

A
Popular History
of
The Great War



SIR E. ALLENBY'S OFFICIAL ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM. On December 9, 1917 Jerusalem surrendered to the British (see plate 49) and two days later General Allenby, commander of the forces in the campaign in Palestine, made his formal entry. He is here seen marching at the head of his troops through the Jaffa Gate. The capture of the Holy City, the goal of the Crusaders, which had been in the hands of the Moslems since the days of Saladin, was hailed with joy throughout Christendom.

A POPULAR HISTORY OF THE GREAT WAR

Edited by SIR J. A. HAMMERTON

Complete in six volumes with
about 1000 maps & illustrations

Volume IV

A YEAR OF ATTRITION :
1917

London

THE FLEETWAY HOUSE

A POPULAR HISTORY OF THE GREAT WAR

BY J. H. BURNETT

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY

THE AUTHOR

AND A FOREWORD BY

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR

AND A PREFACE BY

THE CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF

AND A NOTE BY

THE CHIEF OF THE MEDICAL STAFF

AND A NOTE BY

THE CHIEF OF THE VETERINARY STAFF

AND A NOTE BY

THE CHIEF OF THE ARTILLERY STAFF

AND A NOTE BY

THE CHIEF OF THE ENGINEERS

AND A NOTE BY

THE CHIEF OF THE SIGNALS

AND A NOTE BY

THE CHIEF OF THE TRANSPORT

AND A NOTE BY

THE CHIEF OF THE POST AND TELEGRAPH

AND A NOTE BY

THE CHIEF OF THE RAILWAYS

AND A NOTE BY

THE CHIEF OF THE AIR FORCE

AND A NOTE BY

THE CHIEF OF THE NAVY

AND A NOTE BY

THE CHIEF OF THE ROYAL MARINE

Printed in Great Britain by The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., London

PREFACE TO FOURTH VOLUME

IN 1917 there was no sign whatever that the world war would end in the way that each group of combatants desired, in a smashing victory for the one and a smashing defeat for the other—that "battle without a morrow" which German professors had taught their students was the end and aim of all true strategy. Instead, all that the generals and their civilian directors on both sides could do was to plan and carry out a policy of exhausting the human resources of the enemy, a war of attrition as it was called. If this grim work of killing went on long enough, on one side or the other the supply of men must sooner or later fail. Then the end would come.

The question was which side could the better stand this terrible toll. The Allies were the more hopeful. If, so they argued, three Germans were killed for every two of the Allies there could be no doubt of the ultimate issue. Even if, as was more likely, the losses were approximately equal, two Germans being killed for every two of the Allies, the result, though farther away, would be equally certain. If this assumption, or something like it, was correct early in the year, it was doubly, nay trebly, so after April when the United States, with its vast reserves of man power, entered the struggle. In these circumstances, around Arras, on the Aisne, in the Ypres salient, at Cambrai and most of all in the mud of Passchendaele, the dreadful carnage continued, while Italy met with dire disaster at Caporetto and Russia made her last stand before the empire of the Tsars passed away for ever.

Some of the Allied leaders, although admitting that in the West the war must be one of attrition, argued that this was not necessarily the case in other theatres. The German line might be impregnable from the Belgian coast to the borders of Switzerland, but in south-east Europe the Austrian and Bulgarian frontiers were certainly vulnerable, and the same could be said of the Turkish lines in Asia Minor and other parts of the Near and Middle East. A base had already been established at

Salonica, and a strong thrust from there would seriously disturb the plans of the Central Powers. Bagdad, which had been taken in April, was a suitable base for another advance, this time against the Turks, who could also be assailed in Palestine and Syria. Campaigns on these lines were conducted, on the whole with considerable success, as the capture of Jerusalem by Sir E. Allenby in December testifies; but they were not sufficiently decisive to make it incorrect to describe these twelve months as "a year of attrition."

Besides containing chapters on these subjects, the volume deals with the naval and aerial activities of the contending forces, observing that 1917 was the year in which the convoy system for safeguarding Allied shipping against German attack was in full operation. The year saw also the conquest of German East Africa, the last of the enemy colonies to hold out; and watched from the ashes of Russia rise the new political order known as Bolshevism. The financial situation in Great Britain is discussed, and there is a chapter on conditions in the neutral countries of Europe—Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Netherlands, Spain, and Switzerland—as well as one on the affairs of the decaying empire of the Hapsburgs—Austria-Hungary.

The year was notable, too, because during its course serious efforts were made to bring about peace. The Pope took action in this direction, and the cost of the war, both in men and material, had by now created a similar desire among the combatants, as is shown by the correspondence of the emperor Charles of Austria and his intermediary, Prince Sixte of Bourbon, as well as by the famous letter written by Lord Lansdowne to The Daily Telegraph in November urging negotiations for a cessation of hostilities.

LITERARY CONTENTS

OF VOLUME IV

CHAPTER	PAGE
1 The Advance on Bagdad	9
2 The Invasion of Palestine	25
3 The Russian Revolution	41
4 Rumania's Last Stand	57
5 German Retreat to the Hindenburg Line...	68
6 United States Enters the War	89
7 Capture of Vimy Ridge	113
8 The Fighting Around Arras... ..	132
9 Bullecourt and Hill 70	155
10 French Offensive on the Aisne	174
11 Battle of Messines Ridge	192
12 Third Battle of Ypres	208
13 The Advance from Bagdad	232
14 Chemin des Dames and Verdun	243
15 Abortive Efforts for Peace	256
16 The Rise of Bolshevism	278
17 Caporetto	288
18 Conquest of German East Africa	313
19 The Passchendaele Fighting	334
20 Salonica and the Greek Embroglio	362
21 Conditions in Austria-Hungary	372
22 Italy's Stand on the Piave	383
23 Europe's Neutral Nations	401
24 Safeguarding the Merchant Fleets	421
25 Battle of Cambrai	438
26 The Capture of Jerusalem	468
27 Activity at Sea	488
28 Aerial War and the Great Air Raids	505
29 Problems of Finance and Trade	524
30 V.C. Heroes of the War—(IV)	548
PERSONALIA OF THE WAR—(IV)	583
A DIARY OF EVENTS, 1917	611

STATION 1425

1911

Station 1425 is located on the right bank of the river, about 1/2 mile above the mouth of the creek. The station is a small, rectangular building, about 10 feet long and 6 feet wide. It is built of wood and has a gabled roof. The building is situated on a small patch of ground, surrounded by a low wall. The river is about 100 feet wide at this point and flows in a southerly direction. The water is clear and the current is moderate. The surrounding country is mostly flat, with some low hills in the distance. The vegetation is sparse, consisting of a few small trees and shrubs. The station is used for observing the river and the surrounding country. It is a good place to see the river and the surrounding country. The station is a good place to see the river and the surrounding country. The station is a good place to see the river and the surrounding country.

MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

IN VOLUME IV

Maps and Plans

	PAGE		PAGE
Battles of Gaza	29	Battle of Messines	201
Capture of Ancre Positions ..	73	Third Battle of Ypres	221
The Battles around Arras ..	145	Battle of Caporetto	300
Second Battle of the Aisne ..	183	Battle of Cambrai	451

List of Plates

	PLATE		PLATE
Allenby's Official Entry into Jerusalem	<i>Frontispiece</i>	Canadians Digging Trenches on Vimy Ridge	13
British Troops Arriving at Bagdad	1	French and Italian Leaders in 1917	14
Bagdad, a City of Romance and War	2	French Tank in Action ..	15
Two Modes of Transport in Mesopotamia	3	Scene of a Brilliant British Victory	16
Generals Maude, Allenby, and Chetwode	4	Spoil of War on Wytschaete Ridge	17
Peronne Wrecked by Retreating Germans	5	Rehearsing for the Messines Battle	18
Damage Wrought During the German Retreat ..	6	Effect of a Preliminary Bombardment	19
French Re-enter Devastated Noyon	7	Mine Crater at Messines ..	20
A War-time Congregation ..	8	The Queen During her Visit to France	21
Australian Troops Passing Through Bapaume	9	Queen Mary at Calais ..	22
Three Notable American Leaders	10	The Queen and Princess Mary in East London ..	23
British and Americans Fraternise	11	King George Inspecting a German Helmet	24
American Troops Marching Through Paris	12	The King with Clydeside Women Workers	25

LIST OF PLATES—Continued.

	PLATE		PLATE
An Open-Air Investiture at Buckingham Palace ..	26	British Tank at Bourlon Wood	44
Generals Byng and Plumer and Sir H. Trenchard ..	27	Prince Alexander Visits a Serbian Encampment ..	45
German Shell Bursting in Ruined Ypres ..	28	The War in the Holy Land	46
Canadian Highlanders Returning from Hill 70 ..	29	With Allenby in Palestine	47
A Ponderous Instrument of Destruction	30	Two Sacred Sites in the Great War	48
London Omnibuses Play Their Part	31	The Dramatic Surrender of Jerusalem.. ..	49
Along Devastated Chemin des Dames	32	War's Stark Reality ..	50
The Italian Retreat from Caporetto	33	Occupations of Women on the Home Front	51
Scenes of Italy's Naval Activity	34	Britain's Unrivalled Output of Shells	52
Russian Leaders and the Brest-Litovsk Armistice	35	The Might of the British Air Force	53
Moscow; the Capital of Soviet Russia	36	British 'Planes Setting Out on a Bombing Exploit ..	54
Petrograd: a Souvenir of the Bolshevist Revolution	37	Britain's Defence Against Air Attacks	55
Bolshevist Soldiers in Petrograd	38	The Home Front Feels the Touch of War	56
General Hannington in East Africa.. ..	39	Sir Eric Geddes: Admiral Sir Rosslyn Wemyss ..	57
A Scene from an African Front	40	Deutschland Type of U-Boat and a Mine Sweeper ..	58
German Tanks in Readiness for Cambrai	41	An Epic of French Heroism	59
A British Land Battleship	42	Defeating the U-Boat Menace	60
British and Germans in Hand-to-Hand Encounter	43	Gallant Italian Naval Exploit	61
		Noted Centres of War on the West Front	62

A POPULAR HISTORY OF THE GREAT WAR

Volume IV.

CHAPTER 1

The Advance on Bagdad

SOON after the surrender of Kut to the Turks on April 29, 1916, the operations of the Mesopotamian army, under pressure of climatic conditions, automatically slowed down, and at the front a period of watchful quiescence ensued. Behind the lines, however, intense activities prevailed. The British authorities, stung by the blow to British prestige and by the storm of public indignation at the sufferings of the Mesopotamian army, proceeded to set their house in order.

At Basra development and improvement had taken place. Railway communication was extended, inland water transport was organized; men, munitions, and additional craft arrived from overseas; hospital transport and accommodation was expanded to fit the necessities of the force. Consequently when in August, 1916, General Sir Stanley Maude had relieved Sir Percy Lake there was for the first time a British force in Mesopotamia adequately equipped for the work in hand.

It was no light task in front of General Maude. His responsibilities embraced Ispahan in Persia; Bushire on the Persian Gulf; Felahiye on the Tigris, and Nasirye on the Euphrates. To deal with this wide-flung menace he decided to strike at the heart of the Turkish position and to press up the Tigris straight on to Bagdad, thus relieving the pressure on both the Euphrates

THE ADVANCE ON BAGDAD

flank and the Persian border. To his Tigris lines of communication, therefore, he bent all his energies. The next three months were devoted to the accumulation of supplies at the front, and to bringing his forces up to strength. With the approach of the cooler weather the heat-worn troops revived and responded to training; and it was an army in good health and spirits that faced the winter campaign in December, 1916.

The Turks still occupied the positions on the Tigris from which the British relieving force had failed to dislodge them in the spring. In the interval they had strengthened and elaborated their trench system on the left bank by a series of strong lines from the Sanna-i-yat position to Kut, 15 miles in rear. Flanked by the great Suwalkieh marsh on the one side and the river on the other, it was an exceedingly formidable obstacle. The river bank also had been fortified against a flank attack by water. On the right bank of the Tigris, the Turkish line extended from a point about three miles N.E. of Kut in a S.W. direction to the Khadairi bend and then to the river Hai. Connected by a pontoon bridge across the Hai it then bent back to the N.W. On the left bank the British front trenches were no more than 120 yards from the Turkish at Sanna-i-yat; on the right bank, some 11 miles upstream, the lines were five miles apart at the Hai and two miles from one another at the Khadairi bend of the river.

Strategically the Turks were in a difficult position. By withdrawing their troops on the right bank towards Kut they had a line of communication in prolongation of their battle front. If, therefore, the Hai position were captured their communications on the left bank would be threatened. The same might be said of the British position with one flank so far ahead of the other; but here the very strength of the Sanna-i-yat position—the great flanking marsh—was its weakness. Though it certainly protected the Turkish northern flank, its size presented an impossible obstacle to any outflanking movement aimed at the British line of communication.

The obvious objective for the attacking force was therefore the Hai position. By December 12 the British concentration at Sheikh Saad was completed, and whilst General Cobbe bombarded the Turkish trenches on the left bank to give the impression that the main attack was on that side, General Marshall's force and the cavalry by a night march crossed the Hai at

THE TURKISH POSITION

Basrugieh and drove the Turks up the river on both banks till they reached the strongly fortified bridgehead.

During the next two nights, flying by moonlight, British aeroplanes bombed the bridge east of the Shamran peninsula and set adrift the pontoons; and General Marshall pushing up the Hai reached a position on December 18 which cut in upon the two Turkish trench systems on the right bank of the Tigris, and gave him command of the river above the Khadairi bend. The rest of the month was occupied by the British in building additional roads and bridges, and a light railway was pushed ahead to the Hai. In the last week of the year heavy rain hampered the operations, yet with the Tigris in flood and large tracts of land under water, the grip on the Turkish positions was never relaxed. Where the ground was passable the cavalry were constantly employed on the Turkish lines of communication to the west; and as a result of their activities large stocks of grain and stock were captured.

The Turkish position in the Khadairi bend constituted a menace to the British line of communications and before any further advance could be made its reduction was necessary. It was a line some 2,500 yards long protected by flanking machine gun fire and fronted by a bare plain destitute of cover. In a fortnight the British had advanced their trenches to within 200 to 300 yards of the Turkish front line. It had been desperately hard work in pitiless rain and had involved the digging of 25,000 yards of trench.

On January 7, 1917, the rain stopped, and for two days the Turkish trenches were heavily bombarded and raids were carried out on the Turkish front line at Sanna-i-yat and a diversion was made by General Marshall at the Hai bridge-head. Two days later an Indian division made a sudden attack on the Turkish lines. Here, in a position known as Mohamed Abul Hassan, both ends of the loop were stormed by Indian troops. They advanced through the morning mist, and, with very few casualties, occupied the eastern mounds of Kut and the river-bank, at a point nearly a day's march behind the Sanna-i-yat lines.

The position of the Turkish garrison seemed hopeless with the swollen Tigris at its back, with no bridge and only some primitive basket boats as communications. The British guns hammered the enemy into a narrow area; but instead of breaking or

THE ADVANCE ON BAGDAD

surrendering, the hard-pressed Turks made an unexpected counter-attack along some of the river nullahs and recovered part of the lost ground. The Indian division attacked again in the evening, and again won all the ground. The battle continued all the next day. Though the Turks fought on splendidly, by the following evening they once more were penned. Next day, when the attacking division was closing for the final assault, the Turks made a most gallant sally.

They broke into both flanks of the Indian line, in the face of a terrific tempest of artillery, machine gun, and rifle fire. Though thrown out with heavy losses, they continued to make sorties and counter-attacks. "It seems to me," said a British private taking part in the action, "the old Turk doesn't know he is beaten until he is dead." For nine days the force defending Mohamed Abul Hassan held out in the river loop. Then the Turks buried their dead in their trenches, filling up all the earth-works, and when their surrender was expected, slipped away in the darkness to their main position on the left bank of the Tigris. The British divisional commander thought the Turks had been digging themselves in deeper against his artillery fire.

When day broke, the enemy had vanished, leaving no works to serve as cover for the Indian troops when they advanced towards the river-bank. By general consent the action at Mohamed Abul Hassan was regarded as a Turkish rearguard victory. Seldom had the Ottoman fought with more skill and determination. On the other hand, the attacking troops were handled in scientific fashion. Economy in life was the rule on the British side. The attacking trenches were gradually thrown forward, while the enemy was driven back by hurricane gusts of high explosives from trench-mortars and artillery. More than a thousand dead Turks were found in the bend.

While the Turkish commander was massing east of Kut against the river loop he had lost, the Indo-British forces resumed their operations west of Kut, across the Hai. After working some days in getting their guns and munitions forward, they opened an intense bombardment against the enemy's position southwest of Kut. Screened by the barrage, the attacking infantry stormed a position known as the lunette in the Dahra bend. The lunette extended from the end of the Hai river to the right bank of the Tigris, between Kut and the Shamran bridge. The enemy withdrew from his firing-trenches when the bombardment began,

THE DAHRA BEND

and lost a large stretch of his first line and a considerable portion of his second line. As soon, however, as the Indo-British force began to occupy the lost ground, the Turkish commander began launching counter-attacks. For two days and three nights the contending troops swayed to and fro. Twice the Turks recovered the ground from which they had been dislodged, only to be again blasted and bayoneted out of their lines. In one place the Turks erected a barricade of their dead as a protection from Indian and British bombers.

With the same economy of life as was observed in the conquest of the eastern river loop at Kut, the thrust into the western Dahra bend was maintained. All the lunette was occupied on a front of two miles and a half by January 28. By February 3 the mouth of the Hai river was controlled by the attacking force. The Turks then retired to the liquorice factory, famous for the gallant exploits of two battalions of General Townshend's forces during the great siege. The group of buildings was surrounded by a moat, and formed a large and magnificent machine gun position. Using the factory as a flanking fort, the retreating Turks occupied a line of works extending westward for four miles, and rejoining the Tigris at the Shamran bridge of boats. The boat bridge was soon wrecked by British guns, the enemy's shipping shattered, and a considerable amount of his grain captured by a cavalry raid. Then the liquorice factory, that had been held by General Townshend throughout the siege of Kut, was stormed in a single operation on February 10, the enemy being pushed back half a mile closer to the river in the critical Dahra bend.

The distance between the Turkish front at Sanna-i-yat and the Turkish rear at Shamran in the Dahra bend was 30 miles. It was more than two days' march for an army of the modern type, dragging a large amount of heavy artillery and constricted in its march to the river road between the Tigris and the northern swamps. The Ottoman commander was risking something like a Sedan; for it was clear that, if his lines were pierced in his rear at Shamran, his main body of troops would be enveloped.

The British pressure on the Dahra bend was resumed on February 15, in circumstances resembling the earlier attack on the Mohamed Abul Hassan river loop. On this occasion, however, the defeated Turkish garrison was not allowed to escape by a clever ruse. First the enemy's right flank was driven in,

THE ADVANCE ON BAGDAD

then his right centre, and while he was making weak counter-attacks, his left centre was broken and two thousand prisoners were taken. The pontoons by which the Turks endeavoured to escape across the river were smashed by shell fire, and the bend was occupied.

The enemy commander still persisted in regarding this instant and formidable threat to his rear as a feint intended to weaken him at Sanna-i-yat. His German airmen may have informed him, as the result of their reconnaissances, that the long British line beyond the Hai river showed no menacing concentration of men, guns, and material. For a week all the British preparations for a swift movement were quietly yet intensively forwarded. In the meantime the main Turkish forces were fiercely held in the trap they had made for themselves between the flooded Tigris and the Suwaicha and Suwada marshes.

On the afternoon of February 17 the long-impending operations against the Sanna-i-yat position were begun. A strong frontal attack was delivered, and the enemy's two first lines were carried. The Turks immediately counter-attacked, according to their custom. Their first rush was completely shattered, but their second wave broke into the right flank of the British. Thereupon, the left flank also withdrew in the evening, leaving the enemy in possession of all his lines. Yet the effect of this preliminary demonstration in force was not at all vain, for the Turk was confirmed in his impression that here was the main attack.

After the interval of reorganization the Sanna-i-yat position was more methodically reduced on February 22. Two lines of trenches by the Tigris were suddenly carried. This local success provoked the enemy to counter-attack. He had been carefully trained in this method of trench-holding by the German officers sent to instruct him in the latest methods of warfare. The Germans had learned the methods from the French, who held their front lines feebly, and relied largely on the speed of fire and semi-automatic action of their light artillery to beat an attacking force into bayonet-fodder for their counter-attack.

The Ottoman officers did not always appreciate the rationale of the modern counter-attack. They regarded it superstitiously as a certain recipe for victory, whereas it had become rather an outworn artillery trick, easily countered by a force with superior heavy guns and flying trench-photographers. The British

NORFOLKS AND GURKHAS

infantry, under cover of a strong but limited curtain of shell fire, occupied the first Turkish line. The Turks brought all their guns to bear on their lost works, and, while a fierce artillery duel opened, counter-attacked. Six times they counter-attacked, losing heavily. The heavy, long-ranged British artillery, joining with the lighter guns, mowed down the brave but ineffectual enemy. Once, through sheer power of manhood and mass of sacrifice, the Turk almost touched success. In the end, however, he was beaten. His counter-attack method had been turned against him and used to exhaust him. Two of his Sanna-i-yat lines were consolidated by the victors.

This was the subtly decisive and indirect winning stroke in the conquest of Mesopotamia. The Ottoman commander was entirely deceived. He reinforced his front at Sanna-i-yat when, thirty miles distant against his rear, the main struggle gently opened in the Shamran bend. Just before daybreak on February 23 covering parties, Britons and Gurkhas, were ferried across the Tigris. The Britons got within a few yards of the river-bank held by the Turks before a single outpost espied the leading boat. Machine gun fire and musketry fire broke out against the boat, but the British guns across the river helped to break down all opposition, and the pickets were captured.

The Gurkhas crossed farther down-stream, and, meeting with stronger resistance, conducted a fierce little action before they gained the other bank. After getting through a strong machine-gun fusillade the Gurkha boats were attacked with grenades as the men were landing. There was a bombing match between boat and river-bank, in which the hardy mountaineers of Nepal bore down the Turks. Then, hanging on under an intense artillery fire, they joined up with the Norfolk regiment that had extended from its crossing point up-stream. Britons and Gurkhas advanced through the Shamran peninsula, sweeping the Turks before them, and covering the engineering work on the Tigris.

The great river was a thousand feet broad, with a flood stream running at five knots. The sappers drove in their first shore anchorage at half-past eight. By half-past four the Tigris was bridged and an army was crossing it. Turkish guns swept the point of crossing, but with little effect. One pontoon only was hit, and that was not sunk. The tremendous speed with which the bridge was thrown across the river was the grand surprise. The enemy thought the slow work of ferrying small parties over

THE ADVANCE ON BAGDAD

would go on all night and the next day. Consequently, where he had expected to meet patrols he met a striking force.

In preparation for the sweep for the Shamran peninsula the British guns on the southern bank had been massed in a large arc. The Turkish guns were soon beaten down, and the British and Indian infantry stormed forward in the night of February 23, and, when day broke, the ridge across the neck of the peninsula was conquered and occupied. Well within gunshot of the ridge was the immemorial river road running from Bagdad to Kut. Two days' march to the east was the front of the Ottoman army, still blindly fighting in the Sanna-i-yat position, where the third and fourth lines had been stormed by an Indo-British division. The breaking blow had not yet been struck, yet a decisive battle was already won. Between daybreak and nightfall, on February 24, 1917, the enveloped Ottoman army was destroyed.

At eight o'clock in the morning a strong force of Indo-British cavalry manœuvred against the flank of the Turkish line of retreat. At the same time the infantry drove in from the Shamran bridge upon the fugitive enemy, and, taking him unawares, inflicted upon him crippling losses. Then while cavalry, infantry, and gunners were already chasing the Turk north-westward towards Bagdela, on the way to Bagdad, Sir Stanley Maude's eastern forces broke fiercely upon what had been the Turks' front and was now their scattered rear.

Like a gigantic pair of pincers, of which the handle rested on the Hai river, the points of the widely-separated Indo-British army closed upon the breaking enemy. He fled into the desert, into the swamps and the cane-brakes. His magazines went up in flames, his guns were flung into the river, and, as he ran from position after position, British gunboats steamed up the Tigris with decks cleared for action, and acted as pursuing cavalry. Group after group of the fugitives leading the rout was overtaken by machine-gunners in British aeroplanes.

The recovery of Kut became a relatively unimportant episode in the triumphant march of victory. Like the recapture of the British gunboats, the *Firefly*, the *Sumana*, and the *Pioneer*, which had been lost on the retreat from Ctesiphon, the occupation of the famous little river town, though in itself a romance, was almost lost to sight in the tremendous drama that was now being enacted. The victors had no time to pause when the jaws of their vice came together near Kut, leaving but remnants of

THE TURKISH LOSSES

the Turks, their forces having been reduced from an army into a mob. Upon the rapid organization of the pursuit depended the immediate fate of Bagdad.

The line of the Turkish flight was intersected by numerous stream beds and irrigation ditches, and dotted with peasants' huts. Under all this cover the Turks fought a series of rearguard actions. In the night of February 24 a strong Turkish force, with artillery, was discovered in a series of entrenched positions fifteen miles west of Kut. It was clear that this rearguard was covering the withdrawal of guns and stores from Baghela, farther up the stream. But early in the morning of February 25 the British gunboats and Indo-British cavalry and infantry swept in and around the last strong hostile rearguard.

The cavalry enveloped, by a ride round the river marshes, the northern flank of the Turks. The gunboats steaming up the river, in an artillery duel with the hostile guns, obtained a field of fire on the enemy's rear, where British airmen were watching him. As the rearguard shook under the menace of complete envelopment, the infantry charged and broke down all resistance. Thereupon, the general flight of the enemy went on in increasing confusion and disorder. Although only 4,300 prisoners were taken between February 24 and February 27, the blow to the enemy's strength was tremendous.

The beaten troops had been the pick of their race—veterans from the Gallipoli and Ctesiphon fields of victory. Many of them had fought to the death, their total losses probably reaching 30,000. Those who had died fighting were the cement of the army. When they vanished nothing was left but a panic-stricken mob. This mob, by the evening of February 27, passed through Azizie, on the north bank of the Tigris, fifty-five miles from Kut and forty-five miles from Bagdad.

The trail showed the changes in the Turkish mind. At first a continuous battlefield stretched from Sanna-i-yat to Imam Mehdi. The ground was pitted with shell-holes and strewn with dead troops and shell-cases. Farther westward there were few dead Turks, but many dead mules and horses and dying animals exhausted in the flight. Rarer became the places where the guns of the gunboats and horse-artillery had shelled a Turkish rearguard and made another scene of battle.

Across the undulating desert, broken by mounds and ruined canal-banks, the pursuit continued by the tree-fringed river

THE ADVANCE ON BAGDAD

from Azizie to Laj, twenty miles nearer Bagdad. A force of Turkish infantry, on March 5, endeavoured to check the pursuit at Laj. Covered by the thick haze of a sandstorm, the leading body of British cavalry rode through the nullah in which the Turks had entrenched and compelled them to abandon the position. On March 6 the farthest point attained by General Townshend in his advance was reached.

By the edge of a reed-grown marsh rose the huge vault and gigantic eastern wing of the Palace of Chosroes, the fire-worshipping Emperor of the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean. Where the Great King had sat in glory, heir of the dominions of Alexander and his Macedonian captains, there the small heroic expedition of Townshend had won victory and then retreated, as fresh Turkish reserves from the Russian front reinforced the half-shattered Ottoman army that had vainly defended the approaches to Bagdad. Once more British and Indian troops, excited by victory, lighted their camp-fires round the mighty arch built by the race of fire-worshippers, of which the last remnant had become the Parsees of the Indian Empire.

The situation was in some ways similar to that which obtained when General Townshend camped by the Palace of Chosroes. For the second time the Ottoman army in Irak had been hammered up the Tigris, from the Suwaicha marsh to the Diala river. It had retreated with the utmost rapidity, with the same design as before, which was to get in touch with large reinforcements hastening from the Turkish forces in Persia and the Turkish reserves near Mosul. Immediately on the fall of Kut the Turks in the heart of Persia began quickly to retire. General Baratoff, acting in concert with General Maude, pressed the retiring enemy, and in the first week of March recovered the important provincial capital of Kirmanshah, commanding the main caravan route between Bagdad and Teheran. The Russians were then one hundred and sixty-seven miles from Bagdad, and the British only fourteen miles.

Consequently, the Turkish army in Persia was in danger of having its chief lines of communication cut above Bagdad if it stayed to offer any opposition to General Baratoff's advance. The fugitives from Kut were dragging with them another mass of fugitives from Persia. Neither of the retreating forces could help the other. The only hope of both was that the general Turkish reserves from Mosul would again arrive in time to

A DOUBLE MOVEMENT

strengthen the broken forces near Bagdad and check the British advance.

Sir Stanley Maude, however, was overwhelmingly strong and very swift. His means of river transport were incomparably superior to those General Townshend had possessed. His railway on the lower course of the Tigris set free a large fleet of vessels for immediate battle service up-stream. While the infantry was camped at Ctesiphon the cavalry bivouacked near the Diala river, within gunshot of the suburbs of Bagdad. The retiring Turkish rearguard, which had been pierced by the cavalry, fell back across the Diala, and destroyed the bridge at the point where the tributary stream joins the Tigris.

On the morning of March 7 the manœuvring of forces for the battle of Bagdad opened. The Indo-British cavalry, with two columns of infantry, began to work round the right bank of the Tigris, so as to make an enveloping movement on Bagdad from the south-west. At the same time a direct frontal attack was organized against the line of the Diala stream, which was held by the main Turkish forces and strengthened by fresh troops brought by railway to Bagdad.

The operation was a double movement like that conducted east and west of Kut. The enemy was assailed front and rear, so that if he resisted too strongly the attack on the Diala line, a rapid concentration on his flank would lead to envelopment. A frontal attack alone would not have succeeded. The ground was too favourable to the enemy's defensive. The Diala stream was three hundred and sixty feet wide, and screened by houses, trees, and walled gardens. The cover enjoyed by the enemy's observers, machine gunners, and sharpshooters made it impossible to repeat the Shamran tactics and bridge the river secretly and swiftly.

At any unusual point of embarkation a road and ramps would have been required for bringing up the pontoons, and the enemy would have ascertained from these preparations where the passage would be attempted. The bridge, therefore, had to be constructed openly, and completed by sheer hard fighting. The old bridge-head site was chosen by reason of its convenience, and on the night of March 7 the first pontoon was lowered over the ramp in bright moonlight. The watchful Turks, massed in the houses on the opposite bank, turned their machine-guns and rifles on the launching-party and shot them all down. The

THE ADVANCE ON BAGDAD

second pontoon was caught in the middle of the stream and the crew killed. The third nearly reached the opposite bank, the men rowing with calm, fierce courage, but it was sunk by a bomb. The fourth crossing-party was annihilated in the same manner. Still there was no holding back. Band after band of volunteers came out into the moonlight from the brigade, and the struggle went on across the stream until the loss of available pontoons prevented all further attempts.

The gunners had not been able to help. The pursuit had been conducted with such speed that they had had no time to register on their targets. The work of getting the exact ranges was carried out on March 8. Then, again, in the clear moonlight night the river battle for the bridge-head was resumed. The new curtain fire of shell made for success. The explosions, though apparently injuring few of the concealed enemy machine gunners and sharpshooters, had an important indirect effect. The dust raised by the shells formed so thick a fog that ten boats were able to cross and secure a footing. Only when the dust died down were succeeding crossing-parties slaughtered with the same deadly precision as on the previous night.

In all some seventy Lancashire men crossed the Diala and, joining up, began bombing along the bank. The Turks, finding how small was the landing-party, pressed it in on either flank between two woods. In ordinary circumstances the little detachment, surrounded on three sides by thousands of foes, and cut off at the back by the moonlit, bullet-swept river, would have been exterminated. Happily, the river embankment had been broken by a former flood, and, instead of repairing the mud wall, the Arabs had constructed a new interior embankment, of crescent shape, behind the breached rampart.

Their recent work was a perfect lunette from the military point of view. The Lancashire men at once manned the chance fort, and held it against strong and repeated attacks all the night, all the next day, and the following night. At midnight on March 9 the Turks, by mass attack, reached the top of the embankment, and with one more determined rush would have carried the fort. The Lancashire men were reduced in number to forty, and their ammunition was running out. Yet with steady courage they economised their bombs and cartridges, killing or wounding men at every stroke. They threw the Turks off the parapet, and when the main force at last crossed the river

THE TIGRIS BRIDGED

to their help, the lunette was still held. The Lancashires on the Diala achieved one of the finest feats in the entire war.

Meanwhile, on the last night of the ordeal, the Turks at length showed signs of anxiety at the progress of the cavalry and the infantry columns working south-west of Bagdad. They began to withdraw their machine guns from the Diala. Fresh Indo-British parties crossed the stream, and by slipping through the Turkish rearguard, gained dead ground, outflanked the Turks on both sides, and captured a company of them. One crossing upstream was so unexpected that a Turk was bayoneted as he lay at full length, covering the opposite bank with his rifle.

By the morning of March 10 the brigade was across the Diala, and pursuing the Turks into the palm-groves of Saïda. The guns quickly followed, and raked the palm-groves with shells before the infantry went in with the bayonet. The Turks then retired northwards to an entrenched line four miles from the Tigris. This line was attacked on the flank and also assailed in front, and to avoid envelopment the enemy again fled, leaving the victors to enter Bagdad from the east.

The flank attack was equally successful. On the night of March 7, when the first terrible crossing of the Diala was checked, the Indo-British cavalry, with its two infantry columns, threw a bridge across the Tigris and swept up the right bank of the river towards the road from Aleppo to Bagdad. In great heat and blinding dust-storms the troops marched eighteen miles through the desert, and found the enemy strongly posted south-west of Bagdad. Immediately attacking, they forced the Turks back two miles. Then on March 10, in a blinding gale of sand, they pressed their advantage and again turned the defending forces out of a new position only three miles from Bagdad. Broken on the Diala and driven in on the Tigris, the Ottoman army abandoned Bagdad and, in two confused lines of flight along the railway and along the Diala, separated into divergent, hurrying crowds, one seeking help from the north, the other hoping for aid from the west. On March 11, 1917, the Union Jack flew from the citadel of the city of "The Arabian Nights."

As the vanguard entered, crowds of Arabs, Jews, Persians, Armenians, and Chaldeans came out to meet the dust-covered, red-eyed, weary victors. Children danced before the troops; women put on their festival dresses and clapped from roofs and

THE ADVANCE ON BAGDAD

balconies; the streets were lined with cheering crowds. Some Kurds, however, were looting the bazaars at the farther end of the town, and battalions had at once to be detailed for police work against the last of the marauders of the Ottoman Empire. The joy of the townspeople was extreme. The oppression they had endured was as savage as that of the Mongol era. It had become brigandage on a vast scale, though townsmen and soldiers were nominally fellow-countrymen and largely fellow-Moslems. The despoiled and downtrodden people of Bagdad hailed with delight the prospect of coming under the orderly administration of the race that had built up Egypt and made India strong and prosperous.

On the day of victory, however, little time could be given to the affairs of the city. Only a few battalions could be spared to deal with the looting Kurds and guard the streets. As at Kut, the immediate pursuit of the enemy was the task of supreme importance. General Maude had advanced a hundred and ten miles in fifteen days, fighting rearguard after rearguard, crossing the Tigris three times, and engaging in two great pitched battles. The country through which he worked was destitute of supplies, but such was his organization that he not only fed his army on the march, but arrived in Bagdad with ample resources for rapid, continuous action.

When Bagdad was occupied, the Indo-British cavalry pressed onward along the left bank of the Tigris, and, by another extraordinary effort, reached a point thirty miles up-stream from Bagdad in less than twenty-four hours. Sweeping along the railway line, the cavalry, with considerable assistance from the British gunboats, got another good day's march behind the rear of the Turkish forces, which were retiring on the right bank of the river. These forces consisted of the remnants of three Turkish divisions. They were overtaken by infantry on March 14, and again broken at the railway station of Mushadiya and driven in full flight towards Samarra.

While these operations were proceeding up the Tigris, another strong Indo-British force pursued the second Turkish army, that was retreating up the Diala river in order to unite with their forces retiring from the Russians in Persia. The fighting along the northern tributary was difficult, as the country was intersected with numerous canals and rivers, most of which had to be bridged. The region through which the Russians were operat-

THE TURKISH PLAN

ing was also against rapid movement, as the old caravan route ran through narrow mountain passes and over great stretches of snow. The town of Kizil Robat, on the upper reach of the Diala tributary, was fixed as the junction-point of the Russian and Indo-British forces.

At first it looked as though the Allies would effect their junction without any great difficulty, and combine to crush the defeated and scattered Ottoman divisions. The Turkish commander, however, kept a clear head, for the plan he made was somewhat similar to that devised by Frederick the Great in an extreme difficulty. He tried to entrap that portion of the Indo-British army which had been detached, after the conquest of Bagdad, to move northward up the Diala towards the Persian frontier and link up with the vanguard of the force under General Baratoff.

Collecting the three divisions that were retiring along the Tigris on Samarra, he stiffened them with reinforcements. Then he brought them back along the road to Bagdad towards the Adhaim river, which ran at an interval of thirty miles, roughly parallel with the Diala stream. The Turkish force retreating before the Russians was ordered to entrench, and, while conducting a containing movement northward, to send all the troops it could spare southward to co-operate with the Turkish force on the upper Diala.

The scheme was that this combined force should close down from the north against the British and Indian troops on the Diala, while the re-formed Turkish divisions on the Adhaim river advanced westward and likewise attacked the Indo-British. Cleverly as the converging attack was planned it did not succeed. The British commander also followed the methods of Frederick the Great. He detached a small force that countered the northern body of newly-combined Turks near Deli Abbas. With his main strength he met the forces coming from the Adhaim river line and broke them, so that they fled back over the river on March 29. This cleared the way for the junction of the Allies. On April 2 the Indian Lancers and the Cossacks met at Kazil Robat, and the victories of Kut and Bagdad were consummated by a union of the two armies, and thus there was formed an uninterrupted line of front protecting Persia from invasion.

Much still remained to be done before the concentrated Ottoman forces were decisively broken. On April 10 Sir Stanley

THE ADVANCE ON BAGDAD

Maude, by drawing in his detachments on the right bank of the Diala, lured the Turks to return to the rich region of Deltawah, only thirty miles north of Bagdad. The following night the British commander made a night march from the Tigris, struck the surprised Turks on their flank, and drove them back for many miles with heavy losses. But for a mirage that screened the battlefield in a critical moment the enemy would have been trapped and annihilated.

Again, on April 18, the Turkish divisions on the Adhaim river were attacked on two sides, one thrust being delivered by the Tigris and another across the northern tributary. The Turks only saved their guns because the horses of the British cavalry were completely exhausted by the heat. About 1,500 prisoners were taken. Yet the total casualties of the attackers numbered only seventy-three. Clearly the Turks in Mesopotamia knew that they were beaten. Scarcely any fight was left in them, and only the tropical weather and the waterless condition of the desert prevented another long and victorious march by the army of Mesopotamia.

By the end of April, 1917, the British were masters of the Euphrates as far as Feluja. All the Bagdad railway, stretching seventy miles to the terminus at Samarra, was conquered, and the broken Turkish forces were pushed nearly a hundred miles away from Bagdad. Ancient Babylonia was a British possession, and the famous Moslem shrines of Kerbela and Samarra had been recovered from the Turanians. The way was ready for Sir Stanley Maude to advance on Ramalie, where he won a resounding victory to be soon followed by his tragic death at Bagdad.

To the green-robed Persians Kerbela was as sacred a spot as Mecca. For there Hussein had perished in circumstances that led to the great schism in the Mahomedan world. Then at Samarra, under a dome of gold, slept the Imam of Allah—the mysterious prophet who was expected by the Persians to rise again, when the time was ripe, and establish righteousness throughout the earth. Under British protection, these homes of the Shiah faith, which had been looted of their treasures by the enemy, served strongly to attach the Persian people to the Allies and complete the work carried out by Sir Percy Sykes and General Baratoff.

CHAPTER 2

The Invasion of Palestine

THE successful operations in the north of the Sinai peninsula throughout 1916, had carried the British advance almost to the border of Palestine. In particular the victories at El Arish and Maghaba during December had driven the Turks back to the last coast position in the peninsula, at Rafa. By the beginning of 1917 the railway which, it will be remembered, was being built along the coast from the Suez canal, and upon the extension of which further advance depended, had reached El Arish, the first train arriving on January 4. Rafa is 24 miles from El Arish and railhead was, therefore, within raiding distance of the Turkish forces. Further construction would be threatened by the Turks at Rafa, and after a reconnaissance on January 1, which revealed that the main position of the enemy was at El Magruntein, a mile south-west of Rafa, it was decided to make a cutting-out raid on that place similar to those executed with such success at El Arish and Maghaba. Surprise was the essence of the plan, and great care was exercised to prevent the enemy learning of the coming raid. These precautions were largely successful, the Turks eventually being found almost unprepared.

At sunset on January 8, 1917, the Mounted Anzacs, Yeomanry, Camel Corps, Territorial horse batteries, and a mountain battery under the command of Lieut.-General Sir Philip Chetwode, C.B., D.S.O., set out from El Arish along the road to Rafa, the town on the coast thirty miles distant, and just on the Egyptian frontier. The guns and the wheeled transport passed over a part of the route which the Turks had made fairly firm with brushwood. Striking south of it, the mounted troops rode through the night by cross-country tracks—in deep sand for ten miles, and thereafter on harder ground, the going being so good that they were able to rest for a couple of hours. At four o'clock in the morning of the 9th the cavalry and camelry, which had been specially detached, reached Karm Abu Musleh, a point five miles south of Rafa. So far no warning of the

THE INVASION OF PALESTINE

attack had reached the Turks, but the New Zealanders were unable to prevent the Arabs, who consisted mainly of old men, women and children, from giving the alarm, the typical Arab "hu-lu-lu" breaking across the still night and carrying for many miles. After securing the natives, the New Zealanders, an hour later, moved rapidly over a grassy ridge direct on Rafa. At 6.15 a.m. they crossed the border, and moving in a sweep northwards behind the Turkish position at El Magruntein, occupied Rafa, which was found to be lightly held. By 10 o'clock the Turks were practically surrounded.

The Turkish position consisted of four principal works, the chief of which was a formidable keep, known as the Reduit, standing on a small hill. Round it were disposed three other redoubts, the whole forming a strong position covering all the possible approaches with an excellent field of fire.

The attack soon became general. The Territorial guns were pushed forward most gallantly, in spite of their being exposed to the heavy shelling of the enemy's mountain batteries. The troopers dismounted, and though raked by incessant fire, advanced across the open with the utmost courage and coolness to the assault. As the Turks were shifting from the west to the south, they were engaged by the Yeomanry, and large bodies of Light Horse galloped into action. The Camel Corps moved steadily to extreme rifle-range, dismounted, and made a model infantry attack. Yet the progress of the British was slow. They had little or no cover, and the fire of machine guns, operated by Germans, and of hidden marksmen told against them.

About three o'clock in the afternoon the Anzac artillery and the battery supporting the Yeomanry opened an intense bombardment, which immediately silenced two of the opposing guns and wrecked some of the Turkish trenches. In a succession of rushes the dismounted men, who had been reinforced, pressed forward. The Turks, however, clung to their positions stubbornly, firing with admirable coolness, and seemingly unperturbed by the heavy fire directed upon them. About three o'clock, while the issue still seemed in the balance, news was received from a detachment of the Wellington battalion, which had earlier been sent east of Rafa to cut the wires between that town and Shellal, of the approach of a strong Turkish column. An hour later, the flank guard further reported the advance of another force from the direction of Khan Tunis. Sir Philip

BRITISH PATROLS AT RAFA

Chetwode's position was becoming extremely difficult; the Turks were still defending themselves valiantly and there seemed little prospect of the place being taken quickly. By 4.30 p.m. the rapid approach of the relief columns and the lack of success still attending the efforts of his troops, persuaded him reluctantly to issue orders for the abandonment of the enterprise. Orders to this effect were actually being written when a message was received at headquarters that the Reduit had fallen to a splendid charge by the New Zealanders, and with its capture the remaining redoubts were speedily taken.

The action was over; but only just in time. In face of the approaching relief columns it was essential that the British should withdraw as speedily as possible, and while the detachment of the Wellingtons fell back slowly, engaging the enemy at long range, the rest of the British column, after collecting wounded and prisoners, withdrew to the advanced base at Sheikh Zowaid.

No effort was made by the Turks to re-occupy the position, and on January 10 advanced British patrols moved up to Rafa, and thereafter the place passed permanently into the hands of the British. The action, which had been so nearly a failure, had proved singularly successful. At a cost of 487 casualties, the British had taken a strongly fortified position that barred the way to Palestine and driven the Turks finally out of northern Sinai. The loss to the Turks in killed and wounded had been heavy; but besides these casualties they lost over 1,600 prisoners and large numbers of rifles, guns, ammunition and stores.

At Rafa the British gazed across the frontier upon the billowy downs of southern Palestine, the fertile region which in Biblical days was known as the Land of the Philistines. From Kantara, the fortified bridge-head on the Suez Canal, they had advanced a distance of one hundred and twenty-five miles, more than a hundred of which were sheer desert; but some nine or ten miles west by south of Rafa the nature of the country had changed, the tract of endlessly monotonous and fatiguing soft sand was passed, the troops marched on firm ground, and the animals enjoyed the luxury of fresh green food. In ancient times the cultivated area had stretched even farther westward, the Wadi el Arish, the river of Egypt, having marked the limits on the east of the desert in northern Sinai. Arabs and Turks, with their blighting slackness of method, had watched listlessly the

THE INVASION OF PALESTINE

steady encroachment of the drift sand. From Rafa north-eastward the sand had piled itself in a succession of high dunes; but this was the case only along the fringe of the coast, behind it lying a beautiful country-side, whose waving meadows and numerous fields of grain in the season spoke of an abundance of water. In the spring the undulating expanse of this goodly land repeated to English eyes the charm of the Berkshire Downs.

The defence of the Suez Canal on the east had been by now rendered secure. The British advance had thrust the Turks right across the peninsula and had established a series of very strong defensive positions at Qatiya, El Arish, and elsewhere, all of which would have to be taken before the canal could be threatened. Farther south, the Turks still held Bir el Hassana and Nakhl, which formed advance defence positions for their own railhead at El Kassaima; but the gradual advance of the British along the coast was rapidly making those positions untenable. No serious threat could be made against the canal from El Auja while the British were scarcely 60 miles to the north.

Further advance, therefore, could not be justified on the ground of the defence of the canal; but there were other considerations which counselled a continuance of the offensive-defensive, one of the chief of them being the revolt of the Hejaz Arabs. Any cessation of hostilities in the Sinai-Palestine area would release numbers of Turkish troops for employment against rebellious Arabia. If, on the other hand, the advance were pushed strongly, it was even possible that the Turks would be compelled to abandon their efforts against the Arabs and throw all their strength against the British.

Sir A. Murray, the British commander-in-chief of the Egyptian force, was, however, dubious of his power to conduct extensive operations. His four divisions were in his view only sufficient to permit of his holding the ground he had won, and any further advance would require extensive reinforcements. The War Office concurred, with one or two reservations, but stated that as no reinforcements were at that time available, a large scale advance was not to be contemplated until the autumn, and that Sir A. Murray was to content himself with preparation for that advance and to conduct only such operations as would maintain a vigorous defensive. He was reminded that his first task was the defence of Egypt, but that the capture of Gaza and the further pushing back of the Turks would be valuable moves.

THE ATTACK ON GAZA

In January the War Office, while confirming its instructions, told him to be prepared to release one or two of his divisions for service in France. This order was made definite on January 17, and the 42nd division left Egypt early in February. There were thus left in the Eastern Force only three divisions, the 52nd, 53rd and 54th, and although in the view of the commander-in-chief such forces were less than sufficient to hold with any safety the ground that had been won, the comparatively small number of troops which the Turks had available, prevented the latter from undertaking any offensive, and the British were able to continue the construction of the railway and the vital pipe line for water, undisturbed. By March 1, rail-head was at Sheikh Zowaid, some thirty miles south-west of Gaza. Three weeks later the station at Rafa was opened and the line had almost reached Khan Yunis, five miles beyond. The pipe line was only a few miles behind, and an advance against Gaza had therefore become practicable.



In the meantime several new developments had induced the War Office to change its views. In the first place an Anglo-French convention meeting in the spring had decided upon a general offensive against the enemy upon all fronts. In the second place, the outbreak of the Russian revolution and the imminent collapse of Russia made it imperative that that offensive should be begun with the least possible delay. In the third place, the capture of Bagdad, and the success of the offensive in Macedonia required the co-operation of the Egyptian force. The British commander, however, had already decided upon an advance, and the instructions of the War Office only confirmed his own views. Sir A. Murray's intention in attacking Gaza was set out in the telegram which he sent to the War Office. Dated April 1, 1917, it ran as follows:

Intention—First, to seize the line of the Wadi Ghazze so as to protect the advance of railway from Rafa to Gaza. Secondly, to prevent at all costs the enemy retiring without a fight, which we knew to be his plan as regards his troops in

THE INVASION OF PALESTINE

Gaza, Tell esh Sheria and Beersheba as soon as we approached a little nearer than Rafa. Third, to capture Gaza by a coup de main if possible.

The intention to attack was arrived at in the middle of March, and the command of the operations was entrusted to General Sir Charles Dobell. He submitted his plan to General Murray, who approved it on March 19. Operations were timed to begin on the 26th and a week of feverish preparation ensued.

One of the oldest cities in the world, Gaza is mentioned in history in the Tablets of Tell el Amarna, the date of which is about 1400 B.C. As the key to southern Palestine and eastern Egypt, it has been exposed to successive waves of invasion from both north and south. Amongst its famous conquerors have been Tilgath, Pileser of Assyria, Alexander the Great, the Khalif Omar, Saladin, and Napoleon. The modern city is situated on the coastal plain fringing the hills which rise to the east. Although it possesses no harbour, it succeeds in maintaining a busy export trade in barley, the ships anchoring over a mile out in the roadstead. The rolling plateau on the edge of which it stands, rises gently towards the interior. Between Rafa and Gaza the country is much intersected by watercourses.

Just north of the frontier between Rafa and Gaza, the ancient stream known to history as the River of Gaza, or, in its Arabic title as the Wadi Ghazze, cuts its channel in a north-westerly direction towards the Mediterranean Sea. Its firm steep sides, cut almost vertical by the swirl of storm waters, afford admirable cover but present a barrier to transport.

The road from Rafa crosses the nullah about a mile inland and continues, running parallel to the coast, to Gaza. Between the Wadi and Gaza it passes along the side of a low ridge known as the Es Sire Ridge, beyond which, on the south-east, is a broad and flat valley that rises to another ridge known as Burjabye Ridge. As the Es Sire ridge approaches the town it rises to a hill known as Ali Mentar. Famous as the hill to which Samson carried the gates of the city, it rises some three hundred feet above the surrounding level, and being only half a mile to the south-east, dominates the city completely. Round the western side of the hill olive groves, gardens and fields, cut by innumerable cactus hedges, stretch down to Gaza and the coast.

These cactus hedges make natural barriers comparable with barbed wire defences, and they had been fully exploited by the

THE WANT OF WATER

Turks, whose main position lay along the Ali Muntar spur. Of artificial defences there were at that time few, but the defensive works, though valueless against regular attack made with adequate artillery preparation, were formidable obstacles to a light column such as Sir Charles Dobell proposed to employ.

His reasons for this method of attack were two. In the first place, the Turkish forces at Gaza, though more numerous than his own and occupying a much stronger position, were essentially an isolated unit. General Kressenstein, in command of the Turkish army, had taken up a line of defence running from Gaza through Tell esh Sheria to Beersheba, but that line was only intermittently held, the three places named being the chief centres. A cutting-out operation such as had been undertaken so successfully at Rafa, but on a larger scale, had all the chances of success that had attended previous operations of a like nature. The narrow margin between success and failure not only at Rafa but at Maghaba as well, apparently gave less food for thought than it should have done.

In the second place, the nature of the campaign and the resources available did not permit of large-scale operations. The chief difficulty was the provision of water. After a force had left the advance base at Khan Yunis, supplies were almost non-existent, and it would have to depend upon the little it could take with it and the less that could be brought up. In those circumstances, prolonged operations were impossible.

As the country to the east of Gaza and Ali Muntar was particularly favourable to the employment of mounted troops, the chief reliance was placed upon the Desert Column consisting of the Australian and New Zealand Mounted division, the Imperial Mounted division, and the 53rd division. The reserve troops consisted of the Imperial Camel Brigade, the 52nd and 54th division, and part of the 74th division which had been despatched to Sir A. Murray as a reinforcement.

The Desert Column was directed to secure the line of the Wadi Ghazze, to advance south and east of the city, and then to "attack the enemy's force occupying Gaza." The 54th division was directed to move to the east, thus cutting off the retreat of the Turks and barring the approach of reinforcements which might be expected from Tell esh Sheria. The troops had to have a twenty mile radius of action, a formidable distance under the obtaining conditions.

THE INVASION OF PALESTINE

The Turks, informed by aerial reconnaissance of the unusual activity in the British camp, and suspecting the direction of the attack, had reinforced the garrison of Gaza, which amounted to some 4,000 rifles together with artillery support, and had made arrangements for the hurrying forward of reinforcements. General Kressenstein himself had taken up his headquarters at Tell esh Sheria in order to be nearer the probable scene of operations. In command of the Gaza defences was Major Tiller, whose instructions were to hold the position to the last man.

During the evening of March 25, the British troops began to move forward from their base at Deir el Balah, and the movement continued throughout the night. By the early hours of the 26th, the troops were all in position in the Wadi Ghazze, and the transport of the guns and stores, which presented some difficulty owing to the steep banks, was well forward. So far the enemy had made no sign, and the arrangements had all been carried out with scarcely a hitch. But about four a.m. a fog rolled up from the sea, and one hour later had become so thick that it was scarcely possible to distinguish objects at twenty paces. The inevitable result was confusion and delay, and instead of the various units being in their appointed positions ready to begin the attack at 10 a.m., it was not until well after noon that the British troops all became engaged, although sporadic fighting had broken out between various groups and the enemy, some time before. An even more unfortunate result of the fog was that it prevented the personal reconnaissance which General Chetwode, in command of the Desert Column, and General Dallas, in command of the 53rd division, had hoped to carry out, and so the generals moved their troops across country about whose nature they were poorly informed.

Despite these delays and difficulties, the attack proceeded briskly once it began. The main infantry attack delivered by the 53rd division made steady progress towards Ali Muntar, while converging attacks from the two sides behind that position and on Gaza itself were pressed vigorously. On the south and east sides of the town particularly, the mounted troops moved forward with fine energy, helped considerably by the preoccupation of the Turks with the frontal attack by the infantry. But as the Australian and New Zealand troops closed on the town from the north-east, the resistance stiffened and a fierce fight developed among the cactus hedges which impeded the advance.



BRITISH TROOPS ENTER BAGDAD. The far-famed city of Bagdad, on the Tigris, was the scene of climax of the Mesopotamian campaign. After the recapture of Kut on February 24, 1917, the British forces pursued the retreating Turks to the last defences of the city. It was captured by Sir Stanley Maude, on March 11, who is here seen riding at the head of his troops into the city.



The new boat-bridge across the Tigris at Bagdad, from the east. Two pontoon bridges connect old Bagdad with the newer suburbs on the east bank.



Bagdad, showing its characteristic flat-roofed houses. After occupying it in 1917 the British made a broad thoroughfare known as New Street and constructed the new bridge seen above.

BAGDAD, A CITY OF ROMANCE AND WAR



The illustration shows a camel supply train passing through abandoned trenches of the Turks on the way to Kut. The campaign in Mesopotamia, lasting from 1914-18, was memorable for the recapture of Kut in February, 1917 and the capture of Bagdad early in the following month.



A station on the Tigris bank used by the river transports carrying small detachments. The river was much used by the British for conveying troops and supplies during the campaign. In addition, a fleet of hospital boats was maintained on the river throughout the campaign.

TWO MODES OF TRANSPORT IN MESOPOTAMIA



Elliott & Fry



Stearns



Russell

NOTABLE COMMANDERS IN THE EAST. Left, General Sir Frederick Stanley Maude won fame in the campaign in Mesopotamia, leading the British forces which recaptured Kut and took Bagdad early in 1917. He died at the latter place on November 18, 1917. Centre, General Sir Edmund Henry H. Allenby commanded the 3rd army on the western front in 1917. He then went to Egypt and was responsible for the conquest of Palestine. Right, General Sir Philip Chetwode led the 5th Cavalry Brigade at Mons, and the Desert Column in Egypt, 1916. As Allenby's chief lieutenant he helped to conquer Palestine. In 1930 he became Commander in chief in India and in 1933 was promoted field-marshal.

GAZA SURROUNDED

The Wellington regiment in particular distinguished itself for its dash and daring. After capturing two guns, it pushed on to the outskirts of the town itself, and having, by the aid of the captured guns, demolished some houses from which the Turks were resisting its advance, and taken the defenders prisoner, it pushed on and even succeeded in throwing some of its advanced troops into the town itself.

The infantry attack upon Ali Muntar had been conducted with admirable steadiness. The 53rd division advanced with great coolness across badly exposed ground, meeting stiff resistance all along the line, and by four o'clock they had reached the Turkish positions on the top of Ali Muntar. A spirited rush by some eighty men of the Welch Fusiliers carried them into the Turkish trenches, and although the enemy put up a great fight, they made good their position. Earlier in the day the 160th Brigade had carried a particularly strong position known as the Labyrinth, and by 6.30 p.m., helped considerably by the excellent practice of the artillery, the division had captured the whole of the Ali Muntar defences and everywhere the Turks were retreating into Gaza itself. By nightfall Gaza was surrounded. The Turks had been driven from all their positions except at one point on the seashore where Colonel Money's detachment had been held up; and it seemed as though a brilliant victory had been secured.

The expected advance of Turkish reinforcements had duly been made, and to the east of the town had driven in the advanced patrols of the Imperial Mounted division, which had moved out east of Beit Durdis. In spite of energetic counter-attacks, the Turks had held the ground won, and had inflicted some loss by concentrated artillery fire upon the British forces. But as their advance ceased at 6.30 p.m. when night began to fall, their failure to press their success appeared to be another reason for considering that the victory at Gaza was complete.

Unfortunately the excellent progress made by the troops had not been accurately reported to headquarters, and in particular, the news of the capture of Ali Muntar was not received until late next morning, by which time its evacuation had been ordered and carried out. Moreover, the delay which the fog had occasioned and the slow progress made by the infantry appeared serious to the commanding officers. The position of the mounted troops and the fact that they were without water, was causing

THE INVASION OF PALESTINE

grave anxiety. Finally, the various setbacks had resulted in a delay which made it seem inevitable that the attacking forces would be involved with strong enemy reinforcements long before they had reached their objective.

Headquarters appear never to have received an adequate picture of the progress of the battle, and had laboured under several delusions as to the exact location of the various units. Early in the afternoon the reports of enemy attacks from the east had convinced General Dobell, already apprehensive of counter-attacks against his rear and flank, that the position was serious, and he had ordered the 54th division to move out into its allotted position along the El Burjabye ridge, and make contact with the 53rd division on its left. The point of contact suggested was one mile north of Mansura, but, unfortunately, the 53rd division was never informed of this move.

By nightfall General Chetwode, influenced by the considerations enumerated above, sent orders to General Chauvel, in command of the mounted troops, to break off the action and bring his men back across the Wadi Ghazze. Although Chauvel protested against this order, it had to be carried out, and by 2 a.m. on the 27th the troops were in retreat. The Turks in Gaza made no hostile move, but as the troops crossed the Gaza-Beersheba road near Khirbet Shan about 5.30 a.m., the Turkish relief columns launched a strong attack. By good fortune the 7th Light Car Patrol was nearby, and covered the withdrawal of the mounted troops very effectively, permitting the Imperial Mounted division to get safely over the Wadi by daybreak.

General Dallas was informed of their withdrawal, and as it left his right flank unsupported he was told to swing back the wing of the 53rd division until it made contact with the left of the 54th. The unfortunate result of the failure to inform him of the move of the 54th division now took effect, for General Dallas believed that the 54th was still near Sheikh Abbas, some four miles to his rear. He protested against abandoning positions already won, but a peremptory order decided the matter, and realizing that it was impossible to make any contact while he held Ali Muntar, he ordered a general withdrawal. His right wing accordingly moved back over three miles. The mistake was not discovered until 5 a.m. The weary and disappointed troops were at once ordered forward once again, and although they made contact with the 54th division and actually

A BRITISH REVERSE

reoccupied Ali Muntar, they had not time to consolidate their position before the energetic counter-attacks by the Turks drove them off with considerable loss. An acute salient was created, and in order to lessen the danger the troops were withdrawn to the south, leaving Ali Muntar once more to the enemy.

A further misfortune as the result of the various misunderstandings now began to emerge. The Turks, who had attacked the mounted troops as they retired, were left unopposed and had been free to advance and occupy the heights round Sheikh Abbas. From there they were enabled to enfilade the whole of the British position, and a strong counter-attack by the reserves became a necessity if the ground still held was not to be abandoned. Difficulties of supply for the troops engaged were already sufficiently acute and would become intolerable if a large reserve force were also thrown into action. Moreover, the position itself was difficult to hold and unsuitable for development. After acquainting Sir A. Murray with the details of the situation and having received his reluctant permission, General Dobell issued a general order for withdrawal to a position behind the Wadi Ghazze at 4.30 p.m. Before daybreak on the 28th, the 53rd and 54th divisions had safely recrossed the Wadi Ghazze; their retirement having been little interfered with by the enemy. Thus ended the first battle of Gaza, which cost the British nearly 4,000 casualties. Unfortunately, Sir A. Murray appears to have considered that what was in fact a serious reverse was a definite victory. The tenor of his telegrams to the War Office suggested that the situation was well in hand.

Partly as the result of the successes in Macedonia, partly because, as Sir W. Robertson stated in his telegram in reply, "everyone is now feeling the strain of war . . . therefore, the moral effect of success is of great importance . . ." and that "for a variety of obvious reasons, success in Palestine will have a very inspiring effect in Christendom," but mainly because of the interpretation placed upon Sir A. Murray's reports, the War Office completely changed its policy. The offensive planned for the autumn was put forward, and Sir A. Murray was urged to hasten the conquest of Palestine. In the telegram dated March 30, 1917, the War Office wrote to Sir A. Murray that "as you are assured of reinforcements during the summer, your immediate objective should be the defeat of the Turkish forces south of Jerusalem and the occupation of that town."

THE INVASION OF PALESTINE

The British force was, however, in no condition to push on without a period of extensive organization. In fact, it was three weeks before adequate preparations for a renewal of the assault had been completed. The Turks had utilised the delay to the best possible advantage. Their line from Beersheba to Gaza was enormously strengthened, and the arrival of reinforcements from the Caucasus, released by the collapse of the Russian army, had done much to level up the disparity between the two forces. No longer was Gaza an isolated position defended by little more than natural defences. It had become the rock upon which rested the right wing of a chain of fortified and strongly manned posts on a front of some sixteen miles. Trenches, redoubts and rifle pits had appeared everywhere, the approaches had been surveyed and the ranges marked with great care.

A cutting-out raid, similar to the last, was out of the question. Indeed, so strong did the position appear that Sir A. Murray and General Dobell discussed the possibility of attacking Beersheba first, and by effecting its capture, turning the flank of the Gaza defences. This plan, which was eventually the one successfully adopted by General Allenby, was rejected on account of the barren and waterless nature of the ground across which the long advance would have to be made; and preparations for a second attack on Gaza were pushed forward. Railhead had reached Deir el Balah by April 5, and the transport of stores, guns and ammunition to within striking distance of the Turkish position was correspondingly simplified.

The movement was once again entrusted to General Dobell, and the plan he outlined was for an infantry attack by three divisions, supported by mounted troops. The continuous nature of the Turkish fortifications did not permit of Gaza being surrounded unless a gap could be made in the line. One infantry division was to attack along the sand dunes by the coast, while the two others attacked directly against Ali Muntai from Sheikh Abbas and Mansura. The right wing of this attack was to wheel inwards as before, in order to envelop the Turkish position and, if possible, force a gap in the line. The Desert Column, which this time was to consist wholly of mounted troops, was to move out to the east, protecting the right of the infantry from attacks from the Gaza-Beersheba road, and to seize any opportunity which the infantry might make, of breaking the Turkish lines and enveloping Gaza from the north.

GAS SHELLS USED

On account of the size and scope of the operation, the attack was planned in two stages. The first stage was to be devoted to getting the troops across the Wadi Ghazze and within striking distance of their objective. A whole day was to be spent after the completion of the first stage in consolidating the position. By this means an advanced base equipped with water and stores was to be prepared, and it was hoped thereby to obviate most of the difficulties attending supply which had so militated against the success of the first operation. The attack proper was to be carried out in the second stage, tanks being used wherever possible to aid the infantry. The 53rd division, under Brigadier-General Mott, who had replaced General Dallas, was detailed for operations west of the Rafa-Gaza road, the 52nd and 54th being grouped as the "Eastern attack" under Major-General Smith, and ordered to conduct the attack on Ali Muntar. The Desert Column was to advance against Abu Hureira on the Gaza-Beersheba road.

On April 17 the first part of these operations was carried out without a hitch. The three attacking forces moved up to their allotted positions with little opposition and no difficulty. The next day was spent in bringing up stores and in a bombardment of the Turkish position from land and sea. After a two hours' concentrated shelling, in which gas shells were directed on the Turkish trenches (this being the first occasion on which gas had been used on this front), the attack of the 52nd and 54th divisions began punctually at 7.30 a.m. on April 19, ten minutes after the 53rd division had moved out along the Rafa-Gaza road. One hour previously the Desert Column had moved out in an easterly direction on a front extending over four miles.

A little after noon it had become clear that everywhere the attack was a failure. The bombardment of the previous day and the intensive shelling of the early morning had apparently had little or no effect upon the Turkish powers of resistance. In spite of the gas shells, the enemy had clung to his trenches, and everywhere the advancing British troops were met with a murderous fire. The only real advance was recorded on the left, where the 53rd division had captured Samson ridge at the point of the bayonet. Elsewhere the troops had nowhere been able to reach their objectives. Yet, although they were in many places exposed in the open to a gruelling fire which the inadequate British artillery, rapidly exhausting its ammunition, was

THE INVASION OF PALESTINE

quite unable to keep down, and although they had suffered terrible casualties and were every minute suffering more, the troops held firm on the little ground they had won.

A number of isolated lodgements were made in the Turkish line, but in every case the attackers, shaken by the fire of concentrated machine-guns, were unable to resist the energetic Turkish counter-attacks. Towards the middle of the afternoon these counter-attacks were gradually extended, particularly on the thin line holding the front of the position of the Desert Column. So heavy did the pressure become that the dismounted troops were compelled to fall back. Their withdrawal threatened to expose the flank of the 54th division, and although eventually the Turks were beaten off, the swinging back of the Desert Column brought to a halt the further advance of the 54th.

Farther east the 52nd division had never even reached Ali Muntar. They had suffered very heavily during the morning, and although they managed to take Outpost Hill south-east of Ali Muntar, they were able to do no more than cling to their gain throughout the afternoon. The 53rd division had beaten off counter-attacks on Samson ridge, but the failure of the 52nd on its right to make headway, prevented a further advance.

By 4 p.m. it was evident to Sir A. Murray, in his headquarters at Khan Yunis, that the attack had failed disastrously. Certainly no more could be done that day. Accordingly, as he wrote in his despatch he issued instructions "that all ground gained must, without fail, be held during the night, with a view to resuming the attack on the Ali Muntar position, under cover of a concentrated artillery bombardment at dawn on the 20th."

But to hold on to such exposed positions was impossible. For defensive reasons, if for no other, it was imperative to link up the various units, and until a considerable withdrawal had been effected this was out of the question. The Desert Column and the Eastern Attack were both compelled to retire; and by nightfall, when the troops were installed in their new positions, Samson ridge became almost the only gain. The rest of the line was back almost where it had started.

Although General Dobell gave orders that the attack was to be renewed at dawn, he was compelled to countermand them, as reports of the casualties, the state of the troops and the exhaustion of the ammunition began to come in during the night. When at last the full facts emerged it was painfully

THE SECOND BATTLE OF GAZA

evident to Sir A. Murray that the attack would not only have to be postponed but abandoned. The ammunition was barely sufficient to resist counter-attacks; the casualties were over 6,400. The second battle of Gaza had proved even more of a failure than the first.

One of the first steps taken by the commander-in-chief after the battle was to effect some changes in the various commands. Lieut.-General Sir Philip Chetwode was appointed on April 21 to the command of the Eastern Force in succession to General Dobell, who, by Sir A. Murray's order, returned to England. General Chetwode's place in command of the Desert Column was taken by Major-General Sir H. G. Chauvel, who was in turn succeeded by Brig.-General Chaytor, in command of the Australian and New Zealand Mounted division.

The approach of the summer did not make the prospect before the troops any more pleasant. The freedom which had previously characterised their movements was now replaced by the exigencies of trench warfare. The opposing armies had consolidated their respective positions, and the British front extended parallel with that of the Turks from the sea to Beersheba.

A long exchange of telegrams between Sir A. Murray and the War Office followed. The former pointed out that his requirements in troops and guns had never been met, and that the ill success attending his arms was largely due to that fact. Further advance, he urged, would be contingent upon the despatch of more troops and guns. The War Office replied that in view of the recent failure, his instructions for the invasion of Palestine and the capture of Jerusalem were modified, and that his present orders were "to take every favourable opportunity of defeating the Turkish forces opposed to him and to follow up any success gained with all the means at his disposal, with the object of driving the Turks from Palestine."

A period of intensive preparation ensued. The railway was broadened and extended, and the amount of rolling stock increased, and coastal transport was organized. The chief problem was still water supply, and great attention was paid to the digging of wells, the exploration of possible sources of supplies and the extension of the pipe line to provide 100,000 men and many animals with water.

Although the infantry divisions asked for by Sir A. Murray could not then be sent, the other arms, particularly the mounted

THE INVASION OF PALESTINE

troops, were augmented. By the end of July, five Yeomanry, four Australian and one New Zealand brigades of mounted troops, making ten in all, were assembled. The artillery was largely added to, and the various infantry divisions were brought up to full strength. These divisions now numbered four, the 52nd, 53rd, 54th, and the 74th, which had now arrived. Eventually the 60th (London) division was transferred to Egypt from Salonica, the troops beginning to arrive in the middle of June. France and Italy both despatched detachments and the fighting forces on the Palestine front grew steadily.

Throughout this period of preparations only very minor operations were conducted. Air reconnaissance and air bombing were regular episodes, and the slight aerial superiority of Turkey, at least in the quality of the machines employed, put the British at a disadvantage. Occasional raiding parties were sent out and several skirmishes occurred. The most considerable success recorded by the British at this time was the raiding of the Turkish railway south of El Anja. A camel corps detachment and a column of Anzacs left the British lines on May 22, and reached the railway next day. Within a few hours over thirteen miles of track were rendered useless and the bridge at Asluj was destroyed. Both columns regained the British lines after this successful expedition, unopposed by the Turks.

By the beginning of July, the depression which had settled on the British troops after the two reverses at Gaza had been dissipated. In spite of the great heat and the unpleasant nature of trench warfare in that country, the precautions taken by the medical staff had kept the various diseases to which an army is exposed, particularly in the east, at a remarkably low level.

On June 11, the War Office telegraphed Sir A. Murray, that while it appreciated the services he had rendered and the excellent work he had done, they felt that a change of command was desirable. General Murray was therefore instructed to hand over his command to General Allenby. On the 27th, Sir E. Allenby reached Cairo. The change in command was completed and the new commander-in-chief proceeded at once to make the final preparations for the long delayed advance. The autumn campaign for the conquest of Palestine was about to begin.

CHAPTER 3

The Russian Revolution

IN January, 1917, the position of Russia from a military point of view was not wholly unsatisfactory. Despite the heavy losses of the previous year, the Russians could still meet the armies opposed to them with equal or slightly superior forces, and they had reserves of about 2,500,000 first-class fighting men to draw upon. In technical equipment they were better off than they had been at any other period of the war, and there was no doubt that as the year wore on the supply of arms, ammunition and equipment would be greater than ever before. But, as in the case of the final collapse of Germany, the causes of the disintegration of the army lay far behind the fighting line. The death of Rasputin made no real difference to the Tsar's policy, and he still clung to the belief that only by autocratic methods could Russia and his dynasty be saved. It was in vain that the British Ambassador and others who realized the seriousness of the situation endeavoured to persuade him to adopt a more liberal policy. He heard them in silence and with obvious uneasiness, but showed no inclination to act upon their advice.

To the general dissatisfaction of the Russian people with the conduct of the war was now added the provocation of physical hardship. The winter of 1916-17 was an exceptionally hard one, and that fact added to the difficulties of transport which now began to affect the civilian population as well as the Army. The weather conditions made the working of the Russian railways more difficult than ever. Every locomotive and wagon that could possibly be spared was needed by the army, and though the vast agricultural resources of Russia made an actual shortage of food impossible the absence of adequate transport to distribute it brought increasing hardships upon the people. Petrograd was short of bread. The patient Russians waited in the bitter winter weather hour after hour for insufficient rations. Agitators went among them fanning their discontent, and the people who had suffered heroically for their Emperor and their country were at last becoming exasperated.

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

The meeting of the Duma was postponed, nominally on account of the Christmas holidays, and after much intrigue its reassembly was delayed until the end of February. Early in 1917 Prince Golitzin succeeded Trepoff as premier, but he had few qualifications for such an office. The ministers of war and marine who had supported the movement in the Duma against Sturmer were removed, and Protopopoff gained increased power.

As to the part which Protopopoff played there is still some doubt. There was a general belief at the time that his plan was to engineer a false revolution and use it as a means for re-establishing autocratic rule. He was credited with sending agitators to workshops and factories to foment revolt, and with using the food shortage as a means of stirring up popular dissatisfaction with the Duma. That he had agents working among the discontented populace is very probable. Protopopoff was a wealthy landowner and a capable man of business, who had first distinguished himself as a champion of freedom in the Duma. There he became vice-president, in which capacity he visited Great Britain in the early part of the war, and again made himself remarkable by his advocacy of the common cause of the allies.

On his way back to Russia, it was alleged, he opened negotiations with a representative of the German government in Sweden, and then seemingly made up his mind that a separate peace with Germany and the repression of the democratic movement in Russia were required in the interests of his country. Upon the death of Rasputin he became the virtual controller of the destinies of Russia.

His former friends and admirers in the Duma refused to have anything to do with him. They would not even allow him to address them in the House, as other bureaucratic ministers did. In various ways and on different occasions the National Assembly warned the Tsar that the removal of Protopopoff from the ministry was the chief preliminary to any reconciliation or compromise with the autocratic system.

The tension increased during the first week of March, 1917. In the early part of the war, urban difficulties in regard to food supply in the greatest agricultural state in the world had arisen through incompetence on the part of the government. The government had foreseen nothing and arranged nothing; but the municipalities and the local councils had prevented

BREAD QUEUES

famine. In the National Assembly there were two parties which disagreed over the method of fighting the artificial famine. One party, desiring to get food at any cost, was ready to offer the peasants the highest possible price; while the other party thought that a lower price, combined with a system of requisition, would meet the situation. The food debate, therefore, caused considerable differences of opinion.

The food shortage and the maladministration in distributing what supplies there were provoked riots and strikes. The rations of the garrison troops had to be reduced. Most of the soldiers of the Petrograd garrison (about 150,000 men) were untrained recruits, potentially in sympathy with the people from whom they were drawn. The officers of these "depot troops" were men invalidated from the front or else boys from the military colleges. Protopopoff had not foreseen any possibility of serious disaffection among the soldiers. He had confined himself to organizing the police and the secret police.

In regard to the military forces, Protopopoff relied upon the reactionary minister of war and the commander of the Petrograd garrison. These two men were blind both to the changes that had taken place in the army and to the propaganda which was spreading among the troops. On account of coal shortage some of the factories near the capital had to shut down, and many workmen joined the crowds in the city. Irritated by long waiting in bread queues, some held demonstrations in the streets and raised the cry of "Give us bread!"

A few Cossack patrols moved about the streets to keep them clear, but did not interfere with the people. On Thursday, March 8, the agitation continued and increased. There was a big influx of women workers celebrating an annual fête. In all it was reckoned that about 90,000 men were on strike, the food shortage being their ostensible grievance. A new force appeared on the scene in M. Kerensky, a brilliant and perfervid young lawyer, who was a deputy in the Duma and leader of the Social Revolutionary party. M. Cheidze, another impassioned revolutionary orator of the same stamp, belonged to the Social Democrats. Being far less cautious than the constitutional members of the National Assembly, these two Socialist leaders at once forced the pace of the popular movement.

There was a division in the Duma over the urgent question of food, and a conference was arranged between some of the

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

reactionary ministers and the leading members of the National Assembly. In this fateful conference, held while the hungry crowds were demonstrating in the streets of the capital, the representatives of the nation showed a solid front. They required that the local councils, which had proved their organizing powers in the munition crisis, should be made the principal collectors of grain, and that the distribution of supplies should be managed by the municipal authorities. Protopopoff did not appear at the conference. Through his ministers he rejected the help of the local councils. That night there was more disorder, and bread shops were looted and wrecked.

On March 9, when the failure of the conference was known, the bulk of the working men of Petrograd joined in the demonstrations, and surged along the Nevsky and other main streets in a mood of apparent good humour. Nearly 200,000 took part in these gatherings. The people did not expect a struggle would take place, and many of them were curious sightseers rather than potential rebels. Nevertheless, there were ugly affrays, and both police and gendarmes were killed. On Saturday, March 10, the crowds in the streets were larger still, but the day passed quietly, save for some firing in the evening. A feeling of apprehension was, however, everywhere apparent.

Against Protopopoff were three important men—Prince Lvoff (the president of the Union of County Councils), M. Rodzianko (the president of the Duma), and Professor Miliukoff (the leader of the Constitutional Democratic Party). The first and third of these later entered the provisional government, and all were to play a fateful part in the coming revolution. The Socialists, with yet wilder schools of revolutionaries, arrayed themselves for battle, and swept over all the bounds that Protopopoff attempted to impose. The Tsar was at Mohileff, a day's journey from Petrograd. Both Alexeieff and Rodzianko had urged him to appease the public discontent by granting a constitution and by nominating some minister who enjoyed the nation's confidence to form a government. The Tsar appears even now to have been ignorant of the grave nature of the trouble, and did nothing. The government, in its autocratic way, prorogued the Duma, but the order was ignored, and this body continued its sessions.

By this time the real revolution was in train, and General Khabaloff, the military governor, backed by General Belaieff, the

THE FATEFUL SUNDAY

new minister for war, resolved to hold the capital down by armed force until the Tsar could arrange to send an army back from the front under General Ivanoff. On Sunday, March 11, the commander of the Petrograd army issued a proclamation warning the people that the soldiers would use force to preserve order. Workmen who did not return to their factories would be sent to the army at the front. The newspapers were not printed, and the tramways ceased running. The Preobrazhenski Guards were called out to deal with the rioters, but when ordered to shoot down the people they fired instead on their officers. The Volynski Guards, who were sent against the mutineers, fraternised with them and copied their action. Soon some 25,000 soldiers had come over to the mob. These combined forces of Guardsmen were the mainspring of the Revolution, for they gradually won over the rest of the garrison and defeated Protopopoff's armed police. Then the Cossacks came over in considerable numbers with large bodies of infantry. Arms were obtained from the arsenal, and the prisons were stormed, their occupants being released to join the revolutionaries. The fortress of SS. Peter and Paul was captured.

In spite of its suspension, the committee of the National Assembly continued its deliberations. This suspension had been Protopopoff's aim for some time, but his long-prepared stroke fell too late. By the time the ukases were published the Taurida Palace was defended by revolted Guardsmen. The deputies continued their session all through the night, while in other rooms of the palace delegates from groups of soldiers and workmen continued to direct the fighting in the capital. The Duma formed a committee, including men of most parties, to keep public order. Rodzianko was its president. There was also set up a committee or Soviet, of workmen's and soldiers' delegates, which met in another room in the Taurida Palace. That night Protopopoff himself surrendered to the Duma.

The leaders of the Duma were almost as much dismayed by the character of their new friends as by the menace of their old foes. Conflict between the Duma committee and the Soviet was already apparent, and their aims were divergent. On Monday, March 12, the president of the Duma telegraphed to the Tsar making a last appeal to him to meet the people's demands. The struggle for liberty was then practically decided, as nearly all the Petrograd garrison had sided with the revolted guardsmen.

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

The Guards closed round all buildings where the police and troops under reactionary officers were holding out. As a considerable number of able officers remained with the revolted troops, many of the actions were conducted in a skilful manner and with comparatively small loss of life to the attackers.

In addition to nearly three divisions of revolted troops there were some forty thousand civilians who had obtained arms and fought against the police. The resistance of the last remnants of autocratic power was overcome on Tuesday, the admiralty being then surrendered. Nearly all the members of the old government were under arrest, and the revolution may be said to have been accomplished on Wednesday, March 14.

The Tsar, as we have seen, was at field headquarters at Mohileff when the news of the revolution reached him. On Monday night, March 12, he left for Tsarskoye Selo, but at Bologoi the rails were damaged by workmen, and his train could not proceed. Thereupon he went to Pskoff, Russky's headquarters. Too late the Tsar had offered to make the concessions asked of him by the Duma, but such measures were now of no avail, and the dynasty itself was threatened. On Wednesday, the 14th, an attempt was made by Rodzianko and other moderates to save the Emperor by drawing up a liberal manifesto for him to sign, but the Soviet would not allow this, and nothing remained but abdication.

Russky knew that abdication had now become necessary. He communicated with Rodzianko by telephone, and also sent messages to the Grand Duke Nicholas in the Caucasus, to Alexeieff at general headquarters, and to Brusiloff and Evert. They all agreed to recommend abdication, and in the morning of March 15 Russky informed the Tsar of the general decision. Thereupon, the Tsar wrote out an abdication in favour of his son. A little later he changed his mind in regard to his heir, and, stating that he would not be separated from the ailing boy, signed a form of abdication in favour of his brother the Grand Duke Michael.

On March 14 the council of workmen's and soldiers' delegates had issued to the soldiers that " Order No. 1 " which did so much to ruin army discipline. Saluting of officers was abolished, and the disciplinary powers formerly held by officers were handed over to committees chosen by the soldiers themselves. The men were to obey the soviet in all questions of a political nature.

A NEW PREMIER

Thus, by the evening of March 15, 1917, the movement directed by the National Assembly and Zemstvos was apparently accomplished. The revolution was carried out at comparatively little cost of life. Both the Baltic fleet and the Black Sea fleet came over to the popular side without any serious disturbance or loss of material and men. It was only in the remote east, in the Amur region of Siberia, that any commander of a considerable force made any effective show of resistance to the Provisional Government.

While the country was swaying between the propaganda of the Petrograd soviet and the organizing efforts of the local councils, the Provisional Government constituted itself in day and night sittings at the Taurida Palace. Prince George Lvoff, the president of the union of county councils, was made prime minister and minister of the interior. Professor Paul Miliukoff, the leader of the Constitutional Democratic Party, became foreign minister. M. A. I. Gutchkoff, the chairman of the war industries committee, which had accelerated the supply of munitions, was appointed minister of war and marine. M. Kerensky, the young lawyer, leader of the Social Revolutionary party, was made minister of justice, and M. Shingareff and other brilliant men of the constitutional party filled various important posts. M. Rodzianko, the president of the Duma and chief director of the revolution, did not take office; neither did M. Cheidze, the Social Democrat.

Meanwhile, the unpractical and misled agitators in Petrograd proceeded in their attempt to reduce an empire to anarchy. There were powerful forces of treason and perfidy acting alongside the honest but wild popular forces of revolution. Agents of Germany dominated some of the gatherings of workmen and soldiers, and worked upon them to enfeeble the army and make it an easy prey to the enemy forces. Munition makers and the troops were falsely told that the German and Austrian social democrats were prepared at once to follow their example and rise in mutiny along the battle-front, as well as in the cities. In some cases the Russian soldiers were advised that they should kill their officers and advance unarmed from the fire-trench, when they would be received as brothers by equally mutinous Teuton soldiers. Excited crowds carried banners inscribed with such words as "Down with the war with Germany!" "Hurrah for the struggle between the masses and the classes!"

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

The honest fanatics of pacifism were misled by the more practical agents of the enemy. The provisional government, however, with the old National Assembly and the army commanders behind it, rightly refused to surrender the conduct of the state to the mob of the capital. There were four institutions exercising power—the Provisional Government, the Executive Committee of the Duma, the Military Commission of the Duma, and the Soviet, a word which originally only meant council, of workmen's and soldiers' delegates. The first three bodies worked in cordial support of the new order of things, but the Soviet showed many signs of disloyalty to the government. In the last week of March, 1917, they sent mandatories to the Taurida palace, with orders to arrest the members of the provisional government and of the executive committee of the Duma. Some soldiers, with fixed bayonets, accompanied the delegates.

The palace, however, was defended by a strong force of guardsmen, who asked the traitors what their business was. "What!" the guardsmen exclaimed. "You want to imprison the members of the Duma? Go away!" The delegates went away, and in an endeavour to recover their prestige sent a hundred and fifty armed soldiers to Tsarskoye Selo with a written order to arrest the Emperor and imprison him in the fortress of SS. Peter and Paul. Again the forces controlled by the provisional government resisted the unrepresentative leaders of the city mobs. The small force withdrew without a struggle, after being allowed to peep at "Colonel Romanoff" walking in the guarded grounds.

After the failure of the attempt to arrest the members of the provisional government, the Soviet leaders tried to capture the armies. They despatched missionaries and delegates to the forces at the front. No army commander or general, however, was ready to have all his officers selected for him by the privates. General Brusiloff, commanding in the south, would not allow his forces to be interfered with. General Evert, commanding in the centre, so fiercely resisted the unauthorised power of the Soviet that they afterwards intrigued against him with remarkable persistence. Only in the north-western army, under General Russky, were there any serious disorders, when the communists tried to overcome the officers and make the troops a helpless, leaderless mob. As this army was nearest the capital, it was more subject than

THE GROWTH OF SOVIETS

the others to anarchist influences. General Russky and his subordinate commanders were not, however, men to be daunted. Discipline was restored after a fortnight of confusion and enfeeblement, and before the Germans could strike, the north-western army again stood firm from Riga to the lakelands of the Dwina.

By this time it seemed likely that if the provisional government and the members of the Duma were arrested the armies in the fighting-line would overthrow the revolutionaries. Thereupon, the extremists endeavoured to procure the defeat of the armed forces by creating disorders in the great garrison towns in the rear of the battle-line. The reserve troops were told that they need not obey their officers, and that the great estates were being divided among the people.

By suggestion rather than by definite statement the men were induced to desert and return to their families, so as to secure a large share in the new land. In the agricultural districts of south Russia, especially, certain organizations connected with or favourable to the Petrograd soviet incited the peasantry to invade private estates and divide them up. In some places massacres also occurred.

General Brusiloff succeeded in maintaining command of his reserves at Kieff, but lost for a time control of Odessa and other bases. Moscow remained firm behind the central army, yet the general condition in the urban centres was for some weeks one of profound disorganization. The soviet of Petrograd exhibited remarkable activity in producing smaller soviets in many other centres of industry where the working class was more or less prepared for socialist movements. Not all the disturbances and changes in urban centres were mischievous.

It had been found during the disorders in the army that where the men cast their officers out these officers were often unfitted to command, being incompetent, cowards, or bullies. In the same way, where municipal authorities were overthrown by movements of working men, it was often that the popular decision was well founded, and that the old town council was corrupt and inefficient. The *Zemstvos*, or local councils, controlled by the new prime minister, Prince George Lvoff, best weathered the storm of civil and military commotion. They were, indeed, the soundest and strongest organ of national strength, connecting the army, the peasantry, the gentry, and

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

the middle classes with the large body of trained mechanics and other skilled men.

On March 22 the U.S.A. officially recognized the Provisional Government, a step taken also by Great Britain, France, and Italy two days later. Miliukoff assured the ambassadors that the government intended to uphold the treaties and alliances with the Allies. From the middle of March to the middle of April the divided and confused Russian people wavered between the extremists and the constitutionalists. Happily, some of the socialist leaders came to terms with the Provisional Government. M. Kerensky accepted the position of minister of justice in the new government, and proved himself a reconciling and moderating force. At gathering after gathering he faced the wilder agitators, and seemed gradually to educate his audiences into an appreciation of the realities of the general position. M. Cheidze and his lieutenants became more reasonable and anxious to avoid civil war. While insisting on important concessions from the Provisional Government, the extremist leaders agreed to submit some of the matters in dispute to a constituent assembly, which was to be elected upon democratic lines.

Before the country was ready for a general election, however, the leaders of the Petrograd soviet forced some profound modifications in policy upon Prince Lvoff. In the first place, the idea of making Grand Duke Michael a constitutional monarch had to be abandoned. Russia was to decide by the vote whether it would be a monarchy or a republic. It was at first thought that the majority of peasants would hold to their ancient traditions and require a Tsar. But the spirit of democracy began to infect the peasantry. Some members of the Provisional Government responded to the new feeling and planned a republic on the modern French model. But a middle-class polity of this kind did not suit the aspirations of the Soviet. They endeavoured to win over the peasantry in a vigorous and extensive campaign for agrarian reform. All the estates of the Crown and the Church and the monasteries were to be confiscated and divided among the villagers. This was a possible though rather dangerous scheme, as the Church still exercised enormous influence over the people, who were not prepared for such practical measures of religious reform. The confiscation of all property was the idea at the back of the agrarian reform. The land hunger of the peasantry

THE PEASANTS RISE

was merely excited by the agitators as an instrument for ultimately establishing a complete system of national communism.

The immediate result was an outburst of peasant risings that continued through April. In the Saratov province, for example, where a remote German settlement had spread along the Volga, there were serious attacks on landowners, led by soldiers who had deserted from the garrison towns. Yet, after the peasants had forcibly occupied the lands, they found they could not sow them, owing to lack of seed and to exceptionally bad weather. Consequently, the outrages only tended to reduce the harvests for 1917. It is scarcely too much to say that all the blunders and deliberate errors for which the old bureaucracy was responsible were exceeded by the wild visionaries of the Petrograd soviet. These fanatics were ready to wreck their country in the hope of getting an opportunity to build the paradise of their dreams out of the ruins.

The Russian Provisional Government, however, recognized that a large part of the disorder was due to the uneducated minds of honest men intoxicated by a successful revolution. So they waited, anxiously but not without hope, for the people to come to their senses. One of the German commanders on the Russian front took an action, on April 3, 1917, that helped to sober the popular mind. In the salient of a bridge-head on the Stokhod river some divisions of General Brusiloff's southern army had left their lines in a state of weakness. The Germans were well aware of what was going on. With a favouring wind they rolled cloud after cloud of poison gas over the Russian fire-trench, flung out a heavy curtain fire, and stormed down to the river. The larger part of a Russian army corps was killed or captured, losing guns and a large amount of ammunition. Treachery, incompetence, and faction among the beaten troops were the causes of this serious reverse. Yet it was, in a paradoxical way, a moral victory for the provisional government. It brought home to Russian soldiers and citizens the danger of indiscipline and disorganization. Had this chastened spirit prevailed, the course of later events might have been very different, but it was impossible that the army could stand firm against the subversive propaganda to which it was exposed.

Two days after the Stokhod reverse the Cossack League met in the capital. The soldier delegates from the front and the

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

representatives of Cossack armies swore to support the provisional government and to continue the war to a victorious peace. The Cossacks held brilliant parades in the streets and marched to the British Embassy, and there declared that Russia would be faithful to her Allies. The next day delegates from the Russian 1st army also came to Petrograd. They protested against the anarchical propaganda which the communists were conducting without the consent of the Provisional Government, and affirmed that the government was the sole organ of national direction until the new constituent committee was elected. This, however, was not the case. The Provisional Government was still compelled to divide all exercise of power with the Petrograd Soviet. The latter pretended it was only acting as a sort of legal opposition, but it nevertheless remained in many ways the forcible controller of the national policy.

Each side was organizing for armed conflict. The communists were trying to steal men away from the armies and hinder the output of munitions that might be used against them. The constitutionalists were approaching the men through their officers and their factory managers. Rare were the cases in the rear where munition makers stood steadily to their task, as they did in the famous Ohta Works on the Neva. Rare also were the instances in which divisions in the rear of the armies were not troubled by some preacher of socialism.

On April 9 the wilder spirits of the soviet were excited to further excesses by the arrival of a political exile, Lenin, who from a distance had long exercised marked influence over the revolutionary forces. Lenin had come to Russia with thirty companions by a devious route, travelling from Switzerland through Germany with the help of the German government. He at once began to preach communistic doctrines and his growing influence greatly troubled the Provisional Government. He denounced Great Britain, France, and Italy, and urged that instant peace should be made separately with German and Turk.

The leading members of the Provisional Government had to interrupt their work of reorganizing the country in order to conduct a campaign of oratory on behalf of Great Britain. This led to another approach to civil war. After some of the ministers had explained that the British fleet saved Petrograd in August, 1914, and that the British army relieved the pressure upon Russia in 1915 and 1916, reference was made to the apparently

CONSTANTINOPLE ESSENTIAL

gratifying fact that with British help the grand ambition of the Russian race would be achieved and the holy city of Constantinople become again the centre of the Orthodox religion.

On April 7, 1917, Professor Paul Miliukoff, speaking as foreign minister, stated that the occupation of Constantinople and the Dardanelles was essential to his country. He pointed out that the neutralisation of the Straits would leave Russia weaker than she was before, and compel her to think perpetually about the fortification of the Black Sea coast and maintain a more powerful fleet in the Black Sea.

His views were correct, and supported by the existing military situation. Turkey was seriously weakened and Austria-Hungary half broken, so that the eventual conquest of Constantinople was practically certain if only Russia could recover her fighting strength. But, to the amazement of Professor Miliukoff and his fellow ministers, the reference to Constantinople almost produced a socialist insurrection at a time when the menace of internal strife seemed to have abated. The four thousand agitators in the capital worked up a great show of popular excitement, and the leaders addressed a practical ultimatum to Prince Lvoff, the prime minister. So extreme was the pressure of the socialists that the published statement of the foreign minister had to be contradicted by a proclamation that Russia no longer aimed at extending her territory or strengthening her power at the expense of other nations.

In the second week in April a congress of workmen's and soldiers' delegates from all parts of Russia was held in the capital, and by a big majority the continuance of the war was advocated. But the next day the congress unanimously passed a resolution affirming the necessity for the Soviet to maintain control over the Provisional Government. The Russian people were asked to rally round the workmen's and soldiers' delegates, as these were the only power capable of counteracting any reactionary movement. The Provisional Government was to be supported only so long as it carried out the policy of the Petrograd delegates. Meanwhile, according to the programme of the delegates, the election of the constituent assembly was to be hastened.

"If we can overcome you by the ballot, we shall not use the bullet. But——" Such seemed to be the implied menace of the fiercer section of delegates against the members of the

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

provisional government. The delegates were then apparently confident that they could obtain a majority in the civilian population, and were doubtful only about the men of the active armies.

Even the Guards regiments in Petrograd were tiring of political debates and were organizing battalions for the front. The German fleet was reported to be moving in force into the Baltic, preparatory to a great amphibious operation in the rear of the Russian north-western army. Many soldiers, wasting their time in garrison towns, began to feel the call of patriotism and were inclined to resume their duties. By a gigantic effort Great Britain and France had held the principal German armies down to the Hindenburg line in the west, and, assisted by the prolonged winter, had given Russia time to recover from the disorder.

Yet the time thus strenuously won by her allies had been extremely short for all the strengthening work Russia had to do. The Provisional Government, while carrying on an incessant and intense struggle with the communists, had to improvise a new civil service. When the representative organizations of the county councils and urban councils were rapidly extended and linked with village systems and co-operative systems, there remained a vast administrative machine to clean, repair, and restaff. In many positions, that were notoriously corrupt, it was not sufficient to remove the old chiefs and appoint able and patriotic men. The subordinates were often worse than their superiors.

Many of these subordinates had to remain in the civil service and the state railways and industries because they were too numerous to replace and they knew their work better than new men. In this connexion there was a special source of trouble in the lowest branches of the bureaucracy. Many of the honest and embittered men working at the base of the old government machine, like Omar Khayyám, wanted "to grasp this sorry scheme of things entire" and shatter it to bits, and then "re-mould it nearer to the heart's desire." They became some of the wildest agitators.

In the last week of April, 1917, the general situation was still doubtful. The communists and the constitutionalists were still arrayed against each other, and working vehemently for a victorious majority in the future Constituent Assembly. The Germans and the Austrians were gathering against the new-born

THE TSAR AND TSARITZA

democracy for a terrible trial of strength, and only the army and navy leaders were in a position to estimate if the new Russia would prove more powerful than the old. In many ways the position was similar to that obtaining in Republican France immediately before the battle of Valmy. Owing to the Commune, the Russian democracy had not had time or proper opportunity to organize itself for defence. It had foes within, as well as foes without.

It is of interest to reproduce from the memoirs of Sir George Buchanan, who was then the ambassador, his impressions of the characters of the tsar and tsaritz. When Kerensky abolished the death penalty one of his motives was to forestall any possible demand by the extremists for the tsar's execution. His Majesty, on learning of this, explained: "It is a mistake. The abolition of the death penalty will ruin the discipline of the army. If he (Kerensky) is abolishing it to save me from danger, tell him that I am ready to give my life for the good of my country." In his review of the tsar's reign Sir George says:

The emperor Nicholas II. . . . loved his country. He had its welfare and greatness at heart. Yet it was he who was to precipitate the catastrophe which has brought it to utter ruin and misery. Had he lived in classic times the story of his life and death would have been made the subject of some great tragedy by the poets of ancient Greece. They would have represented him as a predestined victim pursued . . . by some relentless fate, till the curtain fell on that heartrending scene in the basement of the house at Ekaterinburg, where . . . he was brutally murdered by the Bolsheviks. . . .

The empress Alexandra was not a fitting helpmate for a sovereign in his difficult position. . . . She misjudged the situation from the first, encouraging him, when the political waters were already running dangerously high, to steer a course fraught with danger to the ship of state. . . . But baneful as was her influence . . . in matters of internal policy, the Empress must be acquitted of the charge of having worked in Germany's interests. Kerensky himself once told me that not a single compromising document had been found to show that either she or the emperor had ever contemplated making a separate peace with Germany. . . . Her Majesty had indignantly protested [to Kerensky] against the idea that she was pro-German. "I am English," she had declared, "and not German, and I have always been true to Russia." . . . She was. Kerensky was convinced, speaking the truth, and though

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

she unconsciously played the German game by inducing the Emperor to pursue a reactionary policy, she aimed solely at maintaining the autocracy intact and not at bringing about a greater understanding with Germany. There were, however, Kerensky added, German agents in Rasputin's entourage.

Writing of the tsar, Sir George Buchanan states :

His initial and fundamental mistake was in failing to comprehend that the Russia of his day could not be governed on the same lines as the Russia which Peter the Great had known. The Empire had in the interim undergone a vast territorial expansion. . . . There were new forces at work, and the nation's aspirations had grown with its growth. The old policy of centralisation was no longer workable, and devolution was the only effective remedy. But to entrust the Zemstvos with a direct share in the administration of their respective provinces would have been resisted by the bureaucracy. It was not, moreover, in the emperor's character to initiate such a policy nor to face the opposition of those who would regard it as an encroachment on their prerogatives. . . .

The fact that the emperor Nicholas sometimes allowed ministers whom he was about to dismiss to believe up to the very last that they still enjoyed his confidence is cited . . . as a proof of his falsehood. . . . He was not wittingly false . . . but he had not the moral courage to tell them to their faces, more especially when . . . he was but acting under pressure from the empress. It was this besetting sin and weakness, combined with a lack of confidence in his own judgment, that made him the easy prey of those evil counsellors whom the empress chose for the carrying out of her policy. . . .

It was no wonder that the fall of the old regime was welcomed with a sigh of relief, that the revolution spread from Petrograd to Moscow, from Moscow to Kieff, and thence all over the empire, but it was not so much the emperor as the regime of which the nation as a whole was weary.

In the tsar's farewell to his army, which was suppressed by the influence of the socialist delegates meeting in the Taurida palace—the Soviet—the monarch expressed the most admirable sentiments: "This war," he said, "must be fought out to a final and complete victory. Whoever thinks of peace . . . is a traitor to his country. Do your duty then—defend your country valorously—obey the Provisional Government—obey your officers—remember that any slackening of discipline is to render a service to the enemy."

CHAPTER 4

Rumania's Last Stand

THE story of Rumania's heroic struggle down to the fall of Bukarest, on December 6, 1916, has already been told.

By that date the greater part of Wallachia had passed into the hands of Germany, and while the Rumanians, with the preponderant forces of Russia, were successfully holding the enemy on the western frontier of Moldavia, the more important portion of the Dobruja had also been lost. Since the second battle of Targu Jiu and the fall of Craiova in November the whole situation had developed unfortunately for Rumania and the Entente, and the outlook was distinctly dark and depressing.

Germany had taken a considerable area of the country, with the best of its rich corn lands, but she had failed to achieve what had been her greatest aim—namely, the capture or destruction of the Rumanian army. That army had been seriously depleted by more than three months of bitter and incessant fighting against superior numbers and artillery, but even the disastrous issue of the terrible battle of the Argesul, which sealed the fate of the capital, did not result in such an impairment of its cohesion or of its spirit as would have been fatal. All along the line from the Carpathians to the Danube, north and south of Bukarest, it retreated eastward in fairly good order, the Russians helping effectively.

Whether the Germans would be brought definitely to a standstill there was a question that could be answered in the affirmative only if they also failed to penetrate into Moldavia from the north-western passes. An uncompromised defence of the mountains was therefore a matter of cardinal importance, though the rival forces operating in that rugged area were much smaller numerically than those fighting in the Wallachian plain, which at the moment attracted the larger share of public attention and interest, as was natural enough, inasmuch as the bulk of the Rumanian army was still in that quarter. In Wallachia on the north the Rumanian 2nd army, then commanded in person by General Avarescu, had its right in the mountains east of the

RUMANIA'S LAST STAND

Predeal pass, from which it had effected its retirement. It had thereafter got into touch with the Rumanian 1st army, which had been concentrated around Ploesti, and retreated from the capital of the oil-fields on December 6 in the direction of Buzau. These two armies, thus combined, were moving backward in the district north-west of Bukarest. South-west of the capital were the Rumanian 3rd and 4th armies under General Presan. Over against the first group was the German 9th army, under Falkenhayn, and against the second was what was styled the "Danube army," under General von Kosch. Of the enemy forces, Falkenhayn's was predominantly German, while Kosch's was made up of Germans, Austro-Hungarians, Bulgarians, and Turks.

The retreat of the Rumanian 1st and 2nd armies from Ploesti and the line north and south of it took place under a thick pall of smoke, which made the sky for many miles as black as if it had been night. This darkness was occasioned by the destruction of the oil wells. To prevent the Germans from getting the valuable, and to them essential, supplies of the petroleum of Rumania, the wells had been blocked, the oil set on fire and burned, and all the plant and buildings systematically wrecked.

By the railway which branched eastward from Ploesti, and along the high-road in the same direction, the main body of the Rumanians in the north-west retreated to the Cricovu river, where it took up a position, and succeeded in checking the Germans for a while, but the pressure was too severe to permit of a long stand, and it fell back on the town of Mizil, through which from Cislau passed the road from the Buzau pass to Bukarest by way of Urziceni, and to the Danube via Slobozia, whence one arm went northward to Braila, the second eastward to Harsova, and the third southward to Silistria.

Higher up on the same front Averescu fought a delaying action in the valley of the Buzau near Cislau. Lower down, the Jalomita, a stream of some size after its junction with the Prahova and the Cricovu, and then swollen by heavy rains, presented a natural obstacle of importance to the onward march of the enemy, and on its banks, in front of Urziceni and elsewhere, there were several sharp encounters. But the Germans, who had brought up fresh troops, were forcing the pace, and determined to move forward with their occupation of the country, though by this time they must have lost all hope of cornering any large proportion of the Rumanian army. By this

THE GERMANS OVERRUN WALLACHIA

time, also, considerable bodies of Russian cavalry had made their appearance in this area, and were reinforcing the tired and overworked Rumanians, who were now being withdrawn gradually to the rear.

It was not till December 12, and only after bitter struggles, that the Germans took Mizil and Urziceni. The Rumanians resisted the enemy gamely at Cislau, but were compelled to retreat eastward from it about the same date. From Mizil the Germans pressed on towards the town of Buzau, which fell into their hands on the 14th, marking a further stage in their invasion of Wallachia. Buzau, as the centre on the east side of the great oil tract, had a high value from the commercial point of view, but there, as elsewhere, wells, machinery, and the petroleum itself had been destroyed, and the Germans again were balked of this particular prey, which they so much desired. Yet they found recompense in the strategical significance of the place, as it was the meeting of several roads, one of them being the most important in that part of the land, and a railway junction, a line running from it to Braila, fifty-six miles away, and another, the continuation of the Bukarest-Ploesti line eastward, going up northerly through Ramnicu Sarat and Focsani to the Bukovina and Russia.

Simultaneously with the advance of the German 9th army north-west of Bukarest, that of the Danube army was making progress south-west of the capital. In the latter area the Rumanian 3rd and 4th armies were supported by the 40th Russian division. Following on the retreat, after the battle of the Argesul, of these forces, which were commanded by General Presan with great ability, the enemy swarmed across the Danube south-east of Bukarest, the Bulgarians occupying the left bank between Silistria and Cerna Voda, and taking the town of Oltenitsa, with little or no opposition. By December 14 all Great Wallachia, was in the hands of the Danube army south of the railway from Bukarest to Cerna Voda. On the evening of that day Kosch forced a passage of the Jalomita, and the Bulgarians were in Fetesti. As the Russo-Rumanian troops were retiring from Buzau on the north-west, Presan withdrew his whole forces from the positions he had taken up on the Jalomita.

Thus, north-west and south-west of Bukarest, the Rumanians made good their retreat. Since the battle of the Argesul their losses had not been serious, and they had succeeded in inflicting

RUMANIA'S LAST STAND

considerable damage on the enemy, besides slowing down his advance. The Russians and the Rumanians still held him up on the Moldavian frontier—a factor in the struggle of the utmost importance. As far back as November 28 the Russians had started a great relief offensive, but it came too late to save Bukarest and Wallachia. It did very materially contribute, however, to the salvation of the Rumanian army and of Moldavia, by depriving the Germans of the initiative on that front and bringing to naught their plans.

From the Bukovina and all down the Carpathians the armies of Lechitsky and Kaledin covered the mountain approaches into Moldavia, and early in December joined with the Rumanians about the Trotus valley south of the Gyimes pass. Opposed to them in the north was the army of General von Kövess, who had co-operated with Mackensen in the subjugation of Serbia, and it was composed mainly of Austrians and Hungarians; while in the south they were faced by the Austro-Hungarian 1st army under the leadership of General von Arz. Day after day fighting of the most bitter and determined character continued, almost without intermission, in this most difficult region. Heights were taken by storm, lost, recaptured, and lost again; but nowhere did the enemy get a real chance of breaking through.

In the Dobruja the Russians, under General Sakharoff, with Rumanians and Serbians, in late November and in the first days of December, had sought to help their forces on the other side of the Danube by a series of vigorous attacks on the Bulgarians; but these had had no appreciable influence on the issue of the great battle which gave Bukarest to the Germans. After the fall of the capital there ensued a lull on this front, the Russians remaining stationary on the line they had taken up some miles south of Harsova, and about an equal distance north of the Cerna Voda bridge. They were waiting on developments north of the Danube, as their own movements had to conform with them. By December 15 the situation in Wallachia was, unfortunately, only too plainly inimical to Rumania, and compelled a retirement in the Dobruja. On the 16th, Berlin announced that the Russians had evacuated their positions, and that Bulgarian, Turkish, and German troops, moving up after them, had crossed the Harsova-Cartel-Cogealac line. The allied force retreated steadily, fighting occasional rear-guard actions, to the wooded district of the northern Dobruja.

THE RUSSIANS WITHDRAW

In Wallachia the main body of the German 9th army was, on December 15, marching along the high-road from Buzau towards Ramnicu Sarat (otherwise Rimnic), while another portion of it, moving some miles to the east of Buzau, in the neighbourhood of the river of the same name, was attempting to cross the Calmatuiul lowlands. On the 16th the Russians inflicted a severe check on the enemy in the former district, the Cossacks driving him back for some distance, and in the latter sector repelled all assaults near Batogu, thirty miles south-west of Braila, and smothered by their fire attacks south of Filipesti—so that the Germans gained even no local advantage, and were unable to advance for several days. Not till December 25 were the Germans really making any progress worthy of the name, but their powerful artillery was then beginning to tell.

In the morning of that day they commenced a bombardment of the Russian positions on both sides of the Buzau-Ramnicu Sarat road, and in the region of Socariciul-Balaceanul, about nine miles south of Ramnicu. Under cover of the fire of immense quantities of both light and heavy guns they launched a fierce assault on the north of the high-road, and after ineffectual attempts captured a height lying south of Racovitseni, eight miles west of Ramnicu. By a brilliantly-executed counter-attack the Russians retook the height, but had to abandon it, as the enemy swept it with his shells. Next day the unrelaxing pressure of the German guns was too strong for the allies, who were forced to yield ground and withdraw towards the town. On the 27th Ramnicu Sarat was in the hands of the enemy, and the Russians were withdrawing to the fortified line of the Sereth at Focsani, on the railway, and Maicanesti, about half-way between Focsani and Braila.

According to the official German account, published on December 28, it was not till that day that the 9th army under Falkenhayn gained a complete victory over the Russians. But south-east of Ramnicu Sarat, on a line from the Ramnicu river through Boldu, Filipesti, and Viziru to the Danube, south of Braila, the Germans were held at this time. There their objective was Braila, and the Russians sought with tremendous effort to save it, or at least to give such pause to the German advance that it could be evacuated with little loss. Though on December 25 the "well-seasoned German divisions, supported by Hungarian battalions," as Berlin put it, "stormed the stubbornly

RUMANIA'S LAST STAND

defended village of Filipesti, and the strongly entrenched adjoining Russian positions on both sides of the village," the Russians retired only a short distance, and there "stubbornly defended" themselves with more success for several days. Filipesti was destroyed by the fire of the enemy's heavy guns, which had been moved up on the railway from Buzau. Wherever there were no railway facilities for the heavy artillery the Germans advanced either very slowly or not at all in this part of the field.

Farther east on this front the Danube army of von Kosch took up the German line from Filipesti to the Danube. On December 20 it had progressed as far as Pirlita, south of Viziru, or about twenty-five miles south of Braila, but had been repulsed by the Russians, who, however, were pressed back slightly on the south-east near Stancuta. Five days later Petrograd announced that all attacks in this region had been baffled by the Russian fire. Yet on the 27th Kosch's persistent assaults prevailed. Capturing several fortified villages, he forced his way, after repeated attacks, counter-attacks, and desperate hand-to-hand encounters, into the front of the Russians, who were compelled to return to positions northward which they had previously prepared. The Germans confessed that the fighting here was bitter, which meant that their own losses were heavy, and said that their success was due to "the energy of the command and the complete devotion of the troops."

But the Russians did not retire very far, and almost immediately were standing their ground with the greatest resolution. West of Viziru the Germans were thrown back with many casualties. In this last engagement British armoured motor-cars played a prominent rôle. Of them a Russian communiqué of December 28 reported: "The famous British armoured cars took part in beating off the attacks of the Germans. The gallant commander of the car detachment was wounded during the battle of December 26 when repulsing the enemy. Nevertheless, on the 27th he again directed the operations of his force, and put the enemy to flight." It was a fine tribute to the admirable work of this small but efficient British contingent, and of the courage and energy of its head.

South of Janca, a station on the railway from Buzau to Braila, east of Filipesti, the Germans also were repelled, the Cossack horsemen thrusting boldly into them, and casting their ranks into confusion. In spite of this and similar checks the Danube

ENEMY'S SLOWER PROGRESS

army advanced generally, if slowly, on this front, and by the last day of the year was attacking the bridge-head of Braila, some ten or twelve miles from the port itself. The Germans now were both south and west of the town. On the other side of the Danube, in the Dobruja, the Bulgarians, with German and Turkish supports, were by the same date approaching very close to the great Rumanian grain centre on the east. In conformity with the gradual, orderly, fighting retirement of the Russian forces across the eastern Wallachian plain to the line of the Sereth, the Russo-Rumanian troops had withdrawn northward in the Dobruja, but as in Wallachia, so in the Dobruja, the enemy was made to pay a considerable price for all the territory he gained. No longer did he progress by leaps and bounds, as had been the case after the fateful second battle of Targu Jiu.

Having given up most of their southerly positions in the Dobruja at the beginning of the third week in December, the Russo-Rumanians, under the leadership of General Sakharoff, withdrew in good order, and by the 18th were forty miles north of the line they had held when the battle of the Argesul was fought. As they retired they fired the villages, evacuated the population, and when the enemy entered Babadag, the only place of any importance in the district, it was to find a mass of smoking ruins. On the 20th a Bulgarian communiqué stated that Sakharoff was preparing a stand in the broken, hilly region south of the Danube. Heavy fighting continued throughout the next two days for the possession of several heights, which changed hands more than once. By a brilliant attack a Russian regiment threw back a portion of the Bulgarians, who had advanced east of Lake Babadag from Enisala, most of its units being drowned in the lake or neighbouring marshes, and the remainder, over 100 in number, taken prisoner.

But the enemy on this front was in much superior strength, and on the 25th the Russo-Rumanian left wing abandoned both Isaccea and Tulcha, respectively 25 and 40 miles east of Braila. The right wing, however, offered strong artillery opposition near the village of Greci, some 14 miles south-east of the grain town, in an attempt to cover the bridge-head at Macin, six miles away. On the 28th combined assaults of Bulgarian and Turkish troops succeeded in driving the Russians from the fortified hills immediately east of Macin, and then took Rachel, about seventeen miles from Braila. At Macin the

RUMANIA'S LAST STAND

Russians resisted with admirable tenacity, but in spite of their efforts the bridge-head was slowly narrowed by the fierce and persistent attacks of the enemy, and by New Year's Day had been considerably reduced in extent.

Braila was now closely invested on all sides except on the north, where it lay in front of the Sereth line. Without natural defences, the town stood on a bluff on the edge of a wide plain, a melancholy fenland, tenanted solely by herds of swine and innumerable wild birds. Situated on the left bank of the Danube, where the river, after dividing into several arms near Harsova, resumed its normal appearance and was wide and deep, Braila was at the head of navigation for sea-going ships by the Sulina Channel into the Black Sea. The granaries of that town and Galatz ranked with the largest in the world, each holding about a quarter of a million quarters of wheat, or nearly two million bushels. Its wheat gave it vital importance, and made it of enormous value to the Germans.

Here, again, the enemy was destined to be balked. Of the three converging attacks on the town, the one which got home first was that from the east. At Macin and Jijila, a short distance to the north, the Russians continued to offer a most stubborn resistance, but on January 3 they were overborne, and had to abandon both these places. With the loss of Macin, Braila was open from the east, and as it was impossible to defend it any longer, the Russians evacuated the grain town on January 4-5; but before leaving it they destroyed the granaries and factories. From Macin the Bulgarians marched into the empty and desolated streets, while German and Bulgarian cavalry entered from the west.

While the various operations which resulted in the fall of Braila were going forward, strenuous fighting was taking place along the railway and the high-road between Ramnicu Sarat and Focsani; and, at the same time, heavy enemy pressure was incessantly exerted in the mountains and in the valleys leading from them on the north into Moldavia and north-eastern Wallachia. On January 1 the Russians were withdrawing nearer Focsani, on the fortified line of the Sereth, and stood about half-way between Ramnicu Sarat and Focsani itself. Next day there was a sharp fight, but it was only with Russian rear-guards, as the main force went on with its retirement. That day's German communiqué stated that the German and Austro-



PERONNE WRECKED BY RETREATING GERMANS. Throughout 1917 the initiative on the western front lay mainly with the Allies, who in the early months of the year began offensive operations with the old Somme front as the centre. Before them the Germans retreated methodically to the Hindenburg Line; Péronne, beneath Mont St. Quentin, fell to the British on March 18, but before the evacuation the Germans wrecked it by starting fires and with explosives.



The photograph shows the wanton ruin wrought at Vauxaillon-en-Laonnais by the Germans before evacuating the village in their retreat in the spring of 1917.



Allied troops in occupation of the town of Nesle, France. Captured by the Germans early in the war, it was recovered by the French on March 18, 1917 during their pursuit of the Germans to the Hindenburg Line.

IN THE WAKE OF THE RETREATING GERMANS

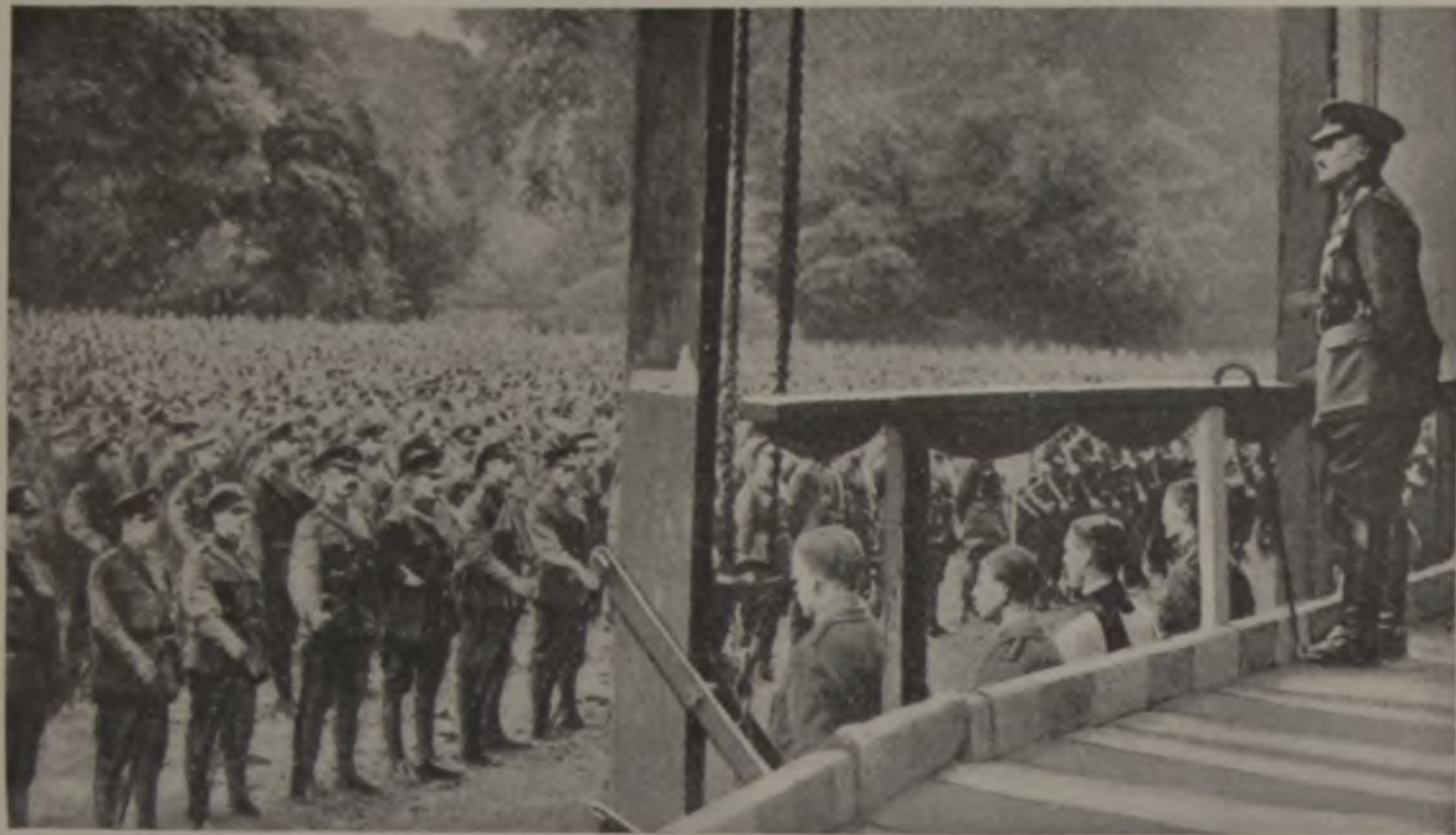


French artillery passing through Noyon in March, 1917. This town of France was reoccupied by the French, following the retreat of the Germans to the Hindenburg Line.



French engineers repairing the havoc in the Rue de Paris caused by retreating Germans. When they evacuated Noyon they mined the streets and afterwards heavily bombarded the town.

FRENCH RE-ENTER DEVASTATED NOYON



A WAR-TIME CONGREGATION. This remarkable photograph shows General Sir Henry Horne addressing his troops after a solemn service at the opening of the fourth year of war. From 1916 to end of hostilities he commanded the British 1st Army.

THE STRUGGLE FOR FOCSANI

Hungarian troops of the 9th army were approaching the Focsani and Fundeni bridge-heads—the latter on the Sereth midway between the former and Galatz. It claimed the taking of many prisoners. Bitter and violent conflicts developed in this sector on January 3. South-west of Focsani the Germans, under cover of a drum-fire bombardment with asphyxiating shells, attacked a Russian regiment along the railway, but the Russian artillery was well handled and made great rents in their close formation. South-east of the Ramnicu river a Russian rifle detachment took by assault the village of Guleanca, capturing over two hundred men, five guns, and eight machine-guns. Nevertheless, the enemy was successful on the Milcovu river, gaining both Pantecesti and Meru; and on the 4th had advanced above Odobesti, eight miles north-west of Focsani.

The Milcovu, an affluent of the Sereth, was the stream which separated the old principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, and what was designated the Milcovu sector formed a prolongation of the permanent system of fortifications called the Sereth line. Its conquest by the enemy gave him an important advantage, as it covered the farther advance of Falkenhayn's centre on Focsani. South-east of that town Slobozia and Rotesti were stormed by the 152nd West Prussian regiment, these villages lying a few miles south of the junction of the Ramnicu river and the Sereth. On January 5 and 6 the struggle for Focsani became greatly intensified, the Germans bringing up their heaviest guns and attacking fiercely in massed formation. On the 6th a concentrated fire of extreme violence was directed on Ramniceni, and under its cover the enemy advanced nearly three miles easterly. According to the official German account, General Knobelsdorf and General Oettinger's divisions, under the command of General Kuhnc, stormed and captured the strongly-consolidated Russian position on the road from Tatarani to Ramniceni, in spite of its having been strengthened by wire entanglements and flanking devices, and thereafter they advanced across the marshes towards the Sereth.

Farther to the south-east a reinforced cavalry division under Count Schmettow took Olaneasca, Guleanca, and Maxineni. Next morning the Russians launched a great relief offensive between Focsani and Fundeni on a front of nearly sixteen miles, but they only gained ground near Obilesti, and Focsani shortly afterwards fell into German hands. North-west of the town,

RUMANIA'S LAST STAND

while the enemy was breaking into it on the south and from the east, Russian and Rumanian troops, after a desperate and most tenacious defence, were driven out of the mountain pass near Odobesti towards the Putna. Early in the morning of the 8th the Russians withdrew from Focsani, with a loss in prisoners of close upon 4,000 men, in addition to guns and machine guns.

Hailed throughout Germany as a great victory, the capture of Focsani, the western bastion of the fortified Sereth line, did not bring the enemy all the success he anticipated with regard to the swift rolling up of that line. The first step in the process had been taken, but practically it remained the only step. The Russians retired from Focsani to the Sereth itself and to its western tributary, the Putna, forming there a strong new line which linked up with the old Sereth line eastward. The Germans progressed to the Putna to find a difficult position, on which they had not reckoned, right in front of them.

On both sides of Fundeni, between Focsani and Galatz, the Russian retreat continued to the Crangeni-Nanesti line, three miles south of the Sereth, and the village of Garleasca was lost in the same district. On the 10th the enemy succeeded in getting a footing on the farther bank of the Putna under cover of a fog, but he did not hold it long, for by an impetuous counter attack, in which Russian bayonets made quick play, he was driven across the river again with considerable loss. A few days later an Austrian attack in the Putna valley was repulsed. For a week little of interest occurred on this part of the front, but eastward the Turks stormed Mihalea, north-west of Braila and west of Vadeni, and also took the last-named village, on January 13. Vadeni, which lay two miles south of the Sereth, was recaptured by the Russians on the 17th by a well-prepared effort, and was held despite a determined Turkish onslaught.

By this time the weather in all Rumania had become most severe, an Arctic cold, with frost and snow, making extensive military movements well-nigh impossible. Mackensen did not attempt any operations of conspicuous importance. Galatz was within range of his guns, but though it was bombarded in a desultory fashion by the Turks of the Danube army, an attack was not pressed. From the junction of the Sereth with the Danube, except about Vadeni, the enemy now occupied the right bank of the stream for a distance of nearly fifty miles westward. Higher up at Radulesti he was checked and thrown

THE END OF THE CAMPAIGN

back, as also at Ciuslea, eight miles north-east of Focsani. On the 16th the Germans were actually standing on the defensive near Fundeni, but on the 20th they stormed Nanesti, and then carried the bridge-head of Fundeni itself, south of the river. The Russians made good their retreat and destroyed the bridges.

Within a short space of time it was obvious that the great combined advance of the enemy was stayed, whatever were the reasons, on a line just south of the Danube, the Sereth, and the Putna, with a net result to him, since the invasion, of the subjugation of Wallachia and the Dobruja, or about three-fourths of Rumania, by the third week of January, 1917. The German hope of overrunning the whole country had failed owing to his being held up on the Moldavian front.

Nothing of special importance took place on the Rumanian front during the months of February, March, April, May, and June. General Gourko had taken over the chief command of the Russo-Rumanian forces, with General Averescu as his colleague; but after the Russian revolution Gourko was superseded. Behind the front all that part of the Rumanian army which was not in the trenches was thoroughly fitted for its duties in every way. On the front itself there were few incidents, other than small raids and patrol encounters, during February and March, when the great cold still gripped the country; but the British armoured-car detachment in February attacked Bulgarian detachments south of the Sereth.

Russia was too closely united to Rumania for the Russian revolution not to have a marked effect on the Rumanian front, and on April 21 M. Gutchkoff, then minister of war in the Russian provisional government, arrived in Jassy. A council of commanders was held immediately. Gutchkoff presided, and the situation was discussed. Later, he received a deputation of Russian officers and men, who assured him that they were determined to fight the invaders. But throughout April, May, and June only small encounters were recorded.

On August 6, 1917, Mackensen attacked the line of the Sereth, but Averescu beat him back. The Rumanian troops underwent terrible hardships, as they could look only to Russia for help, and she was now in the throes of the Bolshevik revolution. In the autumn Rumania had no alternative but to seek an armistice, and it was concluded on December 6, 1917.

CHAPTER 5

The German Retreat to the Hindenburg Line

ALL through the winter of 1916 defensive work had been carried out on the new German line from Arras to St. Quentin, which had come to be known as the Hindenburg line. Early in the year 1917 British 5th army air squadrons discovered that the Germans were at work on this new stretch of fortifications which cut off their salient the apex of which was south-west of Noyon. In distance it was about 70 miles long. Vast amounts of labour and material were expended on the new system, and it became evident to the British staff that the Germans intended to retreat along this front, abandoning their salient, shortening and strengthening their line.

During this time the Germans were diluting labour in their factories and taking every reasonable measure to increase the number of their troops. Ludendorff, it was said, at the beginning of 1917 was able to reckon on a new general reserve amounting to about 1,000,000 men. Of these he is believed to have placed about 400,000 in or about the Black Forest, echeloned from Basle to Constance, and from Mulhouse to Strasbourg. Thus they threatened the French Vosges line on the one side and the Swiss Jura line on the other side, and were supposed to be threatening the French flank below Belfort by a drive through Switzerland.

Another group of 400,000 fresh troops of the new reserve was more loosely collected in southern Germany, menacing Italy by means of a large reinforcement of the Austro-Hungarian troops in the Trentino. There was, however, no sure ground for supposing that either of these preliminary concentrations was intended for use against south-eastern France or Lombardy. Indeed, Ludendorff is said to have decided against a renewal of the Trentino offensive.

Ludendorff and his staff well knew that the concentrations would be soon known to the allies. The two new masses were

LUDENDORFF'S PLANS

in the nature of demonstrations, intended to facilitate operations in the spring, and meanwhile confuse and mislead the allies. Ludendorff was still relying upon the German railway system for a rapid reshuffling of his striking forces. There were indications that a sudden thrust at the Russian front at Riga was among the strokes contemplated, and that very strong forces of men and artillery were being directed towards the Champagne front in France and the Yser and Ypres line in Flanders.

Undoubtedly, Ludendorff intended to strike with his grand reserve, but he met with a series of difficulties during his winter preparations. The German railway system was wearing out. A shortage of efficient lubricating oil, shortage of skilled labour for track-laying, combined with incessant traffic, seems to have produced serious damage to the rolling-stock. Troop and munition trains in motion could be heard at a distance of ten miles, through the wheels shrieking upon the axles. When the stock was sadly in need of a period of relief for repairs, an extraordinary spell of long and severe frost froze the German canals and navigable rivers, caused great disorder in the transport of war stores and general goods, and increased the burden upon the overloaded railways.

A winter of such severity had not been known in Central Europe for a number of years. By stopping all the canal traffic it upset the plans of the German staff and disastrously delayed the rearrangement and munitioning of their armies. This very severe weather, during which on more than one occasion the thermometer reached zero, inflicted very considerable hardship on the troops in the trenches—though where movement was possible it was a relief to the fighting soldiers to be able to walk securely in dry boots after the misery of floundering in mud.

Sir Douglas Haig was in the same difficulty as Ludendorff. He had not sufficient railway power. In order to select his own ground, he needed more railways, and needed them at once. The chief reason why he had been unable, in the summer and autumn of 1916, to open and maintain a double offensive at widely separated points was that he lacked the lines, locomotives and trucks necessary for feeding two separated battle forces. Sir Douglas Haig appealed to the British and Canadian railway companies to help him. First, with the consent of the British government, the passenger traffic in Great Britain was restricted and the carriage of many kinds of material was

THE GERMAN RETREAT

diminished. This enabled rolling-stock to be moved to France and Flanders, and at the same time entire tracks were transported by the railway companies. Even the ballast was conveyed to France. Tens of thousands of tons of macadam for new road-making were given to the sappers of the British armies, who, under their officers, developed quite an unusual speed in road-making and track construction. All this railway work and engineering work was the fundamental factor of future successes, for success rested with the side that possessed the best and most numerous means of movement and supply. During this period two hundred miles of main railway track were added behind the British front, together with new lines of light railways and new motor roads.

By February, 1917, Sir Douglas Haig began to reckon that the tonnage his improved railways were capable of carrying was fairly commensurate with the tonnage landed at his sea bases. His supply of guns and shells was readily increasing, despite labour troubles in England and demands from Italy and elsewhere, but it was not yet sufficient to meet the demands of a prolonged offensive.

The campaign that had been checked in November, 1916, by the swimming clay in the Ancre valley, was, notwithstanding the check, carried on in the latter part of the same month, through December, and through January. The British infantry did not make any important move but continually raided the hostile lines. The campaign was mainly continued by the artillery. In the Somme area the Germans were under observation from the great ridge they had lost. At first the men in the firing-trenches on both sides were in a deplorable condition. On the ground where the action had been broken off there were little more than rough connexions between shell-holes, undrained and without protection of either parapets or dug-outs. In some places, such as the position near Grandcourt, no connected lines existed, but merely a series of rough outpost positions with the approaches covered by British and German batteries.

Sir Hubert Gough opened the infantry advance towards the new German line. On the night of January 2, 1917, the Germans provoked the new Ancre campaign by jumping one of the British advanced posts in front of Serre. A staff officer, enquiring into the affair, found a dead British sentry amid a quagmire of ponds and mud-swamps, through which it was impossible

A BRITISH ATTACK

to build a strong line. The only way in which to strengthen the front was to capture the nearest German positions and link them together into a protective barrier. In the night of January 5 two small parties crawled through the mud towards the German posts. The first party of twenty men rushed their objective and made forty-four German prisoners, at no cost to themselves in fatal casualties. The second party, that attacked a strong point on the right, also trapped the defending troops, but were counter-attacked by a detachment of Bavarian bombers. After a sharp fight the enemy's supporting force was repulsed and the conquered position consolidated.

The points won by this movement commanded an important, perhaps vital, system of trenches, and the German commander, therefore, would not give up the struggle. On January 7 he turned his guns on to his lost positions and, after a heavy bombardment, made another vain counter-attack. The consequence was that the British artillery also opened heavily on a wider front of two miles, and on January 10 English patrols climbed up the battered slopes behind the barrage, and took one hundred and twenty prisoners from an upper line of dug-outs. The prisoners were more numerous than the attackers and the cost of the little local victory was slight.

Sir Hubert Gough resolved to press onward and upward, in spite of the severe weather conditions. So on January 11, when a thick morning mist, followed by a snowstorm, veiled all the Serre plateau, a strong attack was delivered by English county regiments on the high ground above the Ancre, east of Beaumont Hamel.

Very slowly the English troops moved. They were ankle-deep in mud on the firm ground and up to their thighs in slime in other places. Notwithstanding all the difficulties of the ground the German line was reached, under cover of mist and snow, before the hostile machine-gunners could get to work. Some of the German officers fought to the death, but their men surrendered by the hundred without a struggle.

The capture of this ridge exposed the communications of the German troops on the Ancre to the British artillery fire and greatly increased their difficulties. When the German artillery tried to put a shell curtain over the edge of the plateau, something went wrong with their fire-control system. Their observation-officers had been killed or captured, and the falling snow

THE GERMAN RETREAT

prevented the others from seeing what had happened. The wild shooting did scarcely any damage, and, when the weather cleared, the forward observation-officers of General Gough's army were fixed upon the high ground of the Serre plateau.

Then came the great frost that whitened the battlefield for weeks. The mud hardened, and water in the shell holes froze, but the general bombardment of the enemy's reserve line and communications increased rather than diminished, and the continual thick fogs screened the British raids all along the front.

On January 27 the raids were varied by a holding attack against one of the positions on the Bapaume sector. The enemy occupied a sunken road at Le Transloy, on a slope going down to the ruined village. At half-past five o'clock, following a short barrage, a raid was made on the German positions. Before they could man their trenches effectively they were trapped. Only from two isolated trenches on the right was there any rifle fire, and the British troops at first drove a third of a mile beyond their objective. But finding the ground there was too hard to dig, they drew back to the sheltered dug-outs in the sunken road. The German gunners then endeavoured to bombard the attacking force out of the Le Transloy salient, but their attempts to organize counter-attacks were frustrated by artillery fire. They soon tired of provoking an artillery duel, and began to remove their guns towards St. Quentin. The continual mist in the Somme valley favoured the enemy's retirement of his heavy pieces. Nothing, however, could screen the increasing weakness of his lines, as these were being constantly tested by vigorous raids. The German commanders had to sacrifice men in demonstrative counter-attacks, in a vain endeavour to maintain an appearance of strength.

Yet the first, preliminary British thrust between the Ancre and the Serre plateau steadily and methodically continued. On February 3 Sir Hubert Gough made a moonlight attack from Holland Wood over a valley to a crest dominating the village of Miraumont. The ground was white with snow and the moon was shining in a clear sky, but a low-lying mist veiled the movement of the attacking troops.

After a preliminary bombardment they quickly overran the enemy's fire-trench and then, following up their barrage, stormed a strong position known as River Trench, in which there were three strong redoubts. German counter-attacks on the following

GRANDCOURT EVACUATED

morning failed to dislodge them, although the Germans temporarily re-occupied one of the redoubts. Something like 200 prisoners were taken in this operation.

About this time in the southern part of the Ypres salient the Germans employed a ruse which they had found successful on the Russian front. They raided the British line, over the snow, dressed in white clothing with whitened faces. Unfortunately for themselves they lost the element of surprise by a preliminary bombardment—and their attack was repulsed. They also provided their enemies with a valuable hint which they were not slow to take.

On February 7, 1917, the retreat towards the Hindenburg line began by the evacuation of the riverside village of Grandcourt. British patrols cautiously advanced into the trenches



west of the village and, after exploring the snow-mantled walls and cellars, established a new line on the road to Miraumont. The German position was a confused line of shell-craters, broken walls, and dug-outs, overlooked by the new British positions on the Serre plateau. Combles was the first place from which the Germans retreated. Grandcourt was the second place. In both cases the enemy was caught in the pincer-like movement of two enveloping forces, so that he was compelled to retreat in order to avoid heavy and utterly useless losses. It was at Grandcourt that the German artillery had massed during the Somme battles at Contalmaison and the Pozieres ridge.

THE GERMAN RETREAT

Sir Hubert Gough pressed the advantage he had won by attacking in the night the fortress manor-house of Baillescourt, between Grandcourt and Miraumont. German engineers had done all they could to make Baillescourt a position of strength by means of loopholed galleries, machine-gun emplacements, and bomb-proof caverns. Helped by the clear moonlight, the British gunners swept the farm with heavy shell, causing the garrison to retire to their underground shelters. Before they could regain their fire-trenches the British bombers were outside the dug-outs and the garrison of 87 surrendered.

By reason of the strategic conquest of the Grandcourt line and the high ground north of the Ancre the German positions on the dominating Serre plateau were endangered. Almost daily small bits of ground were seized by the British troops, enabling them to reach out farther round the last remaining buttresses of the Germans' original first line of defence. The British artillery had gained a new and extensive field of fire which covered the whole of the Beaucourt valley and the western slope of the spur between Grandcourt and Serre, and was able most effectively to support the advance of the infantry as far as the crest of the spur.

On the night of February 10 troops of the 32nd, a north country, division, stormed the south-eastern approaches to Serre. They had to cover eight hundred yards of difficult ground that dipped and rose and then dipped again, and ended beneath the main plateau from which the enemy looked down. Moreover, there was a deep gully cutting across the line of attack, and in this gully was a German outpost force with machine-guns and the usual underground retreats. The movement had to be conducted by stealth, with no sight or sound to give the enemy warning. The guns bombarded the hostile position without creating any alarm, as bursts of artillery fire had been the regular characteristic of the British winter campaign.

Nearly half an hour after the barrage opened, the north-countrymen covered the half a mile of No Man's Land and, after a fight in the ravine, obtained their objective, with the exception of two strong points, which held out for a few days longer. The importance of the gain was shown next morning by the heavy counter-attack which the German commander vainly delivered with a view to getting back the edge of the plateau. Only a few of his men arrived within bombing distance of his lost line. The British artillery, firing from both the southern and the western

ATTACKING IN THE FOG

sides of the downland, with the assistance of machine-gun fire, succeeded in repulsing both this and further counter-attacks on the two following days.

The village of Serre, still held by the Germans, had now become the apex of a salient which was increasingly difficult to hold. A new British operation was therefore undertaken which had for its object the capture of the spur from the main Morval-Thiepval ridge about Courcellette. The possession of the high ground at the northern extremity of this ridge would command the approaches to Pys and Miraumont on the south and of the upper valley of the Ancre in which lay many hostile batteries.

On February 17 at 5.45 a.m. the attack was made by the 2nd, 18th and 63rd divisions, and was delivered simultaneously on both banks of the Ancre. The ground was thawing and greasy and shrouded in a thick mist. The fog prevented observation and hindered artillery action. In spite of these disadvantages all objectives on the northern bank of the Ancre were won with little difficulty and the line of posts forming the enemy's centre was also secured; but in the south there was a fierce struggle over a steep and isolated hill that commanded Miraumont, Petit Miraumont and Pys.

The English troops secured their first goal, consisting of a few trenches at the base of the hill, and then, by a bitter fight lasting two hours, they climbed up the height and pushed the Germans well over the crest. A fresh, strong German force, however, came unperceived through the mist and attacked the English right flank, compelling a withdrawal to the foot of the high position. In spite of this check, the movement generally was a success. The British line was advanced five hundred yards on a front of two miles, 600 Prussians were captured, and Miraumont was completely dominated from the new high ground captured north of Baillescourt Farm. The hill above the farm was the supreme key-position to the German front on the Ancre. It overlooked the enemy's intricate rear positions on the Serre plateau, and enabled a volume of fire to be directed on three sides of the peninsula of downland to which the Germans were clinging. It also overlooked the upper valley of the Ancre, running north of Pys, and thus prevented the enemy from concealing his forces on the open, rolling ground by the Ancre.

In addition to these two advantages of this position, the Baillescourt Hill rose well above the northern valley of Puisieux

THE GERMAN RETREAT

brook, and afforded direct observation across a large space of ground to the enemy's railway junction at Achiet-le-Grand. The German main gun-positions came under observation. In many cases the flashes from the hostile guns could be seen by British forward observing-officers, and these officers could also steadily and minutely measure the answering effect of the fire of their own howitzers.

The consequence of this was that the Germans had either to submit to the rapid destruction of both their artillery and their infantry or retire under cover of the mist. The German commander made one last desperate attempt on Saturday, February 24, 1917, to recover the hill that dominated his line. In the darkness of early morning his troops came on in fierce waves of assault, only to be swept by shrapnel and raked by machine-guns. Large fresh reinforcements were employed in this forlorn hope, and their determined gallantry showed that the German army still had plenty of fight left in it.

Ludendorff could neither stand nor counter in strength, on the original great German fortified line of downland running down from Gommecourt. His front-line troops could not be properly fed or reinforced, as their communications were dominated by the deep crescent of British artillery. The German railway line was destroyed, only a ditch of shell-craters indicating where the track had been laid. For some time signs of a general retirement from the Gommecourt salient had been visible, and British preparations were speeded up for a modern kind of pursuit. Had the frost held and the air remained fairly clear the German commander would have had great difficulty in effecting a withdrawal. His forces would have been smothered with shell fire, controlled from high observing positions.

The fog that came at the same time as the thaw in the latter part of February saved the enemy from the gravest disaster. The persistent thickness of the air enabled him to get most of his guns away, though he paid a heavy toll while traversing the zones of curtain fire maintained on three sides of the salient by the British artillery. The German gunners began their operations by working their ordnance in a remarkable manner. They seemed to have received a sudden abundance of shell, enabling them to cope with the increasing power of the British artillery. They were, however, merely firing off their shell-dumps because they had no time to remove them. In the evening of February 23,

TRAP MINES LAID

1917, just after the breaking of the German counter-attack against the Baillecourt Hill, the German army drew back without a battle on the western front, in patent confession of defeat.

The signal of the British victory was a line of flames from the German trenches. The enemy was burning his timber-lined dug-outs with a view to making them useless to the new occupants. Through the blurring fog and amid a sea of thawing mud British patrols went forward and cautiously felt their way among wire entanglements and ruined and steaming earthworks. Obstructing parties of German troops were scattered in shell-holes and supported by machine-gun posts all along the enemy's rear. At every likely place traps were laid for the advancing British forces. Trip-mines and other devices, such as had been employed in the Dardanelles evacuation, were largely used. Objects likely to be picked up as souvenirs were filled with high explosives. Charges were laid in the streets and in the underground galleries between the concrete forts from which machine-gun batteries had played. In some cases the larger mines were exploded just as the last Germans tramped away. This was done so that no cover should remain against the barrage of heavy shelling intended to hinder the progress of the main forces.

These forces, however, did not move forward into the traps set for them. They sent out increasing numbers of patrols to secure the ground and discover where the 1st German army proposed to make its next stand. Petit Miraumont was first occupied in the night of February 23. About the same time a forward movement was made north of the Ancre down the road to Miraumont village. By the morning of February 25 all the German line from Serre and Pys to the Butte de Warlencourt was being occupied by the British patrols. In some places the German retirement reached in the evening a depth of two miles. This historic retreat was strangely devoid of any large dramatic interest. Only occasionally did a knot of Germans open a fierce little rearguard action and need handling by a slowly exploring, enveloping movement by the patrols.

The hostile snipers showed high spirit, and fully carried out their orders to display as much activity as possible. Although, however, the enemy command selected special men for this delaying rearguard work and promised them special privileges, they were not always equal to the task assigned to them. For example, a Guards battalion was ordered to hold the fortress of

THE GERMAN RETREAT

Gommecourt to the very last moment. Gommecourt was the pivot on which the German line was swinging back. But when a British patrol entered Gommecourt in the evening of February 27 no resistance whatever was made.

The morning after the capture of Gommecourt the British line was pushed forward a thousand yards north-east of the fortified down, and the defences immediately in front of the city of Bapaume were driven in by the capture of the villages of Le Barque and Ligny. At the same time the western and northern trench systems around Puisieux were occupied. During the month of February eleven villages were either captured by the British or surrendered to them by the Germans. Some 2,100 German troops were captured, including 36 officers. The villages recovered were Grandcourt, Petit Miraumont, Miraumont, Serre, Warlencourt, Pys, Le Barque, Ligny, Gommecourt, Thillois, and Puisieux.

Sir Hubert Gough's army would probably have worked forward more quickly and with less loss had the pilots of the Royal Flying Corps been provided with all the machines of superior type of which they could make use. It will be remembered that, at the close of the battle of the Somme, Sir Douglas Haig especially demanded in his despatch that aeroplanes of the most modern type should be abundantly provided.

This demand had not yet been met in any very adequate fashion and the result was that when the Germans covered their retreat by sending up scores of fighting machines of first-rate quality in the early spring of 1917, the Royal Flying Corps had only a comparatively small number of the latest and most powerful British machines with which to contend for the practical mastery of the air. At the beginning of the German retreat the enemy employed two large forces of machines of the newest type, under the famous von Richthofen and Captain von Bülow. In superior masses these two formations swooped upon the smaller squadrons of new fighting machines sent up by the British commanders. The personal skill, individual courage, and large sacrifices of life of British pilots happily prevented any important check to the advance of the attacking army.

Apparently, there had been no time between the receipt of Sir Douglas Haig's despatch and the opening of the German movement of withdrawal to effect in aerial matériel a revolution similar to that which Mr. Lloyd George had effected in the

A GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURE

production of heavy artillery supplies. The new German machines were not superior to the newest British machines; but, unfortunately, they were at first more numerous. Consequently, the British army was not able to maintain during the closing operations on the Ancre front that practical mastery of the air which it had managed to assert during some of the most critical days of the battles on the Somme front.

The continual misty weather aggravated the difficulties of the advancing British army and lightened the task of the retreating German army. On the whole, the enemy escaped from an impossible position almost as lightly as the British and French Mediterranean armies escaped from their lines on the Gallipoli peninsula. The Germans got practically all their guns away.

By the beginning of March, 1917, the German 1st army had been retired to the Monchy-Bapaume Ridge. This ridge runs from Monchy, south-east of Arras, to Bapaume, south-west of Cambrai. The new German position formed a large salient, projecting between Arras and Bapaume. The salient was about fourteen miles broad along the Arras-Bapaume highway, and about eight miles deep at its extreme point on the Hill of Monchy. The heavy British artillery dominated the whole of this salient. Extending for four miles in front of the Monchy point was a great plateau of land, more than three hundred and twenty-five feet above sea level, running from Berles to Gommecourt, and occupied by British infantry and artillery observation-officers. The enemy held only a small patch of land of the same altitude at Monchy, with still smaller patches near Essarts and near Bucquoy. Between the isolated high downs retained by the enemy were gaps, through which British gunnery officers could both fire and observe.

The Monchy-Bapaume ridge is one of the most important geographical features of France. It forms the dividing watershed between the North Sea and the English Channel, separating the drainage of the Scheldt from the basin of the Somme river. The hills of which the ridge is composed are not formidable in themselves, for the highest point of all the rolling, broken country is not more than four hundred and sixty feet above sea level. The topmost heights are barely more than sixty-five feet above the valleys. In most places the enemy had only winding vales, about sixty feet deep, in which to shelter his howitzers and his brigade reserves. Into these shallow vales

THE GERMAN RETREAT

the British guns threw a plunging fire from the higher ground which they occupied.

It was thus clear that General von Ludendorff had achieved nothing by his retreat from the hills above the Ancre. He had merely narrowed the Monchy salient by some three miles. Over these three miles, between Gommecourt and Loupart Wood, the British commander speedily pushed all his artillery. The consequence was that his guns came three miles closer to the heart of the German salient, and thereby obtained a much greater power of fire over the enemy garrisons.

On the other hand, the German commander acquired considerable advantages of position against infantry attack. In order to reach his new lines the British troops had to cross, by the upper Ancre, a wide, shallow valley raked by high-placed machine-guns and artillery of every kind. It was the intention of the German High Command to make a long stand on the Monchy-Bapaume Ridge, and use it as the main pivot for a great retreat southward at Noyon. The enemy had spent months in erecting a formidable new double barrier behind Gommecourt and Irlès, and was still engaged making many new trenches. In advance of his two new lines of defence he retained a connected string of outpost positions, of which the more important were Nightingale Wood, which was situated on a spur between Gommecourt and Puisieux, and the village of Irlès and Loupart Wood.

The weather in the first week of March was foggy and favoured the enemy by hindering observation for the British artillery. Some ten days were spent by Sir Hubert Gough in bringing his guns forward, constructing new roads and lengthening railways. His infantry profited by the haze and advanced to a depth of a quarter of a mile near Gommecourt on March 3. In the movement from Gommecourt more progress was made for another half mile, and the Prussian Guardsmen were driven from the forested spur of Nightingale Wood and from their more northern positions in Biez Wood. The Guardsmen retired in the night from the high wooded ground which dominated the way of advance between Gommecourt and Bucquoy. After the surrender of the woods another intricate system of defences was abandoned without a struggle. This was the farmstead of Rettemoy, which was so fortified and so connected with switch-lines that it exceeded in strength the farm of Mouquet.

A HILL AND A WOOD

On March 6 there were snowstorms along the western front, but around the Somme the air cleared and the Royal Flying Corps became very active, photographing the enemy's new positions, bombing his depots, and controlling a series of fierce outbursts of artillery fire. With drying winds and clearing air the enemy would have been placed in grave difficulties. General Gough had an excellent force of road-builders and railway constructors, and they drove forward the British communications with a surprising speed. Entire parks of field-howitzers pursued the enemy over the broken downland country and kept remarkably close behind the advancing infantry. But mist and mud continued to serve the enemy. His vast preparations for retreat were veiled in haze or completely blanketed by fog. General Gough could do little more than prepare for pursuit, as General Rawlinson was also doing.

On March 10 the fortified village of Irles, lying in front of Pys and defending the height known as Hill 129, was carried by an enveloping movement. The divisions employed were the 2nd and the 18th. The position was held by a battalion of the Prussian Guard, which was acting merely as a rearguard, and intended to retire to Hill 129 when the new defences were completed. Only two hours before the German plan of retirement was executed the British field-howitzers opened their bombardment. Under cover of the massed fire one British force of infantry worked up from the south, while another swung round northward towards the shoulder of the down. At the same time a detachment of Fusiliers swept up a sunken road which was held by hostile machine-gun crews, and broke the farther flank of the Irles garrison. The Germans were mastered after very little fighting. The whole of the British objectives were captured, 289 prisoners were taken, together with sixteen machine-guns and four trench-mortars. British casualties were slight.

Irles Hill was a little lower than Loupart Wood, which had been occupied on the night of March 12-13. Yet it was the key-position to practically the whole of the Bapaume Ridge; for its possession enabled the British forces to turn the western side of the main down. The day after the capture of Irles Hill the Germans made open preparations for a prolonged retirement over a winding front of about one hundred miles. From a point near Arras to a point near Soissons the German forces prepared to withdraw towards Cambrai, St. Quentin, and Laon.

THE GERMAN RETREAT

As was afterwards discovered by British patrols, an enormous amount of new fortification work was being carried on when Irlès Hill was lost. Vast triple-thick barbed-wire entanglements had been recently erected. Intricate new trench systems were being excavated, and the ground was marked for further long extensions at Achiet-le-Grand and elsewhere.

Thousands of German troops were being employed in transforming the ridge of chalk into a mighty modern fortress system. Clearly it was intended to use the ridge as an obstacle that would delay the army of Sir Hubert Gough for several months. Immediately after the fall of Irlès Hill, however, the French people in towns and villages and hamlets in German possession, from the vicinity of Arras to the neighbourhood of Soissons, became aware that a great general enemy retirement was being hurriedly prepared. Ludendorff had a double aim. He wished to escape from the overwhelming British gun fire around the Ancre and the Somme, and to avoid being compelled to waste his reserves there in another gigantic pitched battle. He calculated that Sir Douglas Haig would require months of new preparation to organize the country which was to be abandoned to him, or to move his main armies for a prolonged offensive in another direction.

Indications of the importance of the contemplated German withdrawal were not absent. The extent and geographical position of the new Hindenburg line were well known to the British staff. This new system branched off from the original German defences near Arras, ran twelve miles south-eastwards to Queant and thence passed west of Cambrai to St. Quentin. Sir Douglas Haig wrote in his dispatch:

The enemy's immediate concern appeared to be to escape from the salient between Arras and Le Transloy, which would become increasingly difficult and dangerous to hold as our advance on the Ancre drove ever more deeply into his defences. It was also evident, however, from the preparations he was making that he contemplated an eventual evacuation of the greater salient between Arras and the Aisne valley north-west of Rheims.

British outposts were therefore ordered to be everywhere vigilant to detect any local withdrawal. On March 14 patrols in the neighbourhood of St. Pierre Vaast wood found sections of the German trenches had been abandoned. In the clear

A REVERSE FOR THE PRUSSIAN GUARDS

sunshine of March 15 it seemed unlikely that the enemy would escape from the great salient without severe damage. Had not a renewal of bad weather handicapped aerial observation, his casualties from gun fire would have been very serious. In rear-guard actions at Achiet on March 15 and above Gommecourt on March 16 he was repulsed with heavy losses.

The British commander pressed forward more strongly in the face of the enemy's show of resistance. Instead of striking back at the points from which an attempt had been made to strike him, he suddenly thrust clean through the German front at Bapaume. Between Arras and Noyon were two German salients with a wider British salient extending between them. Sir D. Haig left the German forces in their own two wedges, and struck directly eastward from each side of the Albert-Cambrai high road, along which he had been fighting since July 1, 1916.

The German commander feared that a violent attempt to break his line would be delivered from the extreme point of the British salient. He placed a fresh force of Prussian Guards around Bapaume and excavated a new and strong system of earthworks on either side of the Albert road. Three great belts of new and unbroken wire covered the new system of defences, on which the German guards were still working when the final barrage fell on March 17. From the west and south-west approaches to the city strong Australian and British patrols came forward with ladders, bombs, and machine-guns. They climbed over the unbroken wire and, in a fierce, short action, scattered the Prussian Guards. As one company fled it was caught in a machine gun barrage and destroyed. The Australians then entered the town.

Soon after Bapaume fell, Le Transloy, forming the southernmost defence of Bapaume, was surrendered by the enemy without a shot, the garrison retiring eastward to the village of Rocquigny. They were pursued by British patrols and thrown out of Rocquigny by nightfall. Then, on the other side of Bapaume, a more daring and rapid method of advance was made. A force of British cavalry worked past the high wood of Logeast, and, penetrating east of the new system of defences at Achiet-le-Grand, turned the whole German line and reached open country towards Béhagnies. Achiet-le-Petit and Biefvillers were taken, and British airmen, cavalry, and infantry scouts were, by the evening, moving beyond the shell-ploughed battlefields.

THE GERMAN RETREAT

Bapaume had been reduced to a ruin, but was still an admirable concentration base for further operations eastward. While these were taking place other British forces were working into and around Péronne. Patrols had begun to feel their way, in the afternoon of March 17, towards the dominant mass of Mont St. Quentin. It was against the hill of St. Quentin that the armies of General Fayolle had been stayed both north and south of the Somme. The French ordnance department had even had a special gun made for action against Mont St. Quentin without, however, succeeding in mastering the hostile batteries concealed in and about the historic down. With the breaking of the enemy's line at Iries Hill, which directly opened Bapaume, Mont St. Quentin was in great danger of being stormed by a sudden flank attack. The Germans hastily removed their powerful batteries. On March 17 there were only a few machine-gun teams and snipers clinging to the crest and watching the British movements at Biaches and in the Tortille ravine. At midnight strong scouting-parties were gathering at the foot of the height and clearing Moislains and the hamlets by the bend of the Somme. In the morning of March 18 a party of Germans was seen retiring from Mont St. Quentin to avoid envelopment, and soon afterward both the height and Péronne town were occupied by the British army.

By the evening of March 18 the British armies had advanced on a front of forty-five miles to a depth of ten miles in some places. In addition to the four towns of Bapaume, Péronne, Nesle, and Chaulnes, some fifty-five villages were recovered from the enemy, and two hundred square miles of land. The French armies from Roye to Soissons swept over a still larger tract of country, recovering Roye, Lassigny, and Noyon, and reaching towards Ham and liberating nearly a hundred villages. The scattered fighting between British reconnoitring-parties and German rearguards was continuous. The enemy employed Uhlans and mounted Jägers to cover his retirement, and against these enemy mounted forces British cavalry patrols worked forward in difficult circumstances. Machine-gun ambushes, with hidden barbed-wire defences and other devices, were naturally employed by the enemy. If a party of German cavalry were sighted and seen galloping away, it was rather unwise to pursue them at the charge; for near the tail of an apparent flight a hostile ambushcade was to be suspected.

AUSTRALIANS IN ACTION

Equancourt fell on March 26, and the same day the British cavalry also took the large village of Longavesnes, on the way to Epéhy. The country round about was wooded. Under cover of the trees several troops converged upon the village, and, charging through musketry and machine-gun fire, drove the enemy back towards the Hindenburg line. Advancing from the new lines they had won, the cavalry forces on March 28 broke a series of German rearguards at Villers-Faucon and Saulcourt and other villages, five and a half miles from St. Quentin.

At points along the line, the German resistance stiffened. After a heavy snowstorm on March 22, for example, the German commander threw out stronger forces and increased his resistance between Arras and St. Quentin. Ruined villages, which were thought to be occupied by British cavalry, were shelled, and the important railway junction of Roisel, seven miles beyond Péronne, was the scene of several fierce little actions. It changed hands three times in two days, but was finally abandoned. At the village of Beaumetz, standing on high ground between Cambrai and Bapaume, an Australian patrol drew heavy fire. It went back for reinforcement by field-artillery, and then skirmished forward. Morchies, a neighbouring hamlet, was occupied without a struggle, and Beaumetz was outflanked, bombarded, and occupied, the enemy retiring before he could be seriously engaged.

The German staff, on hearing the news, gave orders for the village to be reconquered at any cost. The easy surrender was a grave error which interfered with Ludendorff's plan and endangered the Hindenburg line, which ran near by. After a lull of two days a special German force made a surprise attack upon a small Australian sniping-party holding, with one machine-gun, a post in front of the village. The little band of Australians charged, but though most of them fell, the survivors brought back their gun into safety. At other points the Germans worked through the Australians' outpost line, but were broken in a wild street-fight and driven back down the Bapaume road. The next day the Germans attacked in stronger force, but were repulsed.

On March 26 while these events were proceeding the main Australian force attempted a diversion. The point selected for attack was the village of Lagnicourt. It was a dominant position, close to the most critical point in the enemy's new defences. As British aerial observers had found, Lagnicourt village

THE GERMAN RETREAT

was the most delicate spot over the heart of the new front that Ludendorff had constructed. Fighting was going on at Croisilles northward, as well as at Beaumetz southward, when the Australian patrols, extending from Morchies, surprised the German garrison of Lagnicourt and captured the key-position with few casualties. The ease and the speed with which the outer defence of the main junction of the great Hindenburg line had been stormed alarmed the German commander. He ceased the struggle to recover Beaumetz and massed at Quéant the best troops he had available for the recovery of Lagnicourt. He counter-attacked twice but was repulsed on both occasions. It was reckoned that the enemy had some fifteen batteries of machine-guns grouped in one small depression between Lagnicourt and the neighbouring village. He raked the ridge with them, while his heavy guns, in permanent new emplacements behind the Hindenburg system, bombarded the lost ground. The Australians during the night began to advance along the road to Louverval and Doignies.

Then there followed a series of British thrusts all along the line between Arras and St. Quentin. On March 28 the enemy positions at Croisilles were tested, and found to be strongly held, yet ground was won against fierce resistance. The next day the south-western approaches to Cambrai were attacked, the village of Neuville-Bourjonval being stormed and held against a fierce counter-stroke. On March 30 Ruyaulcourt, a little farther north, was taken, opening the way to Havrincourt Wood, destined to become famous as one of the grand fortresses of the Hindenburg entrenched line. Immediately afterwards another line of convergence was cleared towards Cambrai, still in a south-westerly direction, by a succession of spirited attacks around the Péronne and Cambrai high-road at Fins, Sorel, and Heudicourt.

North-west of Cambrai, and above Bullecourt, there was a very weak point in the terrain that Ludendorff had carefully selected for a decisive battle. The little Cojeul stream, tributary to the Scarpe river, flowed from Henin, over low ground. This tract of low ground was liable to be surrounded on either side and transformed into a death-trap salient. The British commander-in-chief arranged for General Gough and General Allenby and General Horne to co-operate in this scene of action. Thus the battle of Arras was prepared. As a preliminary measure some of the enemy's posts at Hénin were rushed at the end of March,

FIGHTING AROUND ST. QUENTIN

while he was being severely pressed by British and French forces far southward at St. Quentin. Then, on April 2, when the St. Quentin battle was growing more violent, General Gough's forces of Australian and British troops fought forward towards the Cambrai sector of the Hindenburg system and penetrated the outworks on a front of ten miles. Hénin was entirely taken, together with Croisilles, Ecoust St. Mein, Noreuil, Longatte, Louverval, and Doignies.

Louverval, with its château by the Cambrai road, was stormed; while Croisilles and the other northern villages were more gradually reduced by house-to-house fighting. Then it was that the German staff reacted with violence. Their heavy howitzers, emplaced in the Hindenburg system, shattered the lost villages and entirely destroyed Louverval Château. The Germans directed heavy artillery fire against these lost villages and made determined counter-attacks to regain them. Seven were broken in the course of the day at Doignies, while at Croisilles, which the enemy was grimly resolved to retake at any sacrifice, the struggle was continuous. Several times the Germans broke into the villages, but were finally forced to abandon the attempt to retake them. On the same day the new German line was bent back round St. Quentin by the southernmost British army. Savy village and Savy Wood, west of the city, had already been carried by Midland troops' hard fighting.

Developing this advantage, the British commander, on April 2, hunted the Germans round both sides of Holnon Wood, captured Bihécourt, and Villécholles, Francilly, Selency, and St. Quentin Wood, thus enveloping the town, west and north at a distance of two miles. Near Savy Wood a battery of six German field-guns was taken by the Midlanders, but could not be at once removed. The German commander, in the night of April 3, made a violent effort to recover his guns, the capture of which had been mentioned in Sir Douglas Haig's report. A strong force of storming troops worked forward for a rush in the darkness, but were completely broken in a hand-to-hand tussle. The guns were then brought into the British lines. Meeting with more resistance, as Ludendorff threw in reserves, the southernmost British forces continued slowly and stubbornly to thrust farther into the St. Quentin sector of the Hindenburg system. Maissemy, Pontru and Le Verguier were occupied, near the St. Quentin-Cambrai highway, by April 8.

THE GERMAN RETREAT

In the next enemy sector northward, in front of Le Catelet, there was a similar series of vehement British thrusts. After the cavalry had taken Liéramont, Epéhy and Peizière were captured, though held by strong hostile detachments. On April 5 the British patrols, having surprised and scattered the Bavarians at St. Emilie and Templeux, stormed into Ronnsoy.

To the north-west of Epéhy, another line of approach to the Hindenburg system had been rapidly won by a driving sweep through Metz-en-Couture on April 3. Two days later the outskirts of Gouzeaucourt and the southern edge of Havrincourt were reached. As Havrincourt wood was likewise occupied along its northern edge, it seemed likely at the time quickly to fall. This great jutting wood was surrounded on three sides, and some British forces had entered it. Yet it did not fall. For months it remained a breakwater against all the British waves of attack that beat on its front and flanks. Like Greenland hill, Riencourt hill, and the suburbs of Lens, Havrincourt wood was one of the grand bastions of the enemy's line.

There is no doubt that the German High Command was seriously disconcerted by the speed with which British advance-guards, with mobile artillery, moved across the evacuated territory. At Emilie, Ronnsoy, Savy, and other barrier positions the German garrisons were dazed and staggered by the rapidity of the assault.

During the period when these operations were taking place on the British front the French, on their right, were also pushing forward, and on the day on which the British entered Bapaume and Péronne the French entered Roye and Noyon. Three days later they had passed Chauny, the railway junction at Tegnier, close to La Fère. The point of contact between the British right and the French left now lay immediately before St. Quentin, a position of vital importance to the German line as road and railway junction. The effort of the Allies in combination was apparently concentrating upon this point, though the French were also attacking vigorously to the south of La Fère, in the direction of Laon.

CHAPTER 6

America Enters the War

FOR nearly three years the United States of America, under the leadership of the president, T. Woodrow Wilson, managed to keep out of the war that had spread over a good part of the Old World, although the country had difficulties about shipping and associated matters with both Great Britain and Germany. This policy of peace was supported, undoubtedly, by the great majority of the American people, then revelling in a prosperity unusual even in that country, but as time went on Germany, feeling more and more the steady pressure of Britain's sea power, was compelled to make further attacks on the accepted rights of neutrals, of whom the United States was much the most powerful.

In March, 1916, the head of the German navy, Admiral von Tirpitz, announced the opening of a more intensive submarine campaign to be directed against all ships trading with the British Isles. This was a direct movement against the legitimate commerce of the United States, and a defiance of the international laws that President Wilson was resolved to maintain. An attempt was made by the party of compromise in Germany, led by Herr Bethmann-Hollweg and Dr. Helfferich, to appease the American people by accusing Great Britain of illegally cutting off neutral trade with Germany. A Note of this nature was presented by Count Bernstorff, the German Ambassador at Washington, to Mr. Lansing, the American secretary of state. Count Bernstorff also set energetically in motion all the press and political machinery he controlled in the United States with a view to making the people think that German and British methods were each as bad as the other. At the same time the attacks upon both neutral and allied shipping were resumed with spasmodic violence.

In April, 1916, the president set out, in an address to Congress, the substance of the note to Germany, in which he threatened a rupture over the submarine campaign. He pointed out that the Government of the United States had from the beginning

AMERICA ENTERS THE WAR

protested that the German submarine policy could not be pursued without gross and palpable violation of the law of nations. In spite of the assurances given by the German government, there had been no check at all upon the destruction of ships of all kinds.

The German Government seemed at first inclined to defy the United States Government. Discussions went on for some time at imperial headquarters, to which Mr. J.W. Gerard, the American ambassador in Berlin, was invited, with Herr Bethmann-Hollweg and Dr. Helfferich. According to a German report, Dr. Helfferich, as minister of finance, took an important part in bearing down all naval and military opposition to a compromise with the United States. In his view the financial and commercial situation was such that peace without victory, but with the friendship of the American people, was necessary to enable the new Middle Europe system to survive and develop in full strength and security. The lack of sufficient submarines and trained submarine crews finally decided the matter—for the time. On May 4 a note was handed to Mr. Gerard in Berlin, replying to the American note of April 20, and practically yielding to the principal demand made by President Wilson.

In the circumstances, however, it is not surprising that a good deal of attention was paid to that country's defences. The American first line was the navy, but it had suffered from some years of comparative stagnation. The secretary of the navy was Josephus Daniels, of North Carolina, and under his energetic administration Congress agreed, though with considerable reluctance, to an increase in warship construction. In 1916 Mr. Daniels obtained the assent of Congress to a very much larger expansion of the fleet, the money appropriated to the navy being upwards of 64,000,000 sterling or more than double the sum voted for the previous year. Ten battleships of the largest type, six battle cruisers, ten scout-cruisers, 58 coast submarines, nine fleet submarines, 50 torpedo boat destroyers, and other vessels of various types were authorised to be built; but the carrying out of such an extensive programme had to be spread necessarily over a lengthy period. It was provided, however, that four battleships, four battle cruisers, four scouts, 30 submarines, and 20 destroyers were to be laid down in the first year. The capital ships were to be super-Dreadnoughts, taking three years or more to build, and armed with 16 in. guns.

NAVY AND ARMY

Secretary Daniels did something more than plan and start these great additions to the fleet. To assist the official naval board he organized a board of civilians, which came to be known as the naval consulting board. It was composed of men of science and of experts, among the first of its members being Thomas Edison, and it was, therefore, able to give the naval authorities valuable technical and practical help in many ways, both before and after the entry of the United States into the war, and it concentrated on plans for destroying the U boats.

Another of the president's ministers, William Gibbs McAdoo, secretary of the treasury, brought into existence a shipping board which dealt with the mercantile marine. Up to this time legislation had discouraged both shipowners and shipbuilders. More than nine-tenths of the overseas carrying trade of the country was in non-American vessels. But as the war went on and produced a marked shortage of shipping on all the seas, there was a wonderful renaissance of the American marine. After Great Britain and Germany, the United States had the finest ocean shipbuilding plant in the world, and now had come a magnificent opportunity for its fullest employment. This it was that induced Congress, after two years of opposition, to accept Mr. McAdoo's scheme for the formation of the shipping board, which was launched with a vote of £10,000,000.

As with the navy so with the army, the United States made no move in 1916 that was in the least indicative of putting itself on a war footing. A new act provided for a small increase in the regular force, which was to be operative by five annual augmentations of its strength, beginning on July 1 in that year. The regulars were still around the 100,000-men mark, as they had been, in fact, for a long time. So far as size went, the American army was even more "contemptible" than was the British in 1914. As an American writer phrased it: "Our army was less than Sir John French's first seven divisions, and the sole powder plant owned by the war department had a daily capacity of 11,000 lb.—not enough to last the guns of New York harbour for one minute of firing." The army budget for 1916-17 estimated expenditure at nearly £54,000,000, a figure that showed a rise; but that considerable sum was discounted, as had been other large sums allocated previously for the same purpose, by the well-known expensiveness of the American soldier. What was perhaps the most remarkable development

AMERICA ENTERS THE WAR

in the republic, prior to its declaration of hostilities against Germany, came out of the army appropriation act, which was approved on August 29, 1916. That definitely organized a council of national defence, which consisted of six members of the administration.

The council of defence was charged with the "co-ordination of industries and resources for the national security and welfare," and with the "creation of relations which will render possible in the time of need the immediate concentration and utilisation of the resources of the nation." In performing its functions the council was directed to supervise investigation, and make recommendations to the president and the heads of executive departments with respect to the railways of the United States, its highways, and waterways, in so far as they were available for defensive military movements, whether for the concentration of troops at specific points or for the assembling of supplies where required. It was also commissioned to report on the mobilisation of naval as well as military resources, and to say what steps should be taken for increasing the domestic production of articles essential for the support of armies and fleets and of the people during an interruption of foreign commerce. Further, its business was concerned with an enquiry into the possibilities of sea-going transportation.

Towards the end of the year, 1916, the clamour and confusion of the presidential election campaign overwhelmed everything else in the national life of the United States. The influence of the war in Europe told upon the political crisis in various indirect ways; but it had no immediate bearing upon the struggle between the Democrats and the Republicans. It was reported that the Republican candidate, Mr. C. E. Hughes, would receive the entire German vote, not because he favoured Germany, but because the Central Empires wished to make Mr. Wilson a permanent example of the power they exercised in American politics. Throughout the election campaign Mr. Hughes preserved a diplomatic reticence, but his lieutenant, Mr. Theodore Roosevelt, attacked the Germans in a most vigorous manner, and practically made it clear that the Republican party would, if it carried its candidate to power, be rather less pacific than the Democratic party had been. When the voting took place Mr. Wilson was returned by a large majority, to which, strangely enough, the West and Middle West contributed largely.

PLOTTING IN MEXICO

Early in 1917 the American secret service handed to the president a remarkable document. It was a copy of some instructions sent by the German foreign secretary, Herr Zimmermann, to the German ambassador in Mexico, directing him to plot against the United States. It was despatched by devious channels and was in a special secret code which, however, the American services succeeded in unravelling.

January 19th, 1917.

On February 1 we intend to begin unrestricted warfare. In spite of this it is our endeavour to keep the United States neutral. If this attempt is not successful we propose an alliance with Mexico on the following basis: That we shall make war together, and together make peace. We shall give general financial support, and it is understood that Mexico is to reconquer her lost territory in New Mexico, Texas, and Arizona. Details are left to you for settlement. You are instructed to inform the president of Mexico, or myself, in greatest confidence, as soon as it is certain there will be an outbreak of war with the United States, and suggest that the president of Mexico, on his own initiative, should communicate with Japan, suggesting adherence at once to this plan, and, at the same time, offer to mediate between Germany and Japan. Please call the attention of the president of Mexico to the fact that the employment of ruthless submarine warfare now promises to compel Great Britain to make peace in a few months.—(Signed) ZIMMERMANN.

About the same time the American secret service also tapped a secret code message to Count Bernstorff, directing him to damage the engines and machinery of all German and Austrian vessels in American ports.

On January 31, 1917, the German authorities formally withdrew their pledge to President Wilson and proclaimed a new campaign of unlimited submarine piracy; and, as though intentionally to add insult to injury, Herr Zimmermann informed the American secretary of state that one American passenger steamer would be allowed to enter Falmouth once a week, on the farcical condition that the vessel was painted with vertical stripes, three yards wide, alternating white and red, with a red-and-white checkered flag showing on each mast.

On the same day as Herr Zimmermann's note was despatched, Herr Bethmann-Hollweg made in the Reichstag a speech containing a blunder as disastrous to his country as the "scrap of

AMERICA ENTERS THE WAR

paper " conversation by which he sought to keep Great Britain from helping Belgium. His aim in this new case was to prevent the United States from fighting for her old, sound, international sea rights. But far from attempting to placate the Americans, he went out of his way with cynical stupidity, to inform them that he had been deceiving them.

President Wilson had a difficult domestic problem. He could have brought his nation at once into the war by going to Congress and revealing Zimmermann's despatch about Mexico, and instantly deepening the impression upon the American mind made by Herr Bethmann-Hollweg's speech. Such a storm of indignation would have swept the States that war would have been declared almost within a day. For various reasons, political as well as military, the president, however, decided to act in a gradual manner. Proceeding nominally only upon the open declarations of the German authorities, he severed relations with Germany by sending away Count Bernstorff and recalling Mr. Gerard. The Senate ratified his action by 78 votes against five.

About this time two American ships, the Housatonic and the Lyman M. Law, were sunk by Teutonic submarines. Then, on February 25, 1917, the Cunard liner *Laconia* was sunk off the Irish coast with the loss of the lives of two American citizens. These were clearly overt acts of hostility, and on February 26 President Wilson returned to Congress and asked for powers to protect the shipping of the country. He met with strong opposition which he countered by publishing the despatch sent on January 19 by the German foreign minister to the German ambassador in Mexico City. The effect of the disclosures was to unite the states in earnest preparation for war.

Had Herr Zimmermann been a traitor he could not well have done more to injure Germany and to benefit the United States than he accomplished by his attempt at a Mexican-Japanese plot. Had he merely arranged to subsidise an insignificant Mexican invasion of American territory, he would not greatly have disturbed the popular mind. But all along the Pacific coast there had for years been a certain fear of Japanese action. It was because Japan was leagued with the Allied Powers that a majority of the people of the Pacific states looked coldly upon the cause of the Allies and partly inclined to hope for something like a German victory. In proposing that Japan should be detached from the alliance by Mexico, the German

SUBMARINE BASES

foreign minister alarmed the western states and turned there the current of popular opinion against Germany.

The result was that when a remnant of pacifist senators defeated President Wilson's measure of armed neutrality in the Senate, by the sorry device of talking out the bill, the educative process in the nation was completed. "A little group of wilful men, representing no opinion but their own," said President Wilson in an unwonted mood of anger, "have made the great Government of the United States helpless and contemptible." A majority of the members of the two Houses were ready and anxious to take action against the Central Empires. The Senate passed, by 76 votes to three, a new closure rule which completely crippled the power of the opposition. American vessels were armed with guns, provided with picket boats for launching against submarines when approaching the danger zone, and sent out to encounter German and Austrian submarines.

The federal reserve board which, as late as November, 1916, had prohibited American banks from investing in foreign loans, withdrew the restriction, and thus enabled the Allies to obtain vast financial aid. Then, largely under American influence, the Chinese Government severed diplomatic relations with Germany and began to seize German ships. The Cuban Government likewise proceeded towards a working alliance against the Teutons; for it was revealed about the middle of March that the Cuban rising under the former president, Gomez, had been engineered by Germany, partly in the general design to embarrass the American Government, and with the more particular aim of establishing submarine bases near the American coast. One point, 150 miles from Florida, had been chosen by the Teuton plotters as a centre of operations against American commerce.

Meanwhile, Mr. Roosevelt had been strongly advocating the expediting of the meeting of Congress, specifically, in order to declare war on Germany; he demanded that the United States should strike hard for the national interest and honour. Other leaders of the Republican party spoke in similar fashion, and now were supported by some prominent Democrats. As the third week in March closed, the press announced that Mr. Wilson's Cabinet was united in support of a strenuous policy. The New York Times denounced "apologetic preparedness," and said it must stop.

Taking this advice, President Wilson called Congress together

AMERICA ENTERS THE WAR

two weeks earlier than had been arranged, and on April 2 asked the members to declare that a state of war existed between the United States and Germany. Abandoning the policy of armed neutrality which he had advocated on February 26, 1917, he preached full and strenuous war against Germany. He said:

There is one choice we cannot make and are incapable of making. We will not choose the path of submission and suffer the most sacred rights of our nation and our people to be ignored and violated. The wrongs against which we now array ourselves are not common wrongs; they cut to the very root of human life.

With a profound sense of the solemn event and the tragical character of the step I am taking, and of the grave responsibilities which it involves, but in unhesitating obedience to what I deem my constitutional duty, I advise that Congress declare that the recent course of the Imperial German Government is in fact nothing less than war against the Government and people of the United States, that it formally accepts the status of a belligerent which is thus thrust upon it, and that it take immediate steps, not only to put the country in a more thorough state of defence, but also to exert all its power and to employ its resources to bring the Government of the German Empire to terms and end the war.

The distinction which President Wilson made in a later part of his address between the autocratic German Government and the unfree German people was a skillful stroke of policy. It was directly intended for the large, hesitant, and powerful body of German-Americans who were either descended from immigrants rebellious to Prussian rule or were themselves men and women who had left the Central Empires in search of more freedom.

In addition to the direct intention of the president's policy, there was an indirect appeal to the German people to bring the war to an end by following the example of the Russians and establishing a democracy. The bitter violence with which the German press vituperated the president of the United States seemed to show that the shaft he aimed had gone home. Though the Germans remained far more docile than the Russians, the moral effect of the address was felt throughout the world. Most of the commonwealths of South America, which had been continually recalcitrant to the leadership of the United States, began to feel the influence of President Wilson's mind; and Brazil, on April 9, being strongly attached to the



VANGUARD OF THE LIBERATORS. Australian mounted troops passing through the wrecked Rue de Péronne, Bapaume. The Germans, as at Noyon, mined the streets when they abandoned the town in March, 1917.



Pershing



Liggett

THREE NOTABLE AMERICAN LEADERS. Left, General John Joseph Pershing on the entry of the U.S.A. into the Great War, 1917, was made commander-in-chief of the American expeditionary force. Centre, Thomas Woodrow Wilson took office as President of the United States, March 4, 1913, kept his country out of the war in 1914, was re-elected President in November, 1916, and soon afterwards the German unlimited U-boat campaign forced him to assent to America's entry into the struggle. Right, General Hunter Liggett led an army corps in France in 1917. In 1918 he commanded the American 1st Army.



BRITISH AND AMERICANS MEET IN FRANCE. The deciding factor in the war was the entry of the Americans (April, 1917) for without them the final issue must have been delayed for many months, perhaps years. Their first troops arrived in France under General Pershing in June of the same year and started on intensive training behind the lines. This photograph shows American and British officers meeting for the first time.

Imperial War Museum



AMERICAN TROOPS MARCHING THROUGH PARIS. The first contingent of American troops landed in France on June 25, 1917. But their numbers were few, and months of training were necessary before America could send a major force. The first big American engagement was at Château-Thierry in May, 1918.

FACTS AND FIGURES

republic of Portugal, broke off diplomatic relations with the Central Powers.

Congress, by large majorities in both Houses, voted for military preparations. National guards were called out to defend munition works, railways and military depots: plans were pushed forward for an immense loan and the financing of the Allies; and the output of merchant ships was speeded up. A large army was planned, and great munition works were extended. Everything that could possibly be done to quicken the organization of the striking power of the country was done by the enemy. The German press, German agents, and Hindenburg himself jeered at the American effort, and foretold it would come too late to determine the issue of the war. The destruction of American steamers increased, and the first blow against an American liner occurred in the first week of April, 1917. The German jeers at the intervention of the United States were really an expression of profound nervousness. Like Figaro in Beaumarchais' play, the enemy laughed to prevent himself from weeping.

The action of President Wilson, and the magnificent support he received from both Congress and country, proved a blessing and a confirmation to the struggling democracies of Europe. It nerved them for the great battles of the third year of war, and while producing at the time little direct change in the military situation, afforded immediate relief in other directions. In the first place, the problem of financing the war to a victorious conclusion was definitely solved. The national income of the United States had reached the enormous figure of £10,000,000,000 a year, which was five times the annual income of Germany. The annual balance of trade was more than £600,000,000. Such was the glut of gold that the banks were in a position to make a loan of £1,400,000,000, on the basis of their gold reserves, by putting out notes without any further authorization or legislation. The American Government, therefore, was at once enabled to make arrangements for a loan of this enormous size, and provide the Allies with a separate sum of £600,000,000 at the low interest of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

In the second place, the United States, while ensuring the ultimate economic defeat of the Teutons, was able to give equally important help in overcoming the effects of the enemy's campaign of submarine piracy. In the ports of the United States

AMERICA ENTERS THE WAR

were interned about 105 German and Austrian vessels. Then in the ports of Brazil, which was following the northern republic into the war, were another 49 enemy vessels, aggregating 250,000 tons. Few of these ships were ready for service, but among them were some of the largest liners of the Nord-deutscher-Lloyd and the Hamburg-Amerika Line, forming magnificent transports or hospital ships, and capable of being fitted for sea in a few months.

In addition to their vast haul of hostile shipping the American people possessed 3,300,000 tons of Atlantic and Pacific shipping. Furthermore, they had very large fleets of steamers on the Great Lakes, including many vessels serviceable in good weather for Transatlantic traffic. The resources of the American shipyards had been greatly developed during the war. As soon as the Americans saw that they were about to be drawn into the struggle, they attacked the fundamental shipping problem, that of conveying the surplus harvest of North America to Great Britain, France, and Italy early in the autumn of 1917, when all Europe would be hungering for corn.

The enemy reckoned that his submarine operations would so seriously reduce all shipping as to hold up the bulk of American foodstuffs. The federal shipping board, however, engaged Colonel Goethals to organise the new scheme for counter-ing this. The scheme consisted in reviving the American industry of timber-built ships, and making use of all the antiquated clipper-building yards, in order to obtain, from September, 1917, a monthly output of 200,000 tons of wooden ships. These ships were to be engined with oil-driven motors and armed for defence. Unlike iron cargo ships, which were big tin cans that sank when holed, the wooden freighters were designed to float, by the natural buoyancy of their timber work, even when they had sustained considerable damage.

This modernisation of the wooden ship had the additional merit of conserving the enormous steel production of the United States for other useful purposes. Among these was the creation of an improved type of submarine chaser, of which scores were ordered. The American fleet had developed battleship strength somewhat out of proportion to fast light cruiser and destroyer strength. In the new anti-submarine warfare, warships of a light and quick class were the principal weapons of the offensive-defensive necessary to save the mercantile marine. The

THE NAVY MOBILIZED

U.S.A. navy had barely sufficient of these light craft of the newest type to cover their capital ships in any general action. Happily, the American shore was far removed from all German war ports, so that the harm enemy submarines could do in American waters seemed to be limited. Arrangements were made for the United States navy to patrol the waters from Nova Scotia to the Caribbean Sea, to act with allied vessels in policing the Atlantic against commerce destroyers, and to assist the allied fleets in European waters.

In fighting strength the American fleet was the third in the world. It ranked somewhat below that of the German fleet in matériel, and had the further disadvantage of lacking the battle experience of Admiral von Scheer's personnel; but the men were inspired by the true sea spirit, and their officers, inheriting the glorious tradition of Farragut, were keen and resourceful.

By an early date in May the naval mobilisation was complete, and provision besides was made for the officers and men to man the additional ships and boats which were being—or were already—taken over by the navy as scouts, supply ships, motor boat scouts, transports, and other auxiliaries. In May, on the president's suggestion through the secretary of the navy, Congress voted to increase the enlisted strength of the navy to 150,000 men. On March 25 the personnel of the navy had stood at 61,000; a month later it reached 81,000, and in May it was well beyond 100,000, a gain of over 40,000 men, all voluntarily enlisted, in about two months. In the same time the marine corps rose to above 20,000 men, an increase of about 6,000. The officers for the ships were found to some extent in the regular navy itself and in the naval reserves.

In addition to the existing strength in ships of the navy, there were under construction, or authorised to be built, 15 battleships, six battle cruisers, 13 scouts, 57 destroyers, 101 submarines, two gunboats, four fuel ships, two transports, a supply ship, a hospital ship, two ammunition ships, three tenders, and a repair ship. Three of them were due to be completed in 1917—one of them, the super-Dreadnought New Mexico, was launched that April. All three were super-Dreadnoughts, as were also two other ships which were to be ready in 1918. Of the 32 battleships mobilised, 14 were Dreadnoughts or super-Dreadnoughts, their displacement ranging from 16,000 tons in the older vessels to 31,400 tons in the newer, and their

AMERICA ENTERS THE WAR

armament from eight 12 in. to twelve 14 in. guns. The two newest ships, the Pennsylvania and the Arizona, were of the 31,400 tonnage. Besides the twelve 14 in., they had twenty-two 5 in. guns, and their speed was 21 knots. The New Mexico and the other four capital ships completing were to have similar batteries and speeds, but had a slightly greater tonnage—32,000 tons. Rapid progress was made with the turning out of new submarine chasers of a better sort than had been built before. Some were constructed in the New York and New Orleans government yards, others in private yards. Within five weeks from the time the first keels were laid down a number of these speedy craft were on active service.

The third way by which the United States could assist the Allies was with her army. As a military state the republic was actually weak and potentially strong. She possessed only another "contemptible little army," which, however, could gradually be developed into a host of five million and more fighting men. She had at first to act as Great Britain had acted between the retreat from Mons and the advance on the Somme, and afford her Allies great help in finance, shipping, munitions, and naval affairs while building up a national army. At first sight the condition of the American army seemed deplorable. Including the militia, which was unfit for service, it numbered less than 250,000 men. The regular force was so small that many authorities doubted whether it would be safe to send a single army corps quickly to France.

For three years Major-General Leonard Wood had endeavoured to rouse the country to the need of national defence by a campaign of enlightenment similar to that which Lord Roberts had vainly carried out in Great Britain. Only in the universities did General Wood produce any effect of importance. University training corps were formed, in which fine material for the cadres of a national army was collected; but the number of trained officers with active service experience was very small. The regular troops were too few even for an expedition across the southern frontier, and the second line was weak and lacking in training; but in America's population of over a hundred million, man-power was abundant. Weapons were also plentiful, as American munition factories had expanded in a gigantic way under the stimulus of orders from Europe.

At the beginning of April the regular army consisted of about

MORE SOLDIERS RAISED

130,000 troops, but of these nearly 35,000 were stationed in the Philippines, Panama, Hawaii, Porto Rico, and China, and of the rest a considerable proportion were non-combatants. As it could hardly reduce the strength of its forces lying outside its territory proper, it did not dispose in America of more than about 80,000 fighting men. So far as it went, the army was excellent in quality. It was organised in three divisions and a cavalry division; and, besides, there were detachments for coast defence. The infantry consisted of 38 regiments of three battalions, each of four companies, the peace strength of a company being three officers and 100 men. The cavalry comprised 17 regiments of three squadrons, each squadron having three officers and 70 troopers. There were nine regiments of field-artillery, each of six batteries with four guns apiece; and three regiments of engineers.

Realising how unready for war on the European scale the United States was, the Allies did not expect the immediate or early appearance of American soldiers in the battle-line. It was understood, furthermore, that it was the opinion of the American general staff that no troops should be sent out of the country to support the Entente Armies until a really large force had been trained and equipped. Not a few Americans maintained, even after war was declared, that it was undesirable as well as unnecessary to despatch troops abroad. On the other hand, Mr. Roosevelt pressed hard for the despatch to France at once of an expeditionary force which he himself was taking steps to raise. His plans went so far that over 200,000 officers and men had given him their pledge to join this force.

From the very first moment the president planned to raise very large forces in addition to vastly increasing the strength of the regulars and the auxiliaries, and among the initial war measures that he submitted to Congress was a bill to authorise conscription. The army was to be increased to its full strength of 293,000 men, and the national guard similarly to 440,000 men, by voluntary enlistment; but he called for the formation of a new national army based on the principle of universal liability to service. Congress did not like the idea of conscription. Though compulsory service had been introduced in the Civil War, it was as unpalatable to Americans as it had been to the British—and opposition to it was keen, especially in the House of Representatives, where some of the leading Democrats opposed

AMERICA ENTERS THE WAR

it violently. The country was divided on the subject, and, generally speaking, looked askance at it; but the President, ably supported by Mr. Roosevelt and other stalwarts, brought both Congress and the country into line with them.

It had taken the British two years to accept conscription; the United States adopted it in six weeks. After several days' debate, both the Senate and the House, on April 28, passed bills for raising an Army of 500,000 men by selective conscription, the Senate by 81 to 8, and the House of Representatives by 397 to 24 votes; but the former put the age limits at 21 to 27, while the latter fixed them at 21 to 40. A storm raged round the limits of age, but the president controlled it. Meanwhile, the Senate adopted a provision authorising him to accept the volunteer expeditionary force which Mr. Roosevelt had offered to raise for immediate service in France, and the House was disposed to agree. While acknowledging the patriotic spirit of Mr. Roosevelt, Mr. Wilson declined the proposal, chiefly on the ground that its plan included the services of officers of the army who could not be spared. The pressure exerted by Mr. Roosevelt was not, however, without a certain effect, as no doubt it prepared the country for the immediate despatch of troops to the front, a request for which had been made by Marshal Joffre, the military head of the French mission, who arrived at Washington on April 25, three days after the British mission, of which Mr. Balfour was the chief, had reached the American capital.

After various conferences and much discussion, the House finally passed the selective conscription bill on May 16, and the Senate followed suit next day. On the 18th the bill became law on its being signed by the president. It applied in round figures to 10,000,000 men between 21 and 30, inclusive, who were to register on June 5. A noteworthy feature was its list of exemptions, which was left practically to the judgment of the president; but it was made clear that there would be no interference with any of the industries essential for the proper conduct of the war or of the national life.

Local boards to consider claims to exemptions, and district boards to revise them, were appointed, but the final adjudication, if such were required, lay with the president. It was alleged by some Americans who were against the war that the registration of the 10,000,000 young men would occasion grave disturbances throughout the country; but when the day of

A LOTTERY OF MEN

enrolment arrived, and with it the 10,000,000, or close on that figure, no serious trouble occurred anywhere. In some States the number registered was larger than had been expected, in others it was smaller, but the evasions were not important in any part of the land. The final returns registered 9,649,938 names. The draft ultimately yielded 687,000 men for the new army, and, as also had been arranged, for filling vacancies in the ranks of the regulars and of the national guard.

What was truly described as the greatest lottery in the history of the world took place at Washington on July 20 when the men of the new army were drafted. They had been selected from among the 9,000,000-odd men on a carefully-worked-out system, and the actual drawing was surrounded with every safeguard and with much solemnity, members of Congress and officers of the army being amongst those present. The exemption district boards had previously been told to take all the registration cards in their district, shuffle them, and then number them serially from one to the highest number represented by the total number of the cards. These numbers were published in the various cities and towns, so that each man registered knew his number.

Of the 4,557 districts, the most populous district exceeded 10,200 numbers, and it was determined to draw 10,500 numbers. Slips numbered from 1 to 10,500 were then enclosed in black capsules which were put in a large glass bowl. Mr. Baker, the war secretary, was blindfolded and drew the first number, which was 258. This meant that in every district the man whose number was 258 was drafted for the army. Some of the prominent people present next were blindfolded, and drew from the glass bowl in the same way. Clerks, also blindfolded, drew the rest. The numbers drawn were then telegraphed to the districts and published in the papers, so that everybody knew very soon who had been selected. In the meantime the war department was preparing 16 large cantonments for the housing and training of these men, who were to assemble in September. These cantonment, each with a population of about 40,000, were bigish towns, and care was taken to build them well. About the same time 16 mobilisation camps were established for the national guard, to the number of 350,000 men, for whom the president had called.

It was evident that there would have to be officers, more and

AMERICA ENTERS THE WAR

more officers, both for the expanded army and national guard, as well as for the new army. Neither the existing army nor the existing national guard could supply anything like enough. West Point and other military colleges could do something, and did it; but hundreds and thousands more were required. The demand was far in excess of the supply—just as it had been in Great Britain. Then a plan was initiated for an officers reserve corps, from which 10,000 officers were to be provided. To have the honour of being among the first ten thousand, more than 45,000 young citizens threw up their jobs or closed their offices to learn soldiering and qualify as officers in the training camps.

As soon as war was declared, the president threw himself with the utmost energy and devotion into organizing the country for war. In his address to Congress on April 2 he had indicated, in a general way, its nature and extent. On April 15 the president issued a personal appeal to the nation, in which he implored it to rise to the level of the enterprise, and to realise how great was the task before it. He said that the navy was rapidly being placed on a war footing, and that a great army was about to be created and equipped, but that there were other things besides fighting to which the people of the United States must address themselves. He declared that there must be provided an abundant supply of food, both for Americans and Allies, and he told the farmers that on them in large measure rested the fate of the war. He begged the farmers in the south to grow foodstuffs as well as cotton.

In this most comprehensive appeal the president asked the manufacturer to speed-up and perfect every process, the middleman to forgo unusual profits and expedite the shipment of supplies, the merchant to take as his motto "Small profits and quick service," the railwayman to see that there should be no obstruction in the arteries of the nation's life, the miner, who was as indispensable as the farmer, not to slack or fail—he "also was enlisted in the great service of the army." To the shipbuilder he commended the inspiration that life and the war depended on him, for no matter how many ships, carrying food and war supplies, were sent to the bottom, more and more ships must be turned out from the yards to replace those lost, and increase the number of vessels on the seas. Lastly, he spoke to the private citizen—by suggesting that everyone who created and cultivated a garden would help greatly in solving

THE LIBERTY LOAN

the problem of feeding the nations, and that every housewife who practised strict economy put herself in the ranks of those who served the nation. Mr. Wilson concluded by requesting editors, publishers, and advertisers everywhere to give the utmost prominence to his appeal, and by hoping that the clergy of all denominations would give his words widespread repetition, with appropriate comment, from their pulpits.

Directed by the president, whom the constitution and the war conspired to make almost the greatest autocrat on earth, things had begun to move in a big way, even before the declaration of war, and in accordance with the plans he outlined to Congress. "Money talks" was a characteristic American saying, and never did money talk more impressively. On April 5 estimates were received by the house of representatives from Mr. McAdoo, the secretary of the treasury, calling for the authorization of a credit of upwards of £700,000,000, to cover initial war measures, £600,000,000 being asked for enlarging and equipping the army. On the 10th the house committee on ways and means, after a discussion with Mr. McAdoo, whose ideas had grown, agreed to an appropriation that was just double that of five days before. It was for £1,400,000,000. This enormous war loan was voted unanimously by Congress, the necessary bill being passed by the house of representatives on April 14, and by the Senate three days later.

Of the American war loan the sum of £800,000,000 was allocated to the beginnings of the military and naval preparations of the United States, and the sum of £600,000,000 was earmarked for the Allies, who needed cash continually for the purchase of supplies in America. This sum, which had been assigned for their use, was just as good as gold. Investors in the United States had already bought over £400,000,000 of foreign loans since 1915, and had taken back, either by purchase or as collateral security for loans to the Entente, about an equal sum in American railway and other stocks and bonds.

The money was to be raised by a loan, and particulars of this, which was christened the Liberty loan, were not announced till May 9, and the date of issue was June 15. But a large sum of money was needed at once. The services of the federal reserve board, which had been created two or three years previously, were brought into play. Then, just as the politicians of the United States had been mobilised, so now were mobilised

AMERICA ENTERS THE WAR

its financiers in support of the president. The government was able without difficulty to raise money on short-dated treasury notes, in advance of the sale of the bonds, and so to meet the current requirements of the Allies in America.

To help to pay the war expenditure, Congress agreed to a large increase in taxation. A bill to raise £360,000,000 in a year by fresh taxation was passed. Later it was discovered that nearly £450,000,000 would be required. On May 19 the Senate passed a general war appropriation bill, authorizing a treasury expenditure of close upon £670,000,000. New or increased taxes were put on incomes, excess profits, railway earnings, distilleries and breweries, motor cars, jewellery, perfumes, proprietary medicines, and tobacco, and the price of postage stamps, telegrams, and telephone calls was advanced. It was calculated that the new taxation amounted to about £4 per head of the population. Simultaneously with this tremendous mobilisation of the money of the United States there proceeded the mobilisation of its materials. In this connexion materials connoted the industrial and commercial resources of America, and everything adjunct thereunto—railways and shipping, as well as farms, mines, shops and factories. Labour problems necessarily were also involved.

Among the earliest preoccupations of President Wilson before the declaration of war was the attitude of labour. Nothing could be more obvious than that the successful participation of the United States in the conflict demanded the cordial co-operation of its workers, of those who handled its materials. The situation was complicated by the fact that millions of these workers were aliens, with a not negligible proportion of them of enemy birth. The census bureau, in June, 1917, estimated that there were nearly 5,000,000 persons in the country who had been born in Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey, and Bulgaria. The policy of the Government had to be at once broad and strong. The secretary of labour, a namesake of the President, was a member of the Council of National Defence, and he was fortunate in having Mr. Gompers as the labour member of the advisory commission. President of the American federation of labour, which had 2,000,000 men on its roll, Mr. Gompers had the most intimate acquaintance with the workers and their problems, and had the further great advantage of enjoying the confidence of the interests he directed. He had realised that the United States

THE FOOD PROBLEM

must fight Germany, and on the day President Wilson asked Congress to declare war upon her, he took decisive action.

For the purpose of mobilising labour for the furtherance of the war, Mr. Gompers called a meeting at Washington, which was held on April 2, and attended by both labour representatives and employers, represented by delegates of the national association of manufacturers. In the report of the work of the council of national defence, which was published towards the end of the ensuing June, it was stated that "It was the definite purpose of Mr. Gompers and his associates to avoid the unfortunate industrial experiences of Britain in the opening months of the European War." The meeting appointed a permanent organisation, with an executive committee of eleven, with a view to labour's aiding President Wilson and the country in the most effective manner. Subsequently eight sub-committees were created dealing with such matters as mediation and conciliation, wages and hours, women in industry, welfare work, cost of living and domestic economy, and information and statistics. The welfare work was based on the principle that the health and efficiency of the workers in the vital industries, upon which all else depended, were ultimate resources which had to be conserved in the interest of the nation. On the day war was declared the labour committee passed a resolution advising workers, as well as employers, not to try to take advantage of the country's necessities to alter for their selfish benefit existing standards of wages and hours of work.

In the spring of 1917 the most serious problem of the Allies, and of Great Britain especially, was food. The world's shortage of wheat and the destruction of shipping by enemy submarines had brought about a grave situation. While legislation for the committee on food supply and prices was pending, the president set in motion, through the department of agriculture, a great food campaign, similar in its general character to that which then was taking place in Great Britain. All through April and during part of May American official effort was strongly directed towards stimulating increased food production. The department of agriculture issued thousands of circulars and bulletins to the farmers, which stated with due emphasis the facts, and urged that while waste should be checked, larger areas of the cultivable soil should be sown or planted.

For the mobilization of the material of war a general muni-

AMERICA ENTERS THE WAR

tions board was created on April 9. It was composed of 17 qualified representatives of the war and navy departments, and of eight civilians. Its chairman was one of the latter, Mr. Frank A. Scott. Before the board was created the war and navy departments could compete with each other in the open market: it put an end to such a possibility by co-ordinating all the departmental buying. Where manufacturing facilities were inadequate, it developed those in existence or added new ones. As the British Government, because of the enormous growth of its Ministry of Munitions, no longer needed, or could get along without, its small-arms factories in America, it passed them over to the board on fair purchase terms. In the course of a month from its formation this organisation had arranged with manufacturers for a supply of 1,000,000 rifles with the requisite ammunition, for artillery in large quantities, for machine-guns at a lower price than had been paid by the war department, for shells of various sizes, and hosts of other things, including armoured cars and army vehicles of all kinds.

To a committee of the advisory commission was entrusted the mobilisation of raw materials, and to another that of supplies. At the head of the one was Mr. Baruch, the financier, and the chairman of the other was the merchant prince of Chicago, Mr. Julius Rosenwald. Both made good, and their efforts resulted in saving the country large sums of money. With the exception of coal, which was dealt with by the committee on coal production of the council of national defence, Mr. Baruch and his associates organised the field in minerals and metals, including aluminium, asbestos, brass, copper, lead, mica, nickel, iron, steel, sulphur, and zinc, as well as oil. Within their range also came alcohol, chemicals, and coal tar by-products, lumber, cement, rubber, and wool.

Equally striking was the success of Mr. Rosenwald and his committee on supplies. Their immediate function was to advise and assist the purchasing bureaux of the war and navy departments as regards clothing, food, and equipment. They did away with government advertisement for supplies, and the competition of government departments with each other was eliminated. Specifications were drafted for providing substitutes for articles difficult or impossible to procure in the quantities required. Middlemen were told that their services were dispensed with. This committee actually bought large supplies for the Govern-

THE DISTRIBUTION OF COAL

ment at figures existing at the beginning of the war, and in some cases at prices lower than those which prevailed at that time. It also obtained options on extensive supplies of leather and other needed articles at what were practically pre-war quotations. Like the committee on raw materials, and other committees, this committee created sub-committees, and these dealt with the cotton, woollen, shoe and leather, knitted goods, and mattress industries, all of which were mobilised effectively, mills and factories that never before had done work for the Government falling into line.

The mining and distributing of coal was mobilised by an organization set up by the council of national defence somewhat later than most of the others. It was called the committee on coal production, and its chairman was Mr. F. S. Peabody, of Chicago. Almost at the start it gave much help to the Government in averting strikes among the miners, notably in Pennsylvania. It investigated the problems of haulage, and arranged that coal should be distributed fairly and evenly through the carrying agencies by land and water for the country, while at the same time it saw to the requirements of the navy and other departments.

Prior to this the railways had been completely mobilised, at the instance of Mr. Willard, under the ægis of the advisory commission, in co-operation with a special committee, sitting at Washington, of the American railway association, comprising the heads of the chief lines of the United States. Over 260,000 miles of railroads were in effect placed in the hands of the Government for war purposes. The railway executives issued orders that coal should be given preference in supply and movement, and that ore should come next.

Mr. Willard's committee, termed the committee on transportation and communications, took as its slogan railway efficiency for the nation rather than for the individual, and bent all its energies towards that end. It organised co-operative committees and sub-committees on telegraphs and telephones, on military passenger and freight tariffs, on cars and locomotives, on electric railways. It divided up the railway systems of the country into six areas, so as to have local as well as general control. For this purpose it enlisted the services, which were given gratuitously, of all the presidents and high officials of the various lines in each of these areas. A complete scheme was drawn up, in connection with officers of

AMERICA ENTERS THE WAR

the army, for facilitating the movement of troops and supplies. The committee, backed by the American railway association, made itself responsible for raising nine reserve engineer regiments, composed of skilled railwaymen, to aid in the rehabilitation of the railways in France, as well as in the operation of the French railways behind the British front. Earlier Mr. Willard assisted in the creation of a commission, of which Mr. John Stephens, formerly chief engineer of the Panama Canal, was chairman. He, with four other prominent railway engineers went to Russia, by way of Vladivostock, to find out what materials or men should be sent to help the Russians.

Mr. Willard, through Mr. Theodore N. Vail, president of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, arranged for the utilisation of the telephone and telegraph systems of the country. This involved the special drilling of some 12,000 telephone long-distance operators, and an increase of wires from 148 to 294 at Washington for long-distance communications. More than 10,000 miles of special systems were taken from commercial use, and devoted exclusively to the navy and other departments, while telephone connections were established with all lighthouses and coastguard stations.

Men of science also were mobilised. At the request of the council of national defence, the national research council maintained at Washington an active committee for co-operation in matters pertaining to scientific research for war objects. Reports were made on the process to be used for producing nitrates for explosives and fertilisers, and the supplying of optical glass for military purposes was considered. Anti-toxins and serums for diphtheria, tetanus, pneumonia, dysentery, and meningitis were closely studied. Among other matters investigated were the diseases of munition workers, protection of the ear from high explosives, and protection from noxious gases. Some of these labours of the men of science impinged on the work of medical men. Under Dr. Franklin H. Martin, a member of the advisory commission, a medical section or committee was created which mobilised the civilian medical resources of the United States, and immediately set about the selection of thoroughly qualified civilian doctors for increasing the medical staff of the army and navy. As many as 21,000 competent men were picked out, and the services of 3,500 medical students in their last year were made available. A

WOMEN'S WORK

general medical board met at stated intervals at Washington to advise and assist the surgeons-general of the army, navy, public health service, and the Red Cross, and at its instance decisive steps were taken for the hygienic and moral welfare of the soldiers and sailors of the nation.

One of the most interesting, as well as significant, developments of the multitudinous activities of the council of national defence was the formation, as early as April 21, 1917, of a committee on women's defence work, under the chairmanship of Dr. Anna Howard Shaw, by means of which the women of the United States were mobilised. With its centre at Washington, it had head and subordinate organizations of women in every state of the Union, which took charge of the movement locally. It speedily assumed immense proportions. Among the things that came into its purview were home relief, allied relief, conservation and thrift, the protection of women workers, and the health and welfare of children.

To the women of America Mr. Hoover, the food administrator, issued a special appeal, which the women's committee made its own. He asked them to stop throwing away any food which could be used, to order meals so as not to have too much, to have a proper balance of the most nutritious foods, to stop catering to different appetites, to have no second helpings, no eating between meals, no four o'clock teas, no refreshments at parties and dances, no suppers after the theatre, no young lamb, no veal, no young pigs killed, no young meat of any sort, no butter for cooking. He also requested them to institute one meatless and one wheatless day a week. He finally invited them all to join in the conservation of food by accepting membership in the food administration of the United States, and by signing a pledge to carry out, in conducting their households, the directions of the food administrator.

The organization of an aircraft production board by the council came somewhat later, but months before the declaration of war Mr. Howard Coffin had an aircraft association in active being. Mr. Coffin urged that the construction of large fleets of aircraft, with trained aviators in proportion, should be made a leading feature of the war programme of the United States. Congress at first, however, did not assign a very large sum for aircraft production, but Mr. Coffin and those who were working

AMERICA ENTERS THE WAR

with him went ahead, and harmonised, standardised, and unified all branches of the aviation manufacture and service.

In the meantime the American public was thinking of aircraft a good deal, as the result of a vigorous aircraft-production publicity campaign. It was pointed out by Mr. Coffin and others that here was a field that the United States could make peculiarly its own. Was not America the birthplace of the aeroplane? Further, it was contended with much force that if Great Britain and France had possessed overwhelming superiority in the air they would already have won the war. Mr. Coffin and Admiral Peary went before the committees of Congress, stated their case, and asked for an appropriation of over £100,000,000 sterling. The country backed them up with enthusiasm.

Mr. Newton D. Baker, the secretary of war, issued a statement advocating a rapid increase in the number of American machines for the front. In July, Congress voted 640,000,000 dollars, or nearly £130,000,000, for the development of Mr. Coffin's great aviation plans. No fewer than 24 aviation fields were authorised, and some of them were quickly established—notably one at Dayton, Ohio, the home town of Orville Wright. Nine aviation schools were founded, six for the army and three for the navy. The mark at which the United States aimed was the construction of 22,000 machines in the shortest time.

Transcending all the actual and potential reinforcements brought by the United States to the democracies of Europe were the political possibilities of a new international situation. The design upon which the leaders of the great Republic entered the war extended far beyond the immediate military issue of the struggle. The first American scheme of a league to enforce peace was modified into a league of honour between all democracies. Above the fiery thunderclouds of battle there seemed to break faintly the light of a larger day than the contending races of men had yet known, and the dream of a concert for peace maintained by a partnership of democratic nations inspired courage and endurance.

CHAPTER 7

Capture of Vimy Ridge

ON Easter Tuesday (April 10) a despatch from the front contained a cheering piece of information for the British public. The Vimy Ridge was taken at last. This height had often figured as Mount Perilous. Gallantly the French had endeavoured to storm it on three unforgettable days. Thousands of shells had been fired by the French artillery in the hope of destroying the trenches, emplacements, and caverns which the Germans had constructed in this, the most redoubtable bastion of their line.

As soon as the Germans retired from Bapaume, Péronne, and Chaulnes (in March), the British high command speeded up its preparations for an attack upon the German front, from Vimy Ridge to the suburbs of Arras. Large forces had been moved from the Somme to the north, while General Rawlinson's old army was strengthened, so that it could extend southward towards the Avre River near Roye. Lieut.-General Sir Henry Sinclair Horne, who had assisted General Nivelle at Verdun, and developed his invention of the creeping barrage, was promoted to the command of the 1st army which was deployed below Vimy cliffs, alongside the 3rd army, which was commanded by Sir Edmund Allenby and arrayed about Arras.

These two powerful forces prepared to engage the Germans along the tremendous fortified front of some fourteen miles from the Souchez River to Cojeul River. The two commanders were given a good supply of an improved kind of caterpillar-wheeled mobile fortress heavier and more strongly gunned than the original Tank. The supply of Stokes guns was increased, as this powerful new invention had developed into a master weapon in the hands of attacking infantry.

The Stokes gun was employed to form blinding smoke-screens against hostile machine-gun lines, as well as to overwhelm machine-gun positions by a rapid fire of aerial torpedoes. The 1st and 3rd armies were, moreover, at last provided with a complete answer to the horrible flame-projectors, or flammenwerfer, which the enemy had used in various way from 1916,

CAPTURE OF VIMY RIDGE

and the methods of gas attack originated by the Germans were likewise improved upon by the new school of British chemical artillerists. Furthermore, the Germans could not equal, on the critical fields of conflict, the British power of intensive bombardment.

The guns between Lens and Arras opened fire at the beginning of April. At the same time the 1st and 3rd armies made fierce raiding expeditions on a broad front. Since the winter of 1915 the raid had developed in an extraordinary way. Battalions went "over the top" in the order fixed for the battle, entered the terrain which was to be part of their objective, and came back with increased confidence and a valuable haul of prisoners. From the prisoners there could be discovered exactly the names of the German forces holding the positions, the generals in command, and the average quality of the troops.

It was, however, the scheme of exercising the attacking forces directly on the ground that they were about to be set to conquer which was the most important characteristic of the new raiding method. When the Germans had become habituated to tip-and-run tactics on the part of the British and Canadian infantry, they were at last surprised by a gigantic raid, which transformed itself into one of the most powerful offensive movements in the history of war.

On April 9, after an intense artillery duel, the battle of Vimy Ridge opened. It had been heralded by a great aerial struggle, in which British pilots, supplied at length with a large number of machines of first-class quality, began to recover the practical mastery of the air. According to General Smuts, the enemy's lines were dominated for a depth of nearly twenty miles by the Royal Flying Corps, assisted by the Royal Naval Air Wing.

When the battle opened, at half-past five in the morning, the wind shifted into the west, bringing a curtaining drizzle of rain with it. It did not, however, hinder the parks of British artillery from firing some 5,000,000 shells on to their targets.

Two previous days of fine Easter weather made the artillerymen almost independent of chance conditions of visibility. Everything in the German lines had been photographed from the air, marked for the precise range, and registered by a gun or so from each battery. Models of the enemy front, to the depth fixed for the offensive, were prepared from the aerial photographs and studied by all arms. All the preliminary

DAYBREAK!

bombardments were carried out with but a small part of the artillery concentration. Not until the dawn of Easter Monday, April 9, did the masses of guns reveal their full strength.

The night was one of wonder and of terror. Finely has Sir William Beach Thomas described the changing hours of it, the waxing and the waning, the quivering of the earth under the discharge of the giant howitzers, the wonderful heaven of stars above when the full fury of the fire world was awakened.

Then the fitful flashes were concentrated into an ocean of lightning which broke into one continuous wave above us along the jagged line of batteries. Here and there great mines arose in ponderous upheavals of blackness, glowing red at the centre. Clouds of golden rain were fired as signals all along the lines. The enemy fired his frantic "S, O S" from every quarter. Star-shells of every hue, flashes of guns, bursts of shell and shrapnel—this medley of fireworks filled the earth and air with such intermingled fires that no distinction was perceptible till some particular explosion happened to reflect the wall of a ruin or give background to a tree. The noise, which quite dazed some observers, was forgotten, clean drowned in the light.

All this in the darkest hour before the dawn. Day came with no apparent sun of victory to shine upon the waiting troops. A cold sleet was driven eastwards by the freezing wind which searched valley and height alike. Yet a merrier company never went upon an adventure than these Canadians and Scots and English and Irish who were to fight the greatest battle of the war. The very thunder of thousands of guns must have been music to them. Looking over to the Vimy Heights, or eastwards towards Roeux and Monchy-le-Preux, or southward to Wancourt, they could witness that loom of smoke above the withered earth which said so much. Now was the way being made straight for them. In the gloomy sky above, hundreds of British gasbags hung like indolent sausages to spy out the land. Far away the gallant airmen were fighting another battle wherein victory spelt salvation of lives beyond number. And all this was but a prelude to that fateful moment when the whistles should be blown and the men should leap from their trenches.

It seems amazing that General von Ludendorff should have spent so much time in boasting that, by his flight from the Somme and Ancre, he had delayed the British offensive movement for several months. He had definitely retired his troops

CAPTURE OF VIMY RIDGE

in the night of March 16, and at dawn on April 9 his principal armies on his most important sectors were gripped and shattered. In spite of the labour of arranging the concentration of British guns and British infantry, with the gigantic supplies and great communications needed for two powerful armies, less than four weeks elapsed between the enemy's movement of evasion and the terrific answer to it. It must also be remembered that the heavy engineering labour of pursuing two of the retreating German armies was also being speedily carried out by Sir Hubert Gough and Sir Henry Rawlinson. So successful were their efforts that preparations for another great British offensive were completed a few days after the opening of the battle of Vimy Ridge.

At the same time the 2nd British army, operating around Ypres under General Sir Herbert Plumer, was also completing a marvellous amount of preparation for another offensive on the grand scale. The engineering power and transport organization behind Sir Douglas Haig's armies were of a quality and scope that the German secret service could not fully have measured.

Commenting on the conditions in his despatches, Sir Douglas Haig said that they "imposed great hardships on our troops and greatly hampered operations. The heavy snow, in particular, interfered with reliefs, and rendered all movements of troops and guns slow and difficult. It would be hard to overestimate the importance of the resultant delay in bringing up our guns, at a time when the enemy had not yet been able to assemble his reserves, or to calculate the influence which a further period of fine weather might have had upon the course of the battle."

In this connection the following passage in Ludendorff's *Memoirs* is of interest: "The battle near Arras on April 9 formed a bad beginning to the capital fighting during this year. April 10 and the succeeding days were critical days. A breach 12,000 to 15,000 yards wide, and as much as 6,000 yards or more in depth, is not a thing to be mended without more ado. It takes a good deal to repair the inordinate wastage of men and guns, as well as munitions, that results from such a breach."

On the north of the great line of attack the Canadian divisions, with an English brigade (13th Infantry Brigade, 5th division) in the centre of their attack, under Lieut.-General Sir Julian Byng, achieved the greatest success in western trench warfare since the recapture of Douaumont and Louvemont. They were set the task of storming up and over the famous Ridge, which covered

THE CANADIANS ADVANCE

the top of the Hindenburg line—those great coal-fields so valuable to France. In May and September, 1915, a magnificent French army, controlled by General Foch and commanded by General d'Urbal, had been twice checked by the Gibraltar-like defences of the Ridge. General Pétain, who then commanded only a small force, had skilfully fought over the advanced hill positions and, by an effort that made him famous, came close to a decisive victory. Yet the great main plateau remained unconquered when the British army extended southward past it. A British assault had been broken in the summer of 1916, and the Ridge still loomed above the Canadian divisions in the grey, rainy Easter dawn of April 9.

Flurries of snow came with the rain as the Canadians left their assembling trenches. The dawn-light remained sufficient for the manœuvring of the forces of attack, yet obscured the vision of the defending machine-gunners and riflemen. In three waves of assault the victors of Courcellette set out to add to the tale of victories they had won since they saved the situation in the Second Battle of Ypres. At first the Canadians advanced without serious opposition on their centre and their right. Preceded by a great stamping barrage of shell fire, they passed the great tunnels in the enemy's line and, under bursts of German shrapnel and close-range machine-gun fire, climbed half-way up the Ridge. The left wing of the Canadians was, however, checked around the low northern height known as the "Pimple." The attacking troops in this sector had a most arduous struggle lasting from 5.30 a.m. to 10 p.m. By downright valour and skill they gradually captured a considerable part of the hostile trenches; but when another heavy snowstorm intervened at night their commander wisely arranged first to repulse the inevitable German counter-attack, and postponed operations against Pimple Hill.

In the meantime the main Canadian forces conducted a terrific battle between the first and second German lines. In their rear a considerable force of Germans emerged from the tunnels, and, reoccupying their old front with determination, opened fire upon the backs of the advanced Canadians. For a time the situation somewhat resembled that obtaining on Thiepval Down on July 1, 1916. The underground force of Germans, supplied with a large number of machine-guns, emerged between the first waves of Canadians and their reserves.

CAPTURE OF VIMY RIDGE

Fortunately, both the British and the overseas British armies had learnt a great deal since the opening of the Somme offensive. In a series of fierce advances the foremost Dominion troops bombed the enemy out of his second line. Then they strengthened their newly-won positions on the second line, and turned back and dealt with the force that was shooting them in the back.

There were two immense galleries running through the Ridge, known as the Prinz Arnuld and Völker tunnels. In spite of the destructive power of the British artillery, both of these corridor caverns remained intact at the moment when the Canadians began to climb the cliffs. Filled with confidence at the slight harm done to them by the millions of shells pitched upon the slopes, the emerging Germans at first showed remarkable dauntlessness. When, however, they were attacked from behind by the Canadian regiments that had first passed over them, and also assailed in front from the lower slope by Sir Julian Byng's supporting troops, and likewise surrounded on both flanks, they surrendered in hundreds, and at last in thousands. The garrison of the Völker tunnel left the place mined. Happily, the victors detected the trap and, cutting the leads, secured an enormous shelter and place of concentration for further operations.

During a pause on the conquered German second line fresh Canadian troops came up and deployed into position, while a tremendous British curtain of shell hammered the enemy into a condition of despair. Then, two divisions strong, the Canadians climbed up the slippery hillside and captured the German third line, pausing once more for a final drive through the German centre. Again they advanced in a magnificent sweep of two-thirds of a mile. Before them went the rampart of smoke and fire of their barrage, and as it forced the Germans into their dug-outs the Canadian infantry dashed forward, capturing Hill 140 with a series of fortified woods and several villages.

At ten o'clock in the morning, as the Canadians climbed to the top of the rampart and commanded a view of the German line eastward, a heavy snowstorm blotted out the landscape. The Canadians, converting to their own advantage the curtain of snow, worked along the third line, which they had penetrated, and gradually cleared it. At half-past ten the snowfall ceased, the black clouds silvered and thinned away, and a fitful sun

TERRITORIAL DIVISIONS

brightened the blasted and thundering ridge of battle. The Canadian centre became more active, and in another two and a half hours of magnificent fighting cleared every part of the German third line, securing their objectives and capturing three commandants and more than 2,000 of the rank and file.

North of the Scarpe, north country and Scottish Territorial troops (34th and 51st divisions), attacking east of Roclin-court, were met by heavy machine-gun fire. Their advance was delayed, but not checked. They topped the southern slopes of the Vimy system by twelve o'clock, and their leading battalion met and broke three strong counter-attacks. Soon afterwards it was reported that a great mass of Germans was concentrating, near Vimy village, for a grand attempt to recover the Ridge. Forward observing-officers measured the distance, and directed a preliminary shell or two on the road by which the Germans were advancing. Quickly the exact range was discovered, and the counter-attacking force was smashed and dispersed.

The right wing of Canadian and British troops then pressed home their advance. Passing through the wide gaps torn by their heavy artillery at fixed intervals in the last wire entanglements fringing the tableland, they went down the eastern slopes of the Ridge. Below them were the villages of Farbus, Vimy, and Little Vimy, all shattered by the fire of the British railway guns. Beyond, on the level plain of Douai, were the hamlets of Arleux, Willerval, Bailleux, with Fresnoy, Oppy, and Gavrelle, which were soon the scene of another great battle. A couple of miles beyond was the village of Drocourt, which had become famous as the northern base of the Wotan, or switch-line, in the Ludendorff-Hindenburg system of defence.

The conquerors of the historic heights descended into Farbus Wood and Goulot Wood, taking on their way batteries of German guns and large dumps of German ammunition. In the early part of the afternoon of Easter Monday the front of the victorious thrust reached the limits of advance covered by its own heavy guns. When night fell the Germans held only a few trenches on Hill 145. All the rest of the great ridge was not only conquered, but re-fortified eastward, by the Canadian divisions and the Scottish division operating on their right.

Round Hill 145, north-west of La Folie Wood, a small detachment of Germans on the crowning hummock of the Ridge maintained a gallant resistance all through Easter Monday. With

CAPTURE OF VIMY RIDGE

their massed machine-guns they shattered every daylight attempt to rush or encircle them. They were left alone in the afternoon; but during the night a Canadian patrol reverted to that Red Indian form of warfare from which their countrymen had originated the famous trench-raiding system. In the windy darkness the patrol got into the machine-gun fortress, and, as soon as day broke and gave them clear vision, they rapidly cleared it, and completed, at little sacrifice of life, the entire conquest of a most important natural rampart.

The village of Thelus, which had been the base from which the Germans held up the French offensive by weeks of resistance in the historic Labyrinth, was completely shattered beforehand by the new railway guns of the British armies. In the obliterated ruins, through which ran the Germans' second-line system, some German bombers and machine-gunners bravely endeavoured to stem the advance. The works on either side of them were rapidly broken under the thrust of the Canadian battalions, and the forlorn hope of Thelus was caught on both flanks.

Squalls of snow veiled all the Douai Plain in the morning of Tuesday, April 10, when the Canadian divisions worked, with patrols, towards the railway line running from Lens towards the eastern suburbs of Arras. Their advanced guards met with little opposition from the fragments of German forces, and fought through the hamlet of Little Vimy and Ville Wood towards the village of Vimy on the foot-hills, almost directly south of Lens.

In a frantic endeavour to hold on to the extreme northern spur of the Ridge the German commander sent out a regiment of the Prussian Grenadier Guards to strengthen the battered Bavarian troops massed in and about the ruined woodland of Bois d'Hirondelle. Near this wood was a rise of ground commanding the little valley of Souchez River. This ground was known as Bois-en-Hache, and it was connected with the foot-hill scornfully known as the "Pimple." The "Pimple" and Bois-en-Hache were of much higher military importance than their small altitude suggested. They were the only German positions that gave observation over part of the lost ridge. This was why the Germans had poured out troops from the Lens area on Easter Monday to retain the lower heights north of the lost rampart.

During the night English troops (37th division) made considerable progress through the gap in the German defences east

THE HIGHLAND DIVISION

of Feuchy and occupied the northern slopes of Orange Hill, south-east of the village. On the morning of April 10 efforts were made to gain further ground through this gap, and British troops reached the enclosures north-west of Monchy-le-Preux.

At noon the advance became general, and the capture of the whole of the German third-line system south of the Scarpe was completed. The progress of the British troops on the right beyond this line was checked by machine-gun fire from the villages of Héninel, Wancourt, and Guémappe, with which the British artillery were able to deal effectively. Between the Arras-Cambrai road and the Scarpe, English and Scottish troops (12th and 15th divisions) pushed on as far as the western edge of Monchy-le-Preux. Here the British advance was held up as a result of the unavoidable weakness of their artillery support, and for the same reason an attempt to pass cavalry south and north of Monchy-le-Preux (3rd and 2nd cavalry divisions) and along the left bank of the Scarpe (1st cavalry division) proved impossible in the face of the German machine-gun fire.

The Scotsmen of the 51st division, who advanced on the right of the Canadian divisions at dawn on April 9, were as successful as their comrades of the Dominion. Their line stretched from the southern edge of the Ridge towards the suburbs of Arras. The German forces opposed to them were based upon a series of fortified lines and labyrinthine underground fortresses. The works at Le Point du Jour were among the principal enemy systems seized by the north-country troops of the 34th division. But even stronger than Le Point du Jour was another network of positions known as the Hyderabad Redoubt.

The guns of Great Britain were as mighty in destructive power on this sector of the front as they were on the Vimy cliffs. Tons of high explosive, used both in mines and in shell fire, destroyed most of the German works between Thelus and Arras. Then the new British engines of war launched missiles more terrifying than the spouts of burning petrol on the use of which Ludendorff was relying to a considerable extent. Over distances which no improved flame-projector could carry, cascades of fire-raising projectiles rained upon Bavarians, Prussians, Saxons, and Württembergers.

For long the German had gloried in his own infernal weapon, and regarded it as triumphant evidence of his superior talent in science. When, however, Sir Henry Horne and Sir Edmund

CAPTURE OF VIMY RIDGE

Allenby brought into action new engines of slaughter that reduced his flame-projector to insignificance, the German was demoralised. He was outmatched in big guns, in trench-mortars, in methods of gas attack, and in machine-gun fire.

There was hardly any resistance in the first German system when the Scotsmen went over the ground. Afterwards, the enemy machine-gunners brought a severe fire to bear upon the attacking forces. Nevertheless, the Highlanders and Lowlanders steadily and skilfully fought their way over Point du Jour, and in the stronger system of the Hyderabad Redoubt their closing success was so rapid that a German general of brigade and his Staff were captured. Besides taking more than 3,600 prisoners, the Scotsmen seized many guns, including some useful 5.9 howitzers. A great amount of German ammunition lay in dumps in the conquered ground, and the victors turned the pieces about and shelled the broken foe.

The South Africans combined with some of the Scottish battalions in this historic battle. They were said to have taken the first hostile line without a single casualty. Then, going onward against a violent fire, they swept all before them, gathering hundreds of prisoners, and contributing largely to the bag of guns made by the united division. Altogether, the division captured 2,200 Germans, with 52 officers, 37 machine-guns, 17 5.9 in. guns, and two 8 in. howitzers. The South Africans had bitter memories of German gun fire in Delville Wood, where they had made a despairing yet effective stand alongside their old comrades the Scots. In the great Arras victory they were among those who smote the German at last with his own weapons, and thus paid off some of the "Devil's Wood" score.

From Vimy Ridge to Point du Jour and the fields north of Arras the artillery of Sir Henry Horne dominated the zone of battle from dawn to nightfall on Easter Monday. In the Arras sector, however, where Sir Edmund Allenby commanded, it was in places impossible for the gunners behind the attacking English and Scottish troops to lay flat all the enemy's front line. There was no front line.

Britons and Germans were, for example, less than five yards from each other in Blangy suburb. Only the foundation walls of one ruined house after another separated them. Mining from cellar to cellar had for years been the sole way of progress attempted by the opposing forces. Overground rushes were

THE RETREAT FROM ARRAS

dangerous; for if a fragment of the burrows were occupied in this fashion, the apparent loser was likely to retaliate by firing a hidden mine under the apparent conquerors, and thereby suddenly reversing the positions.

The French forces under General Pétain had wrestled underground with the Germans in the eastern suburbs of Arras. When British troops took over the Arras sector, they could, for more than a year, do little more than continue the methods of their allies. It remained unsafe to show oneself above ground in daylight on the northern, eastern, and southern outskirts of the battered old city. German machine-gunners and snipers commanded St. Sauveur, Baudimont, Ronville, and other thresholds of Arras. The glorious edifices of the old-time city of Spanish Flanders were vanishing like the monuments of priceless beauty in Ypres. The Gothic buildings in the Grande Place and the belfried Town Hall, showing the final manner of the architecture of the master weavers of old Europe, were in the same state as Rheims Cathedral. Only by happy chance was Arras saved from complete destruction with the remnant of her civil population.

Ludendorff seems to have decided, towards the end of March, 1917, to wheel away from the Arras suburbs. His object was to repeat the manoeuvre of the Somme withdrawal, and evade for a while the great British offensive, preparations for which had been reported by his aerial scouts. It was said by German prisoners that the Arras retreat was originally fixed for the first week in April. However this may be, it was finally arranged for April 15.

In the meantime, instead of decreasing the forces in and around the suburbs of Blangy and St. Laurent, the German commander strengthened them. He intended to deliver a stroke against the shattered city before he withdrew, and to continue his policy of appalling the French mind by the total destruction of all territory from which he was compelled to retreat. Dumps of huge shells, filled with poison gases, were formed near Fampoux village, in advance of the Drocourt line. By the dumps ordinary heavy artillery was sited, and two 16.8 in. Krupp howitzers were ordered forward to Fampoux to render the town uninhabitable if it should be taken.

Happily, Sir Douglas Haig struck before Ludendorff. In the grand heralding bombardment, long-range British guns, mounted

CAPTURE OF VIMY RIDGE

on railway carriages and designed to wreck the enemy's rearward depôts and communications, assailed Fampoux and other neighbouring villages. The German gunners were overborne. The monster Krupp guns were not risked, so that when Fampoux was captured only some of the unused 16.8 in. gas shells, left behind in the headlong flight, told the tale of Ludendorff's baffled design.

As already remarked, both the long, preparatory British gun-fire and the moving line of bursting shells at dawn on Easter Monday had little effect upon the hostile underground line in Blangy. English and Scottish infantrymen at this tangled point had to attack a practically unbroken front of subterranean forts. The bombing parties advanced gallantly and tried to find a way through the dreadful machine-gun fire barrages. The machine-gun barrage had eyes and brains immediately behind it—skilled shooters, studying every detail of the situation. When the guns were close enough together, and fed with ammunition as fast as they could use it, the sleet of lead was of dreadful efficacy.

Fortunately there was space between the British and German lines above and below Blangy, enabling the attacking artillery to pour hurricanes of shell upon the opposing defences. A Ham-burg division withdrew from its ruined first system, leaving a small rearguard which surrendered. Wedges were driven around Blangy Park, and at last, after heavy sacrifice, a British battalion, in an hour of deft bombing rushes, carried the suburb.

Another memorable scene of conflict south of the Scarpe was when Manchester and Liverpool troops (30th division) took St. Martin-sur-Cojeul, and the British line was carried forward between that point and Feuchy Chapel on the Arras-Cambrai road. Here a counter-attack was repulsed at 2 p.m. by the 12th division, and at about the same hour Scottish troops (15th division) attacked the triangle of railway lines east of Blangy. All the German works on three sides of Arras were of immeasurable strength. The British Staff could not find room in its largest map of this sector to mark all the German positions. There were some four square miles of forts of all patterns and sizes—forts sunk in craters, with only a foot or so of loopholed machine-gun emplacement visible at close range; forts rising daringly above belts of wire, as though challenging observation; forts stuck in marshes; forts hidden in church and chapel. This city of forts was first badly shattered by a long, fierce

THE RAILWAY TRIANGLE

bombardment, pierced by an heroic hand-to-hand bomb fight, and then overwhelmed by smashing barrages of exact howitzer fire. The Scottish and English bombing-parties were so close behind the shell that many of the garrisons of the forts were unable to make a strong stand.

In the railway triangle, however, a German force threatened to disarrange the advance. The triangle was formed by the junction of the lines from Lens and Douai, and a branch track connecting the two lines before they merged. On the farther railway embankment, some thirty to forty feet high, the Germans had constructed a deep trench and lined it with dug-outs and machine-guns. The guns were placed in redoubts, consisting of two feet of armoured concrete and additional steel girders, all banked with earth within a foot of the domed top. They formed targets only a square yard in size, and by their narrowness escaped the bombardment and barrage. For three hours the attackers were checked, and all their fine, reckless attempts to get within bomb-casting distance failed.

In the campaign of 1914, 1915, and part of 1916, the check at the triangle would probably have developed into a local defensive victory for the enemy. But Sir Henry Horne had won the command of the 1st British army by, among other great achievements, the invention of a device for plucking victory out of a defeat of this kind. He had become the master-gunner of Sir Douglas Haig, and Sir Edmund Allenby's artillerymen around Arras had constantly practised the various uses of Horne's creeping barrage.

After advancing too far in front of the helpless infantry the line of roaring fire and pillared smoke halted for a moment, and came threshing back like an infernal flail. Again it halted. Then it stamped about and upon the high, fort-lined embankment, and the waiting Scots and Englishmen were occasionally splashed with bits of concrete as they watched gun-mountings and girders spin through the air.

A cleaning-up party of infantry entered the wreck of the best designed of German forts, while the Scots and Englishmen followed their barrage, on a rearranged time-table, towards the second Hindenburg line. Meanwhile, a series of similar fortifications, such as Haugest Work and Holte Work, Horn and Hamel Works, were exploded into the tragic rubble of the battlefield of Arras, after checking other English regiments.

CAPTURE OF VIMY RIDGE

The victors of Blangy fought onward to the Feuchy Redoubt. Here their creeping barrage more than compensated for its preliminary failure at the Triangle. The garrison at Feuchy Work had been so buried by the moving tempest of British shell that none escaped alive. Passing through Feuchy village, some time before the German gunners began to shell it, the men from the Triangle dug themselves in for the night close by a deep pit, where four 8 in. howitzers had been captured by a brigade of British cavalry. Being within striking distance of the important hill position at Monchy, and at very short range from the heavy ordnance defending the Drocourt line, the conquering Britons were subjected to terrific shell fire. They clung to their line all Easter Tuesday, while more English troops lined up with the Scots on the right and the cavalry assembled on their left, for a combined surprise stroke that was to shake Ludendorff almost as much as did the loss of the Vimy cliffs.

At the same time another mass of British troops worked towards the Monchy line from a series of positions south of Blangy and the Douai railway. Near Beaurains, south-east of Arras, was a great German system known as the Harp. It was built on a hill, in a large irregular oval of earthworks and armoured forts, commanding a hollow over which the British troops had to advance. Telegraph Hill, a higher defence, was close by. Neither bombardment nor barrage seriously injured the strength of the Harp. When the attacking lines of troops reached the hollow the fire from the fortified rise stopped all progress. Attempts were made to get machine-guns to sweep the enemy trenches, but the plan did not work quickly enough. The assault was held up at seven o'clock on Easter Monday.

Then from their lair behind a screen of trees some Tanks slithered to the holed and muddy top of Telegraph Hill. Squatting in this dominating position, above the Harp, they bombarded the Harp until it was untenable and its garrison of nearly 1,000 surrendered.

In the neighbouring village of Tilloy, on the highway to Cambrai, with the Harp south-west and Feuchy north-east of it, a Tank again broke into a fortified swell of ground and enabled the infantry to enter the village. There the German works had been terribly wrecked by the distant British guns. The land was smashed into shell-holes, the fields of barbed wire were torn into scattered strands, and the trenches turned into shapeless

THE HILL AT MONCHY

ditches. Devil's Wood, Tilloy Quarry, and other strong points around the Cambrai road were all occupied by eight o'clock in the morning. The survivors of the garrison surrendered quickly, and the British troops continued their progress along the highway to the Hindenburg switch-line. They were impeded, however, by some works erected at Feuchy, on commanding ground at the junction of the lane from Feuchy village and the Cambrai high-road. The Germans had constructed two strong positions, known as Church Redoubt and Chapel Redoubt, and although the garrisons were weakened by the British gunfire, they survived in sufficient strength to make a desperate stand. The Church Work was gradually reduced by bombing operations on April 9, but at the Chapel a handful of gallant Germans held out until the following morning. Once more the ubiquitous Tank lumbered up and settled the affair, thus clearing the last obstacle to the movement against Monchy plateau.

All the succession of victories around Arras by the 3rd army, under Sir Edmund Allenby, opened a wide line of attack upon Monchy. The hill at Monchy was the last patch of high ground, held by the enemy for a breadth of thirty miles, between Orange Hill, conquered by the British, and the city of Valenciennes. The little plateau of Monchy, on the edge of which the village rose, was only about ninety feet above the great plain of French Flanders. Yet it was twenty-five feet higher than Orange Hill, intervening westward between it and Arras city; while eastward, looking over the territory held by the enemy, it gave as spacious and deadly a field of artillery observation as did the higher Vimy Ridge.

It was the grand prize of war in this battle. So long as Ludendorff held it he still overlooked his lost line and safeguarded his new Drocourt front. In the ordinary way the German commander would have launched fierce, heavy, and persistent counter-attacks from Monchy during the decisive time when the 3rd British army was organizing the ground it had won and bringing up its guns.

It had been Ludendorff's design to employ his Drocourt line, with a mass of heavy artillery placed behind it, for the purpose of making irresistible Parthian-like rushes backward in great force against the tired advancing British troops, who possessed for immediate action only some field-guns. At Monchy, however, the shattered Germans were too hard pressed to maintain

CAPTURE OF VIMY RIDGE

a good rearguard defence. Even with reinforcements they could not counter-attack rapidly in strength. Ludendorff found his line extended almost to breaking point. His principal available reserves had to be sent towards the Lens sector, and other reserves had to be railed towards the Quéant region; for Sir Douglas Haig was stretching his original twelve-mile front of advance on either side of Arras to a fifty-mile battle-line, running from Loos to St. Quentin.

On the morning of Tuesday, April 10, troops from Scotland and South Africa (9th division), who had already stormed St. Laurent Blangy, captured Athies. They then gave place, in accordance with programme, to an English division (the 4th), who completed their task by the capture of Fampoux Village and Hyderabad Redoubt. Fampoux was about two miles beyond Monchy plateau, lying in the marsh of the Scarpe Valley, between the river and the German railway communications with Douai. The conquerors of Fampoux achieved one of the pivoting successes of the campaign. They made a dent, more than five thousand yards deep, into the German line. They outflanked the hill fortress of Monchy in the south, and they also outflanked in the north the German positions at Bailleul and other places below the end of the Vimy Ridge.

The attack on Fampoux was made in worse conditions than the advance on Easter Monday. The snow fell more thickly, the soaked, broken ground was a deeper sea of mud, and the gale blew furiously. To the attacking Scotsmen, however, the blinding snow was better than any smoke-screen, forming a natural battle blanket that did not herald any operation. The Germans were surprised and shattered; their artillery was blinded and Fampoux secured.

This was the reason why the Scotsmen, Midlanders, and other Englishmen who had won towards Monchy Hill in the first day of battle were allowed to rest on the Tuesday. Alongside them was the marvellous cavalry brigade, that had also won up the Scarpe valley, taking big guns on the way, and adventuring well beyond the foremost infantry. The victory at Fampoux gave Sir Edmund Allenby the opportunity for one of the most brilliant encircling manoeuvres in modern trench warfare.

The general of a defeated Prussian division which had been pursued by British cavalry into the fringe of open country retired from his old headquarters at Monchy Château. He left



Imperial War Museum

CAPTURE OF VIMY RIDGE. When the Hindenburg lines proved impregnable the Allies endeavoured to outflank them by simultaneous attacks north and south. Both attempts failed in their ultimate object; but while the French under Nivelle were repulsed before the Chemin des Dames, the British made substantial advances in the second battle of Arras, April, 1917, capturing the immensely important Vimy Ridge. These Canadians are digging reserve trenches on the Ridge.



Russell
General Armando Diaz commanded the Italian 23rd army corps in the Carso battles, 1915-16. He was made Italian generalissimo, in succession to General Cadorna in 1917 and led the Italians to victory in 1918.



Levinson



Levinson

Left, General Robert Georges Nivelle led various French brigades, 1914-15, the 2nd Army in 1916, and in December of that year succeeded Joffre as Commander-in-chief. He conducted a great offensive in the Craonne-Reims area, 1917, which failed. Right, General Charles Marie Mangin distinguished himself at Verdun, 1916, and helped in Nivelle's offensive in 1917.

THREE FRENCH AND ITALIAN LEADERS IN 1917

FIGHTING IN SNOW SQUALLS

only a brigadier with one battered brigade, to hold the all-important height. The worn and reduced force of Prussians was ordered to maintain the ground at any sacrifice. Fresh regiments, they were informed, were hurrying to their aid. It was merely a matter of hours when they would be relieved. This was so. Monchy had become the prize in a race against time by the opposing armies. The British won the race, because they did not wait for reinforcements, but struck with all their remaining strength. Sorely had they been tried by three nights and days of terrific fighting, marching in snow, rain and tempest, with little food and less sleep, harassed continually by hidden, hostile machine-guns and shelled by undiscoverable batteries. Yet when the Prussian divisions, which had broken, had to be taken out of the battle, the British troops merely got their second wind, and went forward for another intense and prolonged effort. That is the reason why they won the critical race for time, and altered, greatly for the better, the conditions under which Ludendorff's grand reserve was ground to death between the Hindenburg lines.

In the hells between the obscuring snow-squalls the German machine-gunners were able to observe every movement of their opponents in the little hollows beneath the dominating height. The stoic Britons calmly dug themselves in, in the finest tradition of the first battle of Ypres. Their losses were considerable, but they stuck close to the hill. The cavalry worked forward on both sides of the Cambrai road.

Then, early in the morning of Wednesday, April 11, the long-enduring Scots, English, and mounted troops claimed their reward. Two English infantry brigades of the 37th division, acting in co-operation with cavalry (3rd Cavalry division), assisted by a Tank, in spite of counter-attack by swooping German aeroplanes, encircled Monchy in a series of masterly manoeuvres. The movements at times did not seem rapid. The infantry stumbled up snow slopes, slipping under the double blast of a gale and a rain of bullets. Heads down, they went upward, many falling, yet always with others to take their place.

The Prussians fired from the whitened roofs of the village, and poured machine-gun showers from windows and ditches. Their airmen also used machine-gun fire. But before the snipers could get off the gabled roofs of the cottages the attacking force reached the southern part of the village, and began

CAPTURE OF VIMY RIDGE

to chase the fugitives up the narrow streets and across the square. Thereupon, as a house-to-house conflict seemed to give the enemy time until reinforcements arrived, the combined British movements were locked together.

The cavalry had formed up in a slight hollow north of the village, under a severe fire. The horses wheeled into position, and with amazing suddenness the wild, mud-plastered, unrecognisable figures of Dragoons, Lancers, and Hussars, their faces lost in steel helmets and three days' growth of hair and grime, emerged on to the plateau greeted with wild cheers by thousands of other British troops scattered about the countryside. They had slept for nights in shell holes, in a bath of rain, snow, and mud, with soaking greatcoats around them, chilled to the marrow, hungry and utterly worn out. Yet they charged with superb and victorious fury and perfect, deadly skill. When at last they halted, at the end of a good half mile, not a single Prussian was in view. Machine-guns, that had vainly been used against the too rapid target, were abandoned to them. They linked up with their infantry, who began to search the village, manor-house, and park for concealed defenders, guns, ammunition, and food. The cavalry brought up their Hotchkiss and Lewis guns, and turned to ride down the fugitives in the trenches east of the village.

Between Monchy and Sart Wood they found, in a hollow, a badly-sited entrenched line of German machine-guns. Dismounting, they brought the old Hotchkiss and the new Lewis guns into position above the German line, and, overcoming the enemy, threw him into Sart Wood. British horse-artillery, bumping and lurching, came over holes and dikes and through mud and snow slush, as a preliminary measure for transforming the little Monchy height into the master artillery position against the Drocourt line. It was still a race for time. The German guns beyond Sart Wood began to shell the lost plateau about two hours after the British forces completely occupied it. When night fell, the village and château were smashed into the usual heap of ruins. Long before this the Prussians re-formed and reinforced under cover of Sart Wood, and came out in storming parties to recover the great key-position. Less than a hundred yards from the wood the counter-attack was so smitten by the plunging fire from the hill that it faded into nothingness.

RESULTS OF THE BATTLE

The British front was driven forward half a mile east of Monchy. This won more flexibility for the British defence when the alarmed German High Command drew on its grand reserve for a pitched battle on a great scale for the only hill of supreme importance for thirty miles. Soon German howitzers began to increase their bombardment, and towards the evening another series of assaulting waves issued from Sart Wood.

When the height of Monchy was securely conquered, and posts thrown out into La Bergère and the country near Guémappe, another important operation was directed by Sir Edmund Allenby against the Hindenburg line at the point where it had been broken and turned by the thrust from the south-east of Arras. In the offensive of Easter Monday the hostile line had been assailed as far south as the Cojeul stream, near Henin-sur-Cojeul, while the armies of Sir Hubert Gough and Sir Henry Rawlinson held and occupied the enemy by thrusting actions around Quéant and St. Quentin.

Along the main line of battle, south of Telegraph Hill, near Arras, the village of Neuville Vitasse was carried through a network of trenches on April 9. The German defences on the western bank of the Cojeul stream were also broken. This advance, in combination with the later conquest of Fampoux and Monchy, left the village of Wancourt jutting, like a German bridge-head, into the field of victories of the 3rd Army.

The evening of Wednesday, April 11, may be taken as the end of the Battle of Vimy Ridge, and by the morning of the following day the new British line ran from a point just below Givenchy-en-Gohelle to the south of Vimy village and the south of Bailleul. This remarkable success had been gained at comparatively small cost, as the result of most careful preparation in every detail and perfect co-operation by aircraft, artillery, infantry, and Tanks. Over a front of twelve miles the British had broken through all the German defences, and had come half-way through to the Drocourt-Quéant line. Two miles of the northern end of the Siegfried line had also been taken. At its greatest extent the depth of the Canadian advance was about 5,000 yards, covering hundreds of miles of trenches protected by barbed-wire and machine-guns, with numerous redoubts.

CHAPTER 8

The Fighting Around Arras

ATTER the battle of Vimy Ridge it was the intention of the German commander to make a heavy counter-attack by way of Bois-en-Hache and Pimple Hill against the northern edge of the Ridge. But his operation was anticipated by a sudden movement by the 4th Canadian division and the 24th division of General Horne's forces. Through a snowstorm a squadron of British pilots swooped low down above the wood, where the Prussian Guard had concentrated, and discharged bombs of a new kind that wrought terrible havoc. As the air-men rose above the smoking wood General Horne's barrage went forward, and close behind it came the charging Canadian, Irish, and English troops, the snow blowing on their backs and driving into the faces of their enemies. The ground was a bog of shell-craters and mud, and the German machine gunners on the knoll and the wooded hump maintained a barrage of machine gun fire against the men who were slipping and stumbling forward.

The Prussian Guardsmen, after sweeping the attackers with machine gun fire, came out of their trenches and opened a terrific hand-to-hand combat with bomb and bayonet. The only result was to increase their losses. The Irishmen made a furious charge on the Prussian Guard in Bois-en-Hache, though at times thigh-deep in mud, and thousands of dead and wounded foes marked their trail over Pimple Hill and Bois-en-Hache and along the Souchez stream. The Irish and English troops extended their line towards Givenchy-en-Gohelle, while the Canadians also advanced towards the village on its southerly side.

During the struggle the main mass of General Horne's artillery held the enemy down in Vimy village and the country beyond with such intensity of fire that no German gunner cared to leave the shelter of his dug-out. Captured German guns were employed with their own ammunition against their former owners. Only the snow that veiled the enemy's movements in the Douai Plain prevented Sir Henry Horne from overwhelming the shattered German forces before they could be pieced together again

ALLENBY STRIKES

and strongly reinforced from the grand reserve. Although the enemy clung to Vimy village, on the other side of the slopes, and to the railway on the farther side of Farbus, he merely increased his losses. When the ridge was lost, and the main Hindenburg front turned in the north and pierced in other places, the enemy was left only with the weaker second system running from Drocourt to Quéant, on which he could make a stand with his reserves. If Lens had been allowed to fall, the capture of the entire Drocourt line would quickly have followed.

On Thursday, April 12, as the struggle around Monchy slackened for a brief period, Sir Edmund Allenby widened his great Arras salient by striking southward at Wancourt and Héninel. At first some things did not go very well. The British troops of the 21st and 56th divisions were checked by the thickets of uncut wire and by strong places from which enemy gunners poured out enfilading streams of bullets. At the two villages the infantry were checked by machine gun fire and unbroken wire. Happily, two tanks came forward. Shooting from machine guns at the Germans entrenched behind the entanglement, one tank flattened out two belts of entanglements. Then it climbed the northern slope and fought down the German gunners, after which it advanced into the village of Wancourt. The infantry followed it.

In Héninel the second tank swept down the German troops so ferociously that they fled in terror. Then, with its sister of Wancourt, the Héninel tank explored the land about the Cojeul River. In places, however, the Germans stubbornly held to their pits and trenches, and the fire from the high, raking positions north and south continued to be severe. At length, on Friday, April 13, as one bombing force worked down the trenches towards Wancourt, another strong force worked upward from the south; they met each other behind the Hindenburg line and cheered their common victory.

On a front of seven miles the new Siegfried system was pierced, turned, and occupied. The Wotan switch system was partially penetrated and generally menaced. The old German fortress front between Lens and Arras was shattered, and the gigantic pivot of forts around Blangy was entirely destroyed. Some twelve German divisions had held the main systems or come out in support. They lost, by April 14, 14,000 men as prisoners, with 194 guns, that were soon increased to 228.

THE FIGHTING AROUND ARRAS

While the Wancourt-Héninel action was proceeding the 3rd Bavarian division, which had fought bravely at Loos and on the Somme ridge, was rallied to Douai, and made the spear-head force of a counter-attack on Monchy Hill, with the defeated and re-formed Prussian division in support. Under cover of a sustained and intense bombardment, the attempt to recover the dominating height was developed with crippling losses.

By midday on April 14 the general line of the British advanced troops ran from a point about 1,000 yards east of Bailleul, through Mont Forêt Quarries on the Farbus-Méricourt road, to the eastern end of Hirondelle Wood. North of the river the British had reached Riaumont Wood and the southern outskirts of Lièvin. By the evening the whole town of Lièvin was in the hands of British troops, and the line ran thence to the old front line north of Double Crassier. Large quantities of ammunition, as well as several guns, and stores and materials of every kind, were abandoned by the Germans in their retreat. Meanwhile, fighting south of the Scarpe continued. On the right of the attack troops of the 21st division fought their way eastwards until they had reached a point opposite Fontaine-les-Croisilles, about seven miles south-east of Arras. In the centre a Northumberland brigade of the 50th division carried the high ground east of Héninel and captured Wancourt Tower. Further ground was gained on the ridge south-east of Héninel.

On other parts of the line heavy German counter-attacks developed on April 15, the most violent being against Monchy-le-Preux, held by the 29th division, who completely repulsed the enemy. On the same day the Germans also attacked the positions from Hermies to Noreuil, held by the 1st Anzac corps, under Lieut.-General Sir W. R. Birdwood. Heavy fighting took place and parties of German infantry succeeded in penetrating the lines at Lagnicourt. By the afternoon, however, the enemy were defeated, leaving some 1,700 dead on the field.

On April 16 the Allies launched their main offensive on the Aisne, and shortly after that date the weather on the Arras front began to improve. Preparations were made to deliver the next British attack on April 21, but the weather was again unfavourable, and operations were postponed for two days.

On St. George's Day, April 23, as soon as the powerful French stroke had drawn off part of the reserves Ludendorff was pouring into France, the British commander-in-chief made another

AN ATTACK IN FORCE

attack in force. Sir Edmund Allenby's 3rd army swung out against Roeux and Pelves, Sart Wood, and Vert Wood, Guénappe, Chérisy, and Fontaine, and the country north of Croisilles, and Sir Henry Horne sent one of his corps against Gavrelle. The front of attack was about twelve miles. The operation was a kind of open-field warfare interrupted by scattered redoubts. On the slopes about the Scarpe River, and the little swells of ground between the Cojeul and Sensée streams, the German engineers had constructed a multitude of detached forts.

Ludendorff certainly displayed high ability when he devised this system of interrupting obstacles. He placed only an advance guard in the immediate battle-line, and kept back his large striking forces for a countering blow. In his turn Sir Edmund Allenby seems at first to have sent forward patrols against the scattered forts and entrenched positions, and kept a large reserve in hand for the conflict of mass against mass.

The general result was one of the most sanguinary and close-fought battles in history. Fine weather preceded the action, and enabled the Royal Flying Corps and the Royal Naval Air Wing to show what they could do when they had a good number of machines equal in quality to the best German aeroplanes. On Sunday, April 22, twenty-one German machines and seven German kite balloons were destroyed. On the Monday, thirty-nine German machines were brought down, leaving the enemy's territory open to a large number of bombing raids on railways, dumps, and aerodromes. For a period the British fighting pilots recovered the mastery of the air. By a violent bombardment, continued throughout Sunday night, the artillery inflicted considerable preliminary losses upon the German infantry.

The nearest villages to the German lines were wiped out, and the nearest trenches with their garrisons were battered out of existence or reduced to ruins. The German artillery, however, escaped the crippling damage inflicted upon it in the Vimy and Arras battles. Many German gunners held their fire during the British bombardment, so as to escape counter-battery attack. Ludendorff's aim was to sacrifice his advanced infantry forces, in order to save his guns for the main battle.

When, therefore, the British patrols advanced, they were swept by a barrage of unusual intensity. Nevertheless, they won through the great shell curtain, and a series of magnificent British successes was won, although many of the men were

THE FIGHTING AROUND ARRAS

drawn from Sir Douglas Haig's new reserves, and were receiving their baptism of fire. Southward, progress was made, by furious fighting, to the outskirts of Fontaine. Here there was an extremely strong series of positions at the point where the Hindenburg line crossed the Sensée River.

In spite of the enemy's resistance Fontaine was almost conquered in the first gallant attack in the morning. So severely did the Poméranians of the German division suffer under the British bombardment that they retired to their dug-outs in the support line, and when their empty fire trench was taken by the attacking troops and a tank appeared on the Hindenburg line on their left, they surrendered in a block of five hundred.

The neighbouring village of Guémappe, on the low ground of the Cojeul River, was taken by Scottish troops after a hard fight. The Germans evacuated the ruins, but held on to the machine gun forts in the neighbourhood, and did not retire until they were hammered out. Between Guémappe and Fontaine other British forces of the 30th and 50th divisions advanced southward towards the crossways hamlet of Chérisy, which formed an important German knot of highway communications. Over the rolling fields, rising to two hundred and eighty feet above sea level, the attacking troops fought onward.

Above Guémappe, in the morning, there was a more definite field of conflict than that which obtained southward along the Sensée River. Ludendorff had been much concerned about the loss of Monchy, as the plateau dominated all his line. Between April 10 and April 23 he massed heavy guns in Sart Wood, Vert Wood, and the country around Pelves and Boiry villages.

In the first British advance at dawn, the small German force facing Monchy fled or surrendered as the forward wave of advance reached them. Most of the garrison ran up their own slope to the cover of Sart Wood. This early flight, however, may have been cleverly based upon tactical considerations. Between Guémappe and Monchy, along the road running to Cambrai, the Germans had built a series of redoubts, from which they could bring enfilading fire upon the slopes between Monchy and the opposing woods.

- Northward around Roeux and Pelves were other systems of hostile positions from which the British attacking forces could be swept. Therefore, the Englishmen coming down the Monchy Hill were smitten in the face and on both sides, when they

GAVRELLE VILLAGE

endeavoured to storm in and through Sart and Vert Woods, and advance on their left towards Pelves.

Not until Guémappe was consolidated for a further advance along the Cambrai road, and not until Roeux was entirely won and held along the Scarpe, could a rapid British movement be developed from the Monchy plateau in the centre of the battle line. A superb force of Scottish battalions of the 51st division made a gallant attack upon Roeux village, by way of Gavrelle Road, towards a fortified farm and fortified chemical works. They were swept by a furnace blast of machine guns and trench mortar fire, from the ruins about Roeux and from redoubts on the slopes of Greenland Hill. Yet by noon the farm redoubt and the chemical works on the Gavrelle road, north of Roeux, were captured, and the Scotsmen were progressing eastward.

Southward across the river Scarpe an English assailing force of the 37th division was held up by intense gun-fire, and had to wait for the help of a tank, which crawled up through a long copse. Then a position known as Shrapnel and Bayonet Trench was carried, and the troops slowly pressed forward, under a heavy curtain of shell and a rain of bullets. Along the south bank of the Scarpe they were faced by a crescent of fortified slopes, running from Roeux and Greenland Hill to Plouvain. The English action in this centre remained, therefore, somewhat in the nature of a demonstration along the Scarpe lowland, being designed to assist the more important thrusts against the northern heights.

Above Roeux and somewhat flanking it was the village of Gavrelle, forming a main point in the Drocourt line. The enemy had two main roads running south of Gavrelle towards Roeux, with another main road running south-east to Plouvain. Gavrelle was also connected, by a French national road, with Douai, and by a northward branch road with Oppy. A hundred and sixty feet high, it formed the enemy's chief observation-point below the southernmost slopes of the Vimy Ridge.

On the other hand, it was overlooked by the Vimy foothills, and dominated by the artillery of Sir Henry Horne. The men of the Royal Naval division who stormed into Gavrelle, under cover of a magnificent barrage, were opposed by Hamburgers and Rhinelanders. With comparative ease they captured many of these sturdy Germans, and began to turn the conquered line about, so as to resist the coming counter-attack.

THE FIGHTING AROUND ARRAS

Then, all along the twelve miles of broken enemy positions, the German commander launched his main forces. Only when he thought that the force of the British attack had been weakened did he fully disclose the striking power he had been preparing. His plan was based on the fact that he possessed practically uninjured communications between Douai and Cambrai, while the British forces had immediately behind them roads and lines wrecked by their own artillery in the previous battles.

At first the German commander won a remarkable series of victories. By hurricanes of shell fire, the British forces in Gavrelle were compelled to retire. The Scotsmen in Roeux were driven beyond the ruins of the village and the fortified cemetery. The English troops on the southern side of the Scarpe were forced back. The victors of Guémappe village were smashed out of their defences, and then compelled to retreat, against fresh German troops pouring across the fields from Vitry-en-Artois.

Between the Cojeul and the Sensée Rivers the breaking of the British offensive seemed complete. The British troops were forced away from the positions around Chérisy and from Fontaine. Monchy, which had been taken by the British in a fairly intact state, was reduced to a heap of debris.

Though overwhelmed by the weight and driving power of the enemy's counter movement, the advanced British forces made a series of heroic, and often scattered, stands. The Newfoundland troops who had pushed to the farthest point of the preliminary advance in a most difficult part of the battle front were assailed by two fresh German columns possessing a great superiority in numbers. Yet the main body of Newfoundlanders fell back in orderly fashion.

Reaching the trenches beyond the main British positions the Germans were caught by the British guns. In search of cover, they dropped into the advanced position that had been held by the Newfoundlanders. Without waiting for supports, the Newfoundlanders surged forward again, and for thirty minutes there raged, in and around their lost position, such a hand-to-hand fight as had rarely been seen in the whole course of the war. In the trenches in which the Newfoundlanders again settled, and over the ground which they had counter-attacked, there were fifteen hundred German corpses, and many enemy wounded.

The Lincolns, helped by some north-country troops, performed a similar achievement. They met a body of Bavarians

A GALLANT STAND

who much outnumbered them. Nevertheless, attacking on both sides, first with the rifle, then with the bayonet and the butt, and at last with fists, they annihilated the enemy. The Northumberland Fusiliers, in a magnificent struggle, took and held one of the most important German strategic positions. The Shropshires, Londoners, Black Watch, and numerous other troops nobly distinguished themselves.

Some of the Middlesex and Argyll and Sutherlands touched the record of the Royal West Kents in the Somme Battle. In the great German counter-attack the two English and Highland battalions were driven right back to their original line. Only one company of the Middlesex and one company of the Argyll and Sutherlands remained, like khaki islands, in the grey inundation. Fighting on both flanks and on their rear, and breaking the German waves by machine gun and musketry fire on their front, the five hundred enveloped men clung to two German officers and fourteen men they had taken prisoners, and swept with fire each German wave that broke against them and passed, under raking range, by their flanks. At first the men thought that they would be slain by their own guns. The British artillery put a terrific shell curtain upon the German forces.

Happily, some vigilant British forward observation officer noticed the island of khaki in the ocean of grey. The British barrage swept up to the rear of the two companies, jumped over their heads, and again descended, just beyond the front of the little encircled force. There it remained, protecting the two companies from further attack from the east.

Instead of profiting by this unexpected help and making a desperate dash backward through the advanced enemy lines, the English and Scottish captains decided to hold on until the British movement in force developed. In the triumphant moment, when the Germans broke and retreated, the fugitives were taken in the rear. The band of Highlanders, Londoners, and Middlesex lads made a gap in the retreating German line, and then ranged in line with the main British force and continued the advance.

A Worcester battalion, in another part of the field, made a similar stand on a larger scale and for a much longer period. Two great German charges swept back their comrades on both their flanks. Being well entrenched, the Worcesters broke one wave of 3,000 Germans, and, when the German commander

THE FIGHTING AROUND ARRAS

launched another 4,000 men, again withstood the solid waves and swept the divided force as it swirled along their flanks.

Soon afterwards all the German and British guns pounded the battlefield with hurricanes of shell. The Worcesters ran out of water, and the dust and smoke of the artillery action increased their sufferings and the strain on their bodies and minds. Still they gave no ground. Husbanding their munitions, they fought the enemy off for thirty-six waterless, arduous hours, and were at last joined by the main British forces. The wood held by the Worcesters had been reached by them on April 14. Thus, in addition to the magnificent stand they made in the acute phase of the battle of April 23, they had fought for a previous eight days with their communications cut.

While everything still apparently indicated a decisive British check, the British forces regathered, with their main supports, for the grand clash of the Battle of St. George's Day. Between Gavrelle and the Douai railway and Scarpe River parks of British guns opened upon the solid lines of Germans advancing from Fresnes. Gavrelle and Guémappe were again ground to powder, while Chérisy, Vis, Fontaine, and other villages on which the victorious Germans had based themselves were caught in tempestuous blasts of high-explosive and incendiary shells.

Then, amid and around the dreadful shell curtains, maintained by the artillery on either side, the Scottish, English, Welsh, and Newfoundland troops closed upon Ludendorff's main armies. Gavrelle was recovered by bitter fighting by Sir Henry Home's corps, and then held against incessant assaults by German storming troops. Again and again the Germans gathered, in a wood by the Douai Road, only to be more than decimated by the British barrage, and finally dispersed by the machine guns of the British garrison in Gavrelle. The struggle went on for thirty-six hours. The survivors of each broken German force were sorted out, reduced from battalions to companies, and held in reserve for another attack. Meanwhile, fresh regiments, after toiling from Douai under long-range British gunfire and aeroplane attacks, were deployed near Fresnes, and sent into the defender's barrage and against the machine guns behind the flaming line of shell.

It was all in vain. Nothing could shake the garrison at Gavrelle, though they were a small number of men in comparison with the German divisions repeatedly thrown against

GREENLAND HILL

them. In an attempt to break an already-shattered British position, which had not been organized for defence on its eastward side, the German commander lost men by the ten thousand, although the troops he continually tried to hammer out of the village numbered only some hundreds. He extended his attacks by column to the long road between Gavrelle and Roeux, trying to pierce section after section. But all the British line held firm. The battle continued all night, and ended about mid-day on April 24 by the exhaustion of the German forces.

The Scotsmen of the 51st division, immediately southward along the Gavrelle road and in the outskirts of Roeux, also held most of their ground against incessant and heavy attacks. They had captured, in their first advance, the chemical works on the Gavrelle road, which contained a useful amount of material, including some mine-throwers. The Germans held on to the village, or rather the site of the village, and retained the edges of the Scarpe River abreast of the ruins. They also won back the crest of Greenland Hill, and from all their vantage points they made continual rushes against the Scotsmen.

Neither the British nor German artillery could directly intervene in the swaying body-to-body infantry struggle. They could only curtain off supplies and reinforcements and take terrible toll of all supporting troops and marching reserves. Largely by reason of the nature of the ground, and especially by reason of the strength of the dominating Greenland Hill position, Ludendorff won an important defensive victory at Roeux.

He completely checked an extremely dangerous British thrust north of the Scarpe, which would have turned his position south of the river and pierced the Drocourt-Quéant line in the neighbourhood of Douai. For months after the battle of St. George's Day, Greenland Hill remained an impregnable German salient, rising between the British positions at Monchy and Gavrelle. It became the principal point of conflict between the British forces based on Arras and the German forces based on Douai.

At Guémappe the British troops repeated their success of Gavrelle. After losing the village in the morning they went forward again in the evening against the famous 3rd Bavarian division. They bombed and bayoneted the southern Germans out of the ruins, and swept them back for half a mile or more. Towards nightfall, the German commander threw in fresh troops, but they were smashed up by artillery fire.

THE FIGHTING AROUND ARRAS

Around Fontaine, by the Sensée River, the remnant of the Pomeranian regiment, captured by the British infantry and released by the German counter-attacking forces, were caught, before they could recover their arms, in the grand return attack, and sent into the British cages. With them went prisoners from sixteen battalions, shattered in the actions around the bridge-head of Fontaine-lez-Croisilles.

This village was not merely a bridge-head over the Sensée River. Scarcely two miles down the road was Hendecourt, with Riencourt about another mile away on the same road. Southwest of Hendecourt and Riencourt was Bullecourt, where the Australians and the Londoners were fiercely thrusting at the Quéant end of the Hindenburg switch-line. Fontaine was the gateway leading behind both the Hindenburg systems. It had to be held by the Germans at any sacrifice. Seven or more divisions were brought up and poured through Chérisy to defend the flank of the Fontaine positions. Around the village itself more German forces were sent forward, to get through the British barrage and strengthen the front along the river.

In this action the British artillery had a great superiority of position. From Ecoust St. Mein to Croisilles, some of the guns of the 5th Army took in flank the large German forces on the Sensée River line. These same German forces were smitten on the river front by the guns of the 3rd Army. The Germans were in a large salient, subjected to cross fires by two masses of heavy British artillery. Sir Edmund Allenby's men held the great observation point on Tower Hill, which had been taken in the first British attack, and the forward observation officers were soon able to train their guns upon the enemy formations as these came into view over the lower undulations of ground. In the end, though neither Fontaine nor Chérisy was occupied, the enemy's losses were immense.

Immediately a large body of German troops had been repulsed near Gavrelle on April 25, Sir Henry Horne turned the main mass of advanced guns against the top of the Wotan Line. The villages of Achéville, Arleux, and Oppy had been transformed into fortresses, to protect the top of the Hindenburg switch system at Drocourt and all the southern side of the Lens salient from Avion and Méricourt to Rouvroy.

The first phase of the battle was in the nature of a skirmish on a large scale. Storming parties of Canadian, English, and

ARLEUX CAPTURED

Scottish troops fought into Oppy, and broke into and beyond the junction point of the German system at Arleux. At the same time, the British forces in Gavrelle swept forward more than half a mile south of the village, and reached the western slope of Greenland Hill.

The capture of Arleux was a gallant feat. It was carried out by troops of the 1st Canadian division who fought on April 9 from Neuville St. Vaast over the Vimy Ridge, and continued their great drive for a depth of six miles into the German front. When the attacking troops left the trenches before dawn on April 28, the German wire entanglements remained uncut over several long stretches, and behind the wire was a Prussian division, the 111th, who also held the crest of a slight slope running towards Oppy.

Arleux was a straggling street, flanked by groups of cottages, small gardens, and orchards. All these were fortified, together with some sunken roads at the northern end of the village. The Prussians endeavoured to hold out until reinforcements arrived from Fresnoy; but the Canadians, after storming the crest between Arleux and Oppy, pressed their attack with such fury that Arleux fell in two hours of hand-to-hand fighting. In the sunken roads German machine-guns continued to worry the conquerors until night-fall. Then they were rushed by the same tactics as had won the crowning hummock of the Vimy cliffs.

As soon as news of the defeat reached the German gunners, they directed a heavy fire upon the village. When the clouds of red and yellow dust cleared, the buildings of Arleux were scattered around the fields. Yet the Canadians held on to the spot where the village had been. The German commander barraged the village with gunfire, and swept it with an arc of machine guns before sending his infantry into the open. It was all in vain. Every time his troops came out, they were seen from the Vimy Ridge, and shelled into scattered impotence. A few days afterwards the Canadians broke into the German position at Fresnoy.

With the storming of the crest between Arleux and Oppy another important success seemed to be assured. Oppy, however, was a more difficult position to assail. The key to it was a wood beside the village, and this wood the enemy had made into a grand rookery of machine guns. The guns were mostly placed in the budding boughs 20 to 30 feet above ground, and

THE FIGHTING AROUND ARRAS

the gunners could take shelter on ladders running down the trunks. On the ground, the deep dugouts placed behind barricades were concealed and strengthened by felled trees.

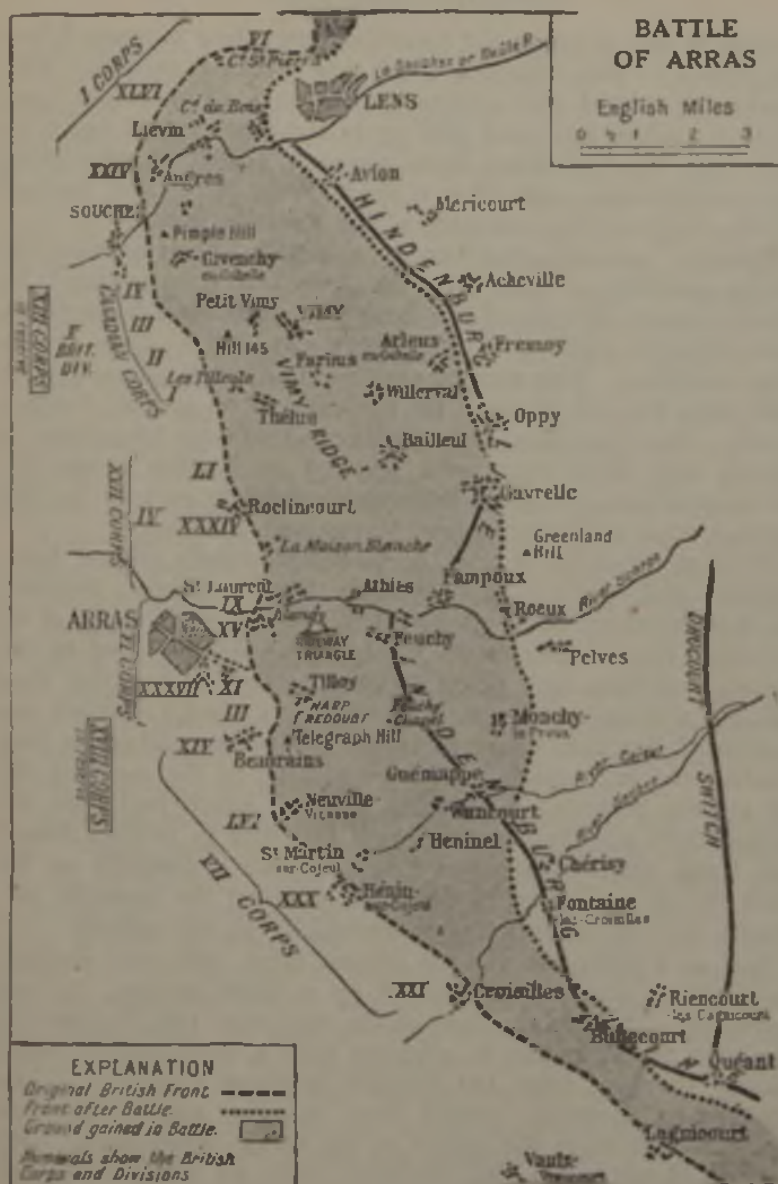
In the first advance, the British troops penetrated the village and reached the wood and then swayed backwards and forwards for hours against tremendous odds. German reinforcements came up in motor omnibuses as well as by rail; and from Neu-vireuil filtered into the wood and the groups of houses near the white manor-house. In the end, the German reinforcements worked back through the wood, and round the church and recovered the village.

Sir Henry Horne brought forward his heavy guns, and lashed the village with big shell and hammered at all its communications. Yet for days the big white manor-house survived, with its broken roofs and empty windows clearly visible through a thin fringe of dead trees. The German commander retired the broken garrison and sent forward the 2nd Guards reserve. When the British troops again attacked Oppy, in darkness before dawn on May 3, they came under a hail of machine gun bullets, and afterwards under a hurricane of shell fire. Again they penetrated into Oppy Wood, only to be thrown out by the massed counter-attacking forces of the Prussian Guards, and forced back, for the second time, to the outskirts of the village.

While the British barrage went ahead to the eastern end of the village, with the assaulting troops following close behind it, the Guards reserve drove in sideways in a southerly direction, through the wood and across the village. This compelled the British flank to fall back over the Gavrelle Road. Oppy again was won and lost.

Northward, however, the second British offensive on the Oppy front was more successful. Long stretches of trenches were stormed between Oppy and Arleux, enabling the line to be linked up with the Canadians in Arleux. The Canadians were by this time known to the German command, and regarded by them as their prey. Sir Julian Byng, so they thought, had kept the division so long in action that its strength was gone. The 15th reserve division of Prussians was informed that it had weak troops in front of it and was deployed in and around Fresnoy, with orders to attack in the morning of May 3.

The result was that before morning dawned, the fresh Prussian division was surrounded in Fresnoy village. By six



THE BATTLES AROUND ARRAS. Map illustrating the British offensive in April-May 1917. The gains included the capture of Vimy Ridge and parts of the Hindenburg Line from Gavrelle to Bullecourt.

THE FIGHTING AROUND ARRAS

o'clock in the morning the Canadian encircling movement was completed. The enemy's front was strongly defended with machine-guns and wire entanglements, and, as at Arleux, part of the Canadian force was held up in the centre. But again, on the wings, the Canadians broke through, linked together along the enemy's rear, and, after a short, fierce bomb and bayonet attack, captured the remnants of the Prussian division.

Fresnoy, however, then became a British salient between the enemy positions at Achewille and Oppy. A counter-attack by the 1st reserve division of the Prussian Guards was shattered by high-explosive shell and shrapnel from British guns on the Vimy positions. This repulse enabled the Canadians to improve their lines beyond Fresnoy by the capture of another German trench. The Canadians, however, remained with two flanks to defend, and when they were relieved by English troops the enemy continued to thrust in on either flank to prevent the new garrison from working forward throughout the line.

Then at dawn on May 9 the German artillery around Lens, together with every available gun north of the Scarpe, drenched the five hundred yards of front at Fresnoy with shells of all calibres. Dense white smoke screens were skilfully used by the Germans to hide their firing artillery as well as to cover their infantry advance. The men of the 15th reserve division advanced at dawn in dense columns, and were repulsed as they reached the fire trench. At nine o'clock in the morning the 1st reserve division of Prussian Guards, which had been detached from the Oppy sector, also attacked in column formation, and, after tremendous losses, gained a foothold on the outskirts of the village. For several hours the struggle continued, but the English troops gradually won the mastery.

Just as a defensive victory against great odds was shaping, the German commander brought up a third division, the 5th Bavarian. Through the lines of the weakened 15th division the Bavarian troops passed in columns with a battering-ram effect against the lads from the English Southern Counties. The Englishmen, however, served their machine guns to the last moment, and when the cellars of the village were choked with gas and blown in by high explosive, they fell back to Fresnoy Wood. Thence they recovered part of the lost ground by a counter-attack, and from the north-west corner of the wood defied the Prussian and Bavarian masses to shift them.

BLUDGEON WORK

The German high command paid an excessive price for the recovery of Fresnoy. It was mere bludgeon work, this counter-attack by 27,000 men in dense column formation, and as the field of war was dominated by Vimy Ridge, the destruction of German men, guns, and material was enormous. The same conditions obtained at Oppy and along the next village southward at Gavrelle. While the forces of the 1st, 3rd and 5th British armies swayed to and fro on the wings of the battlefield, their centre stood almost motionless during weeks of slaughter.

The garrison of Gavrelle had heaps of dead grey figures before it in the action of April 23. In the next action, on April 28, the British forces that attacked from the south of Gavrelle village swept over a wide tract of featureless country and reached the western slopes of Greenland Hill. The movement, however, was checked by fire from the German position southward around Roeux. Until Roeux fell Greenland Hill could not be taken.

While fighting was going on at Greenland Hill on April 28, some of the forces on the left, including a London battalion, dug themselves in and stubbornly broke a number of counter-attacks. A company of Londoners whose officers were all casualties made a daring attack on Square Wood, which they occupied, and then charged against a strong position known as Railway Copse, from which the Germans fled. The Londoners dug themselves in until the evening, when they returned to their division after having suffered comparatively slight casualties.

Their feat indicated how near the German line was to breaking. When, however, the London men withdrew, Ludendorff reoccupied Railway Copse and Square Wood with division after division, and, after another fortnight of intense fighting, the main British forces only won one quarter of the ground through which the two hundred Londoners had penetrated. Greenland Hill remained for months the base of the German defences on the Douai road. It was not until the first week in June that the British hold on its western slopes was for the time assured. The eastern slopes were still occupied by the enemy.

On April 30 the Germans round Gavrelle reorganized the ground they had temporarily lost to the London group, and, on a day of brilliant weather, stormed back towards the village. The great counter-attack resulted only in fresh and larger grey swathes being piled upon the barren fields. On May 3 the British troops in turn resumed the battle in the Gavrelle sector.

THE FIGHTING AROUND ARRAS

They were met by masses of Germans in a violent hand-to-hand combat round a windmill north of the Douai road. Eight times the windmill changed hands while the gunners on both sides looked on helpless. Another division of the Prussian Guard was engaged in the struggle around Gavrelle on May 3. It was supported by the reserve Guards division, which was detached for the first counter-attack at Fresnoy. In these circumstances the nine battalions of Guardsmen completely lost the day, and, leaving the windmill in the hands of the British troops, after seven vain counter-attacks, retired.

Around Roeux the fighting on April 28 and May 3 was as terrible as at Gavrelle. The English troops who relieved the Scotsmen had a bitter time in and about the chemical works and on Greenland Hill. Having recovered the factory, the enemy made it a machine gun and trench mortar position. Many leading English officers fell, but subalterns and sergeants succeeded them, and with brilliant initiative held on to important points of ground. On the afternoon of April 28, the German commander collected a great force of men and launched them in wave after wave. The English battalions, though enfiladed northward from the high ground of the Douai road, and caught on the flank by a line of German machine guns, re-took the chemical works as the Scotsmen had done, but soon had to fall back.

The enemy had a labyrinth of defences knitted together from the ruins of the railway station, manor-house, chemical works, cemetery, churchyard, and cottages. They also held two dominating positions north and south of the village. Bombarded out of the chemical works on April 28, the English troops resumed their attack and again entered the factory, and captured a hundred German Poles in and around the works. Again, however, they were driven back.

Continuous fighting went on around Roeux for the first two weeks of May. Finally, in the evening of Friday, May 11, the English troops, with Irishmen and Scotsmen helping them, completely broke the enemy's grip upon this group of fortified buildings. In the great night attack the sand-bagged cellars of the chemical works were cleared and reorganized. The quarry by the chemical factory yielded two hundred and fifty prisoners, and some four hundred and fifty more were taken in the works and the churchyard, in the tunnels and open fields.

THE TAKING OF ROEUX

The Bavarian and Württemberg battalions had come straight from Douai to garrison Roeux. As night was falling a terrific bombardment of shrapnel drove the garrison underground. The attacking troops then carried many of the German machine gun posts before the gunners came out to fire. The larger part of the German garrison fled across the open fields of Plouvain, only to find this way of escape closed by another British barrage. Some of them went through the curtain of death, and paid heavily for their gallantry; other groups, caught between two fires, surrendered, bringing the tale of prisoners to about 700.

The total British casualties were below this figure, while the losses of the two German regiments amounted to 2,000 men, in addition to the unknown number of fugitives caught in the enveloping curtain of shell near Plouvain. The victorious troops spent the night and the following day in turning the labyrinth of tunnels, dug-outs, and machine gun emplacements to their own use. In the evening they again advanced, and steadily worked through the village, which was conquered against incessant German counter-attacks by May 16.

After May 16 the German army headquarters at Douai resigned themselves to the loss of Roeux, and, with Roeux, to the loss also of the command of the Scarpe valley and the flanking position in which the western slope of Greenland Hill could be swept with fire. Some two miles south of Roeux was the dominating British position, the hill of Monchy, which looked across the valley to Infantry Hill and the slope on which Sart Wood and Vert Wood rose.

A grand increase of heavy British artillery, sited behind the Monchy Plateau, was a fundamental condition of a successful British advance on Monchy. The artillery problem could only be solved by a vast amount of organizing work on the new lines of communication from Arras to Fampoux, Monchy, Guémappe, and Wancourt. The labours of the British pioneers and other construction forces were magnificent in scope, intensity, and rapidity. Yet they needed time to carry out their mighty work, by reason not only of its magnitude, but of the continual harassing effects of the long-range German gun fire.

Yet the Germans were subjected to much more damage than they were able to inflict. Their loss of Vimy Ridge and Monchy Hill laid their communications generally open to gunfire in clear daylight, and enabled a long-range British bombardment from

THE FIGHTING AROUND ARRAS

invisible howitzers to be maintained against all their rear in the night-time. From the valley positions, captured by the cavalry brigade after the storming of Monchy, the British infantry worked forward and upward to Sart and Vert Woods and the knoll, known as Infantry Hill, lying between the woods. Some progress was made north of Monchy at the end of April, and in the hard fighting of May 3 the Sart and Vert Woods were approached and part of Infantry Hill was occupied. A continual British bombardment made it impossible for the Germans at once to sweep back down the lower slopes. Infantry Hill was carried, and the German lines were driven in some three hundred yards in front of Vert Wood. The British success, however, was not permanent. The enemy was able to filter large reinforcements into the caverns. Though the woods were smitten constantly by the British artillery, the Germans countered by deepening their underground works and pouring thicker concrete upon their roofs.

On June 14 the knoll was again stormed on a front of three-quarters of a mile, and the survivors of the garrison were captured. It was a brilliant feat of surprise, as the Scotsmen and East Anglians went forward without artillery support. Once more the Germans drove the British troops from the crest. Yet again the Englishmen and Scotsmen returned the attack, and recovered their advanced posts on Infantry Hill.

About a mile and a half below Monchy was the village of Guémappe, now a chaos of shell holes, near the Arras-Cambrai highroad. After the victory of St. George's Day, Ludendorff's lieutenant sent the 3rd Bavarian division forward, and when this in turn was broken he brought up larger forces. His aim was to retain machine gun positions on the Cambrai Road, from which the flank of the British from Monchy could be swept.

In spite of the renewed strength of the enemy in both guns and men, the British troops at Guémappe heroically fought forward, on May 3, towards St. Rohart factory, near the village of Vis-en-Artois, at the junction of the Sensée stream and the Cambrai highroad. If this advance had been allowed fully to develop it would have cut through and behind the supreme German fortress system around the Sensée River and around Bullecourt, Quéant, Rencourt, Chérisy, and Cagnicourt.

The entire Hindenburg system, with its many tunnels, its thousands of forts, redoubts, and earthworks, would have been

CHÉRISY TAKEN AND LOST

decisively pierced. Months of incessant and most murderous work would have been spared the English, Australian, and Scots forces on the Sensée River and Bullecourt sectors, and the enemy would have been compelled to make a longer retirement to a weaker line. The junction, at Quéant, of the remnant of the Siegfried line and the Wotan line had been reduced to a salient by the series of victories won by the 3rd Army. Basing his observation posts on the hill at Monchy, Sir Edmund Allenby, the moment he launched his attack from Guémappe on May 3, threatened to cut through the base of the great German salient.

The German high command massed more guns and more of the forces of their grand reserve in the Cambrai area. When at last even their great reserve was in danger of exhaustion they brought guns and men from the Russian front. The British troops at Guémappe, notwithstanding, succeeded in pressing back the most intense concentration of enemy forces. South of the Cambrai road, at a distance of about a mile from the Sensée River, the Germans were located in three quarries and a triangular wood, all connected with each other by means of tunnels. The German garrison in Triangle Wood resisted hard and steadily, and were driven out slowly.

The victorious British troops then crossed the Sensée River, south of Vis, and, swinging their right wing along the Guémappe-Chérisy road, stormed into Chérisy village. In the first stages of this advance one English battalion had no casualties. The success was, however, only a prelude to main battles, for the German position at this point was extremely strong. The trenches were heavily held, as also were two difficult sunken roads which had been converted into lines of machine gun forts. In addition, the narrow valley of the Sensée brook, that ran across the new British front immediately behind the village, formed a formidable obstacle.

On May 3 the British advanced troops broke clean through the village, fought across the river, and began to progress towards the rear communications of the Fontaine-Bullecourt-Riencourt-Quéant salient. Thereupon, the German commander brought up an overwhelming counter-attacking force, and from woods, hollows, and tunnels sent them, in convergent mass, storming against the new temporary British line. Although the fresh German reserves greatly outnumbered the advanced British forces, they could not easily recover Chérisy. SOS signals

THE FIGHTING AROUND ARRAS

went up from the British outposts, and, in answer to these signals, a blasting British barrage fell upon the German multitudes. Yet in some places the enemy came through the fire in sufficient force to press back the British troops. Chérisy was lost, and soon afterwards the Germans recovered the strong point of Cavalry Farm, lying east of Guémappe.

Except for the German tunnels, the ground which was given up by the English was of no value. It was wholly exposed to gun fire and unprotected by trenches, save for fragments of shallow ditches which had been wrecked by the opposing artilleries. Sir Edmund Allenby relied, in this kind of open field warfare, more upon his guns than upon his men. His method was to use fewer troops than did the enemy, while bringing a heavier gunfire to bear upon the great counter-attacking masses which he provoked into action.

The additional guns employed by the Germans at the beginning of May did not increase the fire power proportionately to their number. Many of the new pieces were needed to replace the batteries which the British gunners had rooted out with remarkable accuracy. In one part of the field, where three German batteries were grouped, two of them were completely destroyed by British counter-battery fire, and the third was badly damaged. Therefore, when the German infantry came back to the exposed ground between Chérisy and Cavalry Farm, they had again to suffer terribly, until they could construct fresh earthworks and excavate new dug-outs.

Then, by a night attack delivered by the British troops along the Arras-Cambrai road, on May 12, Cavalry Farm was again recovered, together with twelve hundred yards of German trenches. West and north-west of Chérisy village the British regiments slowly gained more ground by slight pushes, but no further general assault was delivered for many weeks.

One of the reasons for this was that the extraordinary strength of the southern side of the Hindenburg systems had been revealed in the intense fighting round the Sensée brook salient. The German stand was based upon two continuous tunnels, placed about 100 yards apart, and apparently extending for many miles like the underground electric railways of London. There were a great many exits to each tunnel, and an unparalleled number of sunken concrete machine gun redoubts. A rush across one of the tunnels was usually ineffective. German

AN ENGINEERING MARVEL

reinforcements were sent, in continual streams, along the subterranean galleries, against both sides of the attacking force. At the same time the main masses of German reserves came out into the open, and stormed against the British front. For the purpose of grinding down the strength of the Germans Sir Douglas Haig decided that it was wisest merely to nibble at the strong, completed path of the Hindenburg tunnel system, and induce the Germans to counter-attack in the open.

At Fontaine-lez-Croisilles the tunnel system was as perfect as it was at Bullecourt. In the battle of May 3 the English regiments, on the Fontaine section of the Sensée line, stormed forward at dawn, and captured all the enemy's first zone of defences, including the important observation position known as the Hump. Then they carried six hundred yards along the first Hindenburg line and took Fontaine Wood, north of the village. The Germans, however, remained in the south and south-east trenches and occupied the sunken roads west of Fontaine. Also, near the wood on its southern side, there was a strong system of hostile defences, and all the ground which the Germans lost was pounded by heavy shell fire. The British detachments in the wood obtained contact with the forces in Chérisy, but the enemy remained pocketed along the western side of the Sensée brook and immediately below it. When the British advanced forces were weakened by the barrage, the new German shock troops (" Stosstruppen ") crept forward in the converging movements of which they were excessively proud. At Fontaine they succeeded at heavy cost in holding the village and pressing the British battalions back. Nevertheless, the British retained the supreme advantage of the possession of the Hump.

Immediately after the battle of May 3, Sir Edmund Allenby massed an enormous weight of artillery south-east of Arras. Employing the dominating height as a permanent fire-control position, and sending up squadrons of aircraft to assist in discovering hostile battery sites and movements in the enemy's rear, he broke up the Hindenburg system round Fontaine by a fortnight of intense bombardment. The artillery of Sir Hubert Gough's 5th Army strongly assisted in the work of shattering the German front between Fontaine and Bullecourt.

The Germans' main communication tunnel was the last word in modern military engineering. It was lined as comfortably as the hall of a new dwelling-house, with countless alcoves con-

THE FIGHTING AROUND ARRAS

taining sleeping bunks, shelves for rifles, small arms ammunition, and bomb supplies. Great underground caverns were connected with the main tunnel, into which were also built concreted shafts, running outward to enable machine-guns to be thrust up into the shell-holes of No Man's Land on one side, and shell-holes in the rear of the tunnel on the other side. In some cases the protective wire was arranged in successive belts each 25 feet deep. The main object of the British commanders was to batter in the tunnel. Between Fontaine and Bullecourt for ten days and nights the heaviest British artillery poured hundreds of thousands of the new British high-explosive shells upon the tunnelled line. The effect was terrifying. Where aerial photographs had first revealed perhaps the most intricate system of defences that military engineers could construct, there remained at last only a tortured stretch of brown, beaten, and featureless earth.

The battle in the Fontaine salient became a decisive duel between the gun and the tunnel. The gun won. In the early morning of May 20, the British infantry advanced between Fontaine and Bullecourt, and carried the first Hindenburg line. When night fell the attacking forces were firmly in the support line above the tunnel. A scattering machine gun fire from the tunnel outlets delayed, for a time, the British troops, yet before noon they had driven right across the flanking systems, between the enemy's first and second lines, and reached the alley ways in the support line. Thereupon the German commander launched his reserves in open warfare. The fresh German troops held the Englishmen and Scotsmen back until the afternoon, while the German artillery ravaged the lost territory and the British rear with whirlwinds of shell. In the evening, assisted by their barrage, the British troops obtained a firm footing in the last German trenches and consolidated their victory on the Hindenburg line. After the battle of May 20, only two thousand yards of the Hindenburg tunnel remained in the possession of the Germans between Fontaine and Bullecourt.

CHAPTER 9

Bullecourt and Hill 70

THERE is a road in France of sacred interest to the people of the Australian Commonwealth. It runs by Albert, through Bapaume, to Cambrai. Between Albert and Bapaume are Pozières and Mouquet Farm, and between Bapaume and Cambrai is a scatter of villages—Boursies, Beaumetz, Morchies, Lagnicourt, Bullecourt, and others—lying mainly north of the great national road.

Heroic as was the fighting record of the Australians on the Gallipoli peninsula, their mettle was far more severely tested during nearly a year of fighting on and around the Albert-Cambrai highway. Their commander, Sir William Birdwood, after exhausting the enemy forces on the Beaumetz line, stormed into Lagnicourt on March 26, 1917, thereby reaching, within two miles, the Queant junction of the Siegfried and Wotan sections of the Hindenburg line. By their audacious stroke in the critical direction of Quéant, they imperilled the entire plan of General von Ludendorff, and opened the vast battle along the Hindenburg line fourteen days before the 1st and 3rd British armies drove through the enemy's front.

After swinging forward his left wing, the commander of the Australian troops, on April 2, thrust forward with his right wing, and carried all the enemy's advanced line at Louverval and Doignies. At the same time he lengthened his hold around the Quéant pivot by moving forward on the left to Noreuil and Longatte. At the end of the first week in April the Australians fought forward from Noreuil, and approached one of the supreme battlefields of the Great War—Bullecourt. They were a part of the left wing of the 5th army, under Sir Hubert Gough, which was co-operating with the 3rd army under Sir Edmund Allenby. There was, however, a great difference between the offensive power of the 5th and 3rd armies. For example, the Australian and British troops of the 5th army had so rapidly advanced from Bapaume that they had left most of their heavy artillery behind them. They set out from the neighbourhood of Bapaume on March 17.

BULLECOURT AND HILL 70

and in nine days of advance, they arrived at the Hindenburg line, with only light artillery to support them.

By an intense speeding up of all the vast constructive and engineering work, the period of British preparation was considerably shortened. In the meantime, the 3rd army that faced the enemy in positions established in October, 1914, had been preparing since the spring of 1916 for the blow it delivered on April 9, 1917. The 3rd army thus attacked the Germans with an equality in the matter of preparations. When, however, Sir Edmund Allenby's forces advanced beyond the range of their medium-calibre guns, their situation became, for a time, rather awkward. While they were dragging up, through snow and slush, their 6 in. guns, they required some remarkable movement by the 5th army in order to occupy the enemy and force him to weaken the front which they intended to attack. The Australian infantry advanced over the snow, at five o'clock in the morning on April 11, while the guns of the 3rd army were flashing over the north-western horizon. There was no time for the British artillery to attempt to break the wire of the Hindenburg system. It was left to some Tanks to crawl over the snowfields before dawn and attempt, under fire of the new German anti-Tank guns, to flatten out some of the entanglements that protected the great tunnel.

In and around the tunnel were two German battalions in the front line, and the rest of a division in support and reserve. Machine-gun forts were placed along the hostile front, and behind the Australians there was not sufficient heavy artillery to stamp out these forts and the trenches they defended, with the main lines of earthworks and caverns built above the tunnel. An hour before dawn a few big British guns began to shell Bullecourt and Riencourt. Half an hour afterwards the preliminary bombardment of hostile trenches quickened. Still the great shell bursts only occurred slowly in couples: they were merely intended to distract the enemy while the British Tanks crawled to the German barbed wire.

At ten minutes to five the guns ceased fire. At five o'clock the Australian infantry climbed from their newly-made trenches on the right of Bullecourt, and stormed across the tunnel towards the main German artillery position at Riencourt. Twenty-five minutes afterwards it was light enough to see the Australian support troops going over the snow in extended order.

AN AUSTRALIAN ADVANCE

with cavalry behind them. A great line of red flares went up from the German trenches, and their massed artillery poured curtains of shrapnel shell upon the figures standing out against the snow, and moving calmly to the dark belt of barbed wire running across the sides of the hills. After clearing the wire, by dropping overcoats on it and climbing over, or finding paths left for German snipers, many of the Australians changed from a walking pace into a run. Horsemen went with them through the wire, and a tank joined the infantry. The Australians were able to cross the hollow and mount the crest of the hill.

Towards seven o'clock the Australian forces on the left closed towards Bullecourt, while the Australian right went over the hill that protected Riencourt, and entered the village; they could not take the German guns, but they almost enveloped Bullecourt, and attained every point they were ordered to reach. Three and a half hours after the first advance, the Australians still held the main tactical positions near the junction point of the Hindenburg system. Here it was, however, that the Germans' overpowering strength in artillery decisively told upon the event of the battle. Strong German forces advanced over the hill behind Riencourt, and against the Australian flank at Bullecourt. About noon they began to work forward by incessant bomb attacks, conducted with overwhelming weight of material. The Australians were swept in rear and flank as well as bombed in front. Their new line was broken in several places, and they were forced back to their original positions. A thousand of their advanced troops fell into the hands of the enemy.

Yet, grievous as were the losses of the gallant division, it accomplished the main task set it. The troops who reached Hendecourt were a good five miles in the rear of the enemy's Cojeul River line, running by Wancourt. The troops who thrust into Riencourt were more than six miles behind the German Cojeul River system, and nearly three miles north-west of Quéant. They were also well behind the enemy's main tunnel line at Fontaine and Chérisy.

The result was that the Germans had to draw off forces from the Cojeul River and Sensée River works to deal with the Australians. By the time the Australians had been dealt with, the right wing of the British 3rd army, under Sir Edmund Allenby, drove in victorious force against Wancourt and Héninel, crossed

BULLECOURT AND HILL 70

the Cojeul stream, and obtained elbow room in the new British salient at Arras. The German commander on the Bullecourt front thought he had so shaken the Australians that he could press them back towards Bapaume. He brought to Quéant the 3rd division of the Prussian Guard, together with troops from other Guards divisions, and squeezed these reinforcements alongside the German division holding the Quéant front.

The shock troops of the Guards came out at dawn on April 15, and cut off two Australian advanced posts, allowing the main forces to debouch into Lagnicourt village and advance towards Noreuil. Along most of the line, however, the advanced guards of Australians and British troops shattered the attacks with machine-gun fire. Only by Lagnicourt were a couple of outposts rushed, while those on either side were bent back. Through the gap the Guardsmen, Bavarians, and other German troops of the line poured in overwhelming mass. They broke through Lagnicourt, and took about twenty-two field-guns; but, as they were placing charges in the guns to burst the barrels, a magnificent counter-attack by Queenslanders and New South Walesmen caught and broke the Lehr regiment, the Fusilier regiment of the Guards and other crack forces. As the fugitives raced back to their own lines, where they had not cut their wire, many of them were caught in the entanglements and slain by the artillery of the Australian force. The despairing remnant, to the number of 400, were taken prisoners. 1,500 German corpses were found in and around Lagnicourt.

The counter-attack of the Australians was a fine piece of work. The battalions advanced by alternate companies, one halting and firing while the men in the other fought onward, partly covered by their comrades' flanking fusillade. These tactics were executed along the entire front. The Australian gunners who had retired in haste carrying their breech-blocks with them, returned in time to put a shrapnel curtain over the flying enemy before he could get through his wire. Six weeks after the great German retreat, the northern army corps of Sir Hubert Gough's 5th army were in a position to renew their offensive on the scale of the Ancre and Somme actions.

On May 3, as the 3rd British army was fighting on the Sensée river flank of the Quéant salient, the British and Australian forces of the 5th army again broke into the Bullecourt and Rencourt sector of the Hindenburg system. Upon this occasion

A GERMAN BARRAGE

the attacking infantry was fairly well provided with heavy artillery support. In a quarter of an hour they were in the front line of the Hindenburg system. In another fifteen minutes they followed their barrage into the second line. Then the Australians worked over a slope into a tramway cutting running towards Riencourt. Only on their right were they checked. The barrage went over the line of sunken forts without putting them out of action. The German machine-gunners had time to man their hidden concreted works, and there followed a long, fierce, and confused struggle between scattered Australian troops and the German supports creeping up from the tunnel. Gradually the fragments of the Australian battalions worked round the machine-gun positions, and, by bombing and hand-to-hand fighting, gained all their objectives. Meanwhile, the London troops, who directly attacked Bullecourt, would have taken the village if the troops on their left had been able to get forward and shield their exposed left flank.

The German artillery put a great barrage upon the British trenches, over the neutral zone and their own lost line; and the German commander having brought his men up from the tunnel, and filtered them into the stairways leading back to the brick ruins, the London troops were scattered into broken parties, and kept in incessant action until, like the Australians on April 11, their bombs were finished, and they had to retire.

This withdrawal left the Australian attack clean in the air. By midday Bullecourt village projected like a flat promontory on their left. In front was the Riencourt ridge, pitted with battery sites that drenched the Australians with shrapnel and high explosive. On the right was another promontory at Quéant, where hostile heavy batteries were firing. Between the two promontories, in a small section of double trench varying with the sway of battle from five hundred to twelve hundred yards, were the indomitable Australians, fighting over a vast underground system. They held their ground to the death.

In the night, on the extreme left of the Australian position, where a small force had been attacked by machine-gun fire and isolated, some New South Wales troops reached the extreme point fixed to be taken in the original battle plan. The enemy counter-attacked heavily. At noon on the first day some three hundred shock troops advanced from the sunken roads on the right, and dived from shell-hole to shell-hole like a school of

porpoises. The Australians stood breast high over their parapet, with cigarettes in their mouths, and withered the attack before it had time to develop. Only a handful of Germans arrived within a dozen yards of the trench, and there died. At the same time, a bombing attack was made against the left flank of the new Australian position, but a shower of Stokes aerial torpedoes blew the bombing detachment into eternity.

The Germans, however, also possessed a large number of trench mortars. By means of a powerful bombardment on the Australian right, they forced this flank back completely to the left flank. Thereupon, a Western Australian battalion resumed the struggle and recovered the whole of the objective. Yet they in turn were driven back by the concentrated fire of German trench mortars. Then the enemy infantry drove furiously down the trench into the bare 500 yards of German territory in which the Australians were penned.

The following afternoon the gallant troops of New South Wales, who had restored the extreme position on the left attack, came forward and again bombed their way for more than 600 yards over other ground that had been temporarily lost. Then once more the Prussian Guard and the shock troops counter-attacked in the night of May 5. Three times they tried to break through, but in vain.

On the morning of May 7 some of the English troops, who had fought around Bullecourt village, came forward, with a fine Scottish force, to co-operate again with the Australians. In close bomb-fighting the Scots blasted the enemy down the trenches, and fought into the village, dragging a bunch of prisoners out of it. They sliced off the south-east corner of Bullecourt, linked it with the part of the Hindenburg line held by the Australians, and rescued to London men who had been taken prisoners in the battle of May 3.

On the same day some British artillery observers spied a German division trying to dig a trench behind Bullecourt, set their guns on to the large force, and killed many of the diggers just behind the village. As the struggle on the Bullecourt line became more clearly defined, the Germans used their flame projectors and their poison gas shells, only to be answered by gouts of flaming oil and a new British gas shell of dreadful quality.

By this time part of the great tunnel was solidly occupied by the Australian forces, and found to be sufficiently high and



FRENCH OFFENSIVE ON THE AISNE. The illustration shows French tanks, called *artillerie d'assaut*, crossing German trenches during Nivelle's great attack between Soissons and Reims, April-May, 1917.



Imperial War Museum

SCENE OF A BRILLIANT BRITISH VICTORY. The battle of Messines began on June 7, 1917, after an artillery bombardment lasting from May 28. The infantry and tank attack, organized by General Plumer, was successful, the enemy line being forced back until the salient south of Ypres no longer existed. The British held the Messines Ridge until April 12, 1918. The photograph shows a bombardment in the Douve Valley.

AN ADVANTAGE SEIZED

wide to allow the enemy quickly to move troops from point to point. It was also known that at Reincourt there were catacombs, capable of sheltering 6,000 Germans.

All these advantages which the enemy possessed, together with the chain of great caverns which he was constructing, were fairly balanced by the continually increasing power of the heavy British artillery, whose big guns maintained such a barrage over the hostile rear that the Germans could not move across open country into their subterranean fortresses without grave losses. They had also to stop working on a new switch line, which was intended to give them communication with Quéant when they were driven out of the Bullecourt salient.

After the action in Bullecourt village on May 7 the Germans took a full day to recover. They launched their customary counter-attack on May 9, beginning with a terrific bombardment, followed by storming operations all along the line. They were repulsed everywhere, with great losses, and the victorious Australians, Scotsmen, and Englishmen came out against their broken foes and bombed them out of some of the most important positions. Again, on Friday evening, May 11, the Germans were observed to be massing for another great storming operation in the neighbourhood of Bullecourt. A tempest of shrapnel unexpectedly fell upon them, and the survivors quickly scattered into what shelter they could find.

The British commander was quick to seize the advantage his guns had won for him. Just as twilight was deepening into night he launched his English and Scottish troops into the historic village, through which the men of London had battled with desperate valour on May 3, when their supporting wing was checked. The linked cellars beneath the ruined cottages, with the armoured machine-gun forts and the caverns of the great tunnel, once more enabled a considerable part of the garrison to maintain a fierce defence, and escape, when beaten, by unseen subterranean ways. Bomb-fighting went on all night, and continued in the morning of Sunday, May 13.

The British troops attacked both sides of the village. The Scotsmen, in the south-eastern corner, sent out parties of bombers, who worked up the trenches on the right and reached the road running across the village of Bullecourt from east to west. Other English bombers blasted their way through the eastern end of the village towards the same road. The Germans

were being surrounded. In an endeavour to escape, they bolted along the trenches eastward, only to find the Australians waiting for them there. After a brief fight, some 200 prisoners were taken. Nevertheless, remnants of the garrison continued to hold out in the underground works in the village.

Early in the morning the German gunners tried, by means of a heavy barrage, to break a path for their battalions massing behind the village. The infantry was sent forward, shoulder to shoulder, in columns of four, to win back Bullecourt. The moment the barrage lifted the British curtain fire fell on the road they had to travel. One German column went steadily forward into the hurricane of fire and was torn to fragments. Only twelve Germans got within bombing distance. Three were mortally wounded, and nine were killed. One hour afterwards the heavy German artillery again hammered at the British line in the village, and provoked another British shell curtain, through which the German columns again went forward. On this occasion twenty of the counter-attackers arrived near an English trench. Of them, 19 were killed.

The success of these two British barrages decided the battle for Bullecourt. Final victory was the result of one of those highly technical dispositions which the enemy thought was impossible. The liaison between artillery and infantry was practically perfect. Although the gunners worked under frightful difficulties, with, day and night, storms of explosives searching for their batteries, again and again, in the first fortnight of May, the dense German masses were shattered before they could close upon the British troops.

Ludendorff reckoned upon a raggedness in the British co-operation of guns and bayonets. Especially did he anticipate encountering only a weak British artillery at the pivot point of his Hindenburg system. Yet by May 12 he knew that he had been entirely mistaken. Around Bullecourt he was opposed by British infantry of the line, whose fighting qualities exceeded those of his best shock troops, crack Guardsmen, and Bavarians. All his artillery, which he had been emplacing and strengthening for at least nine months, was overborne by British artillery, which it had taken less than two months to haul forward, emplace, and provide with abundant shell.

Bullecourt was a great testing-place for the strategy of General von Ludendorff and that of Sir Douglas Haig. At Bullecourt

RIVAL TECHNIQUE

the German dictator at first accomplished all he had designed to achieve. He withdrew his 1st army safely from Bapaume. He established himself in the immense new earth-works above his gigantic tunnel and below his new high artillery positions. Behind the ordinary "cannon fodder" manning his first line was concentrated the finest flower of his forces. Finally, in spite of the fact that he had been taken by surprise by the Australian division in the second week of April, he was able to recover and strengthen the Hindenburg line. He felt confident that his scheme of defence would win him time to employ his submarines in starving out the British races.

On the Bullecourt front the British and Australian gunners had slowly to discover their targets, in an unknown tract of country containing tunnels, galleries, catacombs, and thousands of other underground shelters of which they were ignorant. Not until an enemy gun fired could they learn its position. Every possible tactical advantage was enjoyed by the Germans in and around Bullecourt.

Nevertheless, they were thoroughly beaten. The technique of the British Empire forces, composed mainly of troops who did not know anything of war before August, 1914, proved superior to the technique of the German armies, which had been training in military technique, with the utmost scope and energy, since Roon and Moltke prepared in the middle of the 19th century for the victorious campaigns against Denmark, Austria, France and Russia.

After the great Bullecourt battle, at the end of the second week in May, there remained on May 14 only two posts of the original German garrison holding out in the village. Groups of fugitive bombers were unearthed slowly from unlikely corners in an oppressive heat like that of August. Through nights that brought them no fresh air to cool them at their task, the British bombing parties fed as they went on with their deadly work, and snatched brief periods of rest in horribly strange places.

The 3rd Prussian Guards division, with a regiment of Grenadiers and a division brought down from Ypres, were shattered in the final battle of Bullecourt. Still the German commander resolved to make a final attempt to turn defeat into victory. Early in the morning of Tuesday, May 15, Bullecourt was again ploughed up by a smoking, flaming tempest of German projectiles, and drenched for hours with gas shells. Then, at

dawn, when the British batteries were fiercely shooting at the German gunners, the first German masses advanced in the open upon the right flank of the lost German line. The position was held by New South Wales troops. After passing through the British barrages of guns and machine-guns, at four o'clock in the morning, the German infantry survived in sufficient strength to penetrate the Australian centre for thirty yards. They were, however, immediately counter-attacked with bombs, bayonets, and trench mortars by the rallying men from New South Wales. By eleven o'clock no living German remained in the trench, but more than two hundred of their dead were found in it. Moreover, as the enemy was held in the rear by a shell curtain, through which he had to flee, his total losses were much greater. Another counter-attack directed on the left flank of the British position, about the same time, did not reach the defending outposts. The British artillery smashed up the German columns as they were advancing, with trench mortars firing behind them and big guns clearing a path in front of them.

Later in the morning a third attack was delivered upon the north-east corner of Bullecourt. This also was repulsed, with staggering loss to the enemy, by shrapnel curtains, machine-gun barrage, and gusts of rifle fire. In the afternoon the German commander launched his fourth and strongest counter-attack upon the south and south-west of Bullecourt village, and sent his troops up in such continuous, dense formations that the British gunners could not kill them quickly enough. The Germans drove back some posts near the lower end of the village in hard fighting above ground, while the remnant of the old garrison in the ruins was reinforced from the main tunnel.

Fighting went on all night and continued throughout Wednesday, May 16. The British troops gradually gained ground by their amazing tenacity and personal prowess. The artillery duel was terrific; but the hostile gun-fire only on rare occasions equalled the intensity of the British gun-fire, and on Thursday, May 17, after continuous fighting for nearly 15 days, the village was conquered, with all its underground tunnel connections.

When everything is considered, the achievement of the Australian, English, and Scottish troops of Sir Hubert Gough's army appears to have been the most striking British success in the spring campaign of 1917. The storming of Vimy Ridge and the advance from Arras to Monchy Hill and the upper part of

THE VILLAGE CAPTURED

the Hindenburg line had certainly larger strategic importance than the break made between Riencourt and beyond Bullecourt. Yet, regarded as an affair of sheer human effort in fighting, engineering, heavy gun transport and improvised organization, the advance of the left wing of the 5th army over the broad wasted zone between Bapaume and Bullecourt, followed by an amazingly rapid and victorious thrust across the works of the Hindenburg tunnel, lifted the victors in the Ancre and Somme battles to a pinnacle of achievement.

On Sunday, May 20, when the conquered position at Bullecourt was fairly consolidated, the considerable break in the Hindenburg line was extended by an English advance north of the village. By an assault at dawn, more than a mile of tunnelled front was carried and held by violent fighting against the enemy's counter-attacking forces. The struggle continued until the evening, by which time the Germans showed signs of exhaustion. At the end of the day the English troops again stormed forward, behind their creeping barrage, and captured the hostile support system. All through the night the contending armies clashed amid the thunder of the guns. Only in a small sector of the great tunnel above Bullecourt was the underground German garrison able to hold out, by means of a subterranean stream of reinforcements.

With this exception, the Germans were thoroughly beaten and driven out of their fortress tunnel between Bullecourt and Arras. The nature of the ground made it too costly an affair for the British troops to continue a merely local action on the two thousand yards of tunnel west of Bullecourt. Another great offensive by the 3rd and 5th armies would have been necessary to capture the fragment of the Hindenburg line and extend the British gains around Riencourt, Fontaine, and Chérisy.

Sir Douglas Haig ordered a strong British artillery demonstration, apparently indicative of another combined operation by the forces of Sir Edmund Allenby and Sir Hubert Gough. But no large infantry action followed. The British commander-in-chief was merely holding the main enemy masses on the old battlefield, in the design to facilitate the new campaign by the 2nd British army on the distant Messines Ridge. In the first week of June the new battle opened under the direction of Sir Herbert Plumer, and the Bullecourt front relapsed into a condition of comparative calm.

In June, 1917, when the Ypres campaign was being energetically organized, Russia was still of potential strength. The Americans were ready to improve her railway system, and, with Japan and Great Britain, to supply more war material. Discipline might have been restored if the commanders of proved genius had been allowed to use stern measures against the elements of corruption and treachery. German guns by the thousand and troops by the hundred thousand would have been held between the Baltic and the Black Sea, and become unavailable for service along the Isonzo, the Aisne, and the Passchendaele Ridge. Thus little was wanted, in that critical summer, to turn the balance of victory in favour of the Allies.

While selecting Ypres as the scene of the grand duel between the forces of Germany and the British Commonwealth, Sir Douglas Haig also maintained a severe pressure against the enemy around Lens and beyond the Vimy Ridge. On the northern side of Lens, British troops also pressed upon the enemy in the blocks of colliers' cottages, and approached Hill 70, against which Sir John French's offensive had failed in 1915.

The British staff rightly regarded Lens as the most formidable fortress in any theatre of war. The unforeseen, general employment of siege-guns made the pits and tunnels of the coalfield of magnificent military value. The enemy won time to improve and practically perfect the underground system of defence that he found made to his hand. Then, by bringing up large reserves of infantry and many guns liberated from the Russian front, he transformed the mining town into an underground Gibraltar.

Yet Sir Henry Horne, the victor of Vimy, possessed in the ridge he had conquered an observation position of enormous importance. He saw his way to conduct a fierce and deadly conflict of attrition. The enemy's scheme of badger defence was not sound, in spite of the extraordinary advantages afforded by the coal-mining works; for whenever the Germans lost an important position they had to come out in strength into the open, and counter-attack against one of the ablest gunners in Europe. If the German commander continually yielded ground in order to save his men he was bound to lose Lens, and, what was of still more importance, he was bound to allow the end of the Hindenburg system at Drocourt to be turned.

In short, it was possible to bring him to battle on fairly equal terms. This, General Horne, with the assistance of General

MIDLANDERS AND CANADIANS

Pulteney, continuously did after the conquest of the Vimy Ridge. Bitter fighting went on almost incessantly along the Souchez river, where the Canadians gradually secured a hold upon the electric-power station and the approaches to Avion.

Across the river the enemy held a dominating knoll, known as Hill 65, which rose west of the city and formed its main direct bastion, linking, across two miles of ruined northern suburbs, with Hill 70. In the middle of June the English troops north of the Souchez river began to work down to a hostile system of fortifications comprising a slag heap and ruined mining works. These were taken completely on June 19, and although the Germans launched four heavy counter-attacks in 24 hours, they utterly failed to recover the works which they had lost.

Then on Sunday, June 24, a force of midland men carried Hill 65. The hill rose about five hundred yards in front of the English line, and was strongly garrisoned by part of a Prussian division, yet the British barrage of heavy shell was so overwhelming that it entirely broke up the Germans and prevented their machine-gunners from sweeping the approaches. The midland men carried the western slope in a nocturnal attack, and the Prussians, instead of trying to retain the reverse incline, evacuated the complicated system of network trenches surrounding the height and fell back into Lens city. As soon as the hill was occupied, the Germans were enfiladed across the river upon all the ground they had been holding against the Canadians. On June 26 they abandoned the wreckage of La Coulotte and the brewery on the Lens-Arras road, together with the approaches to Avion.

As the Germans retired they destroyed streets and blocks of houses to make clear fields of fire for their machine-guns and field-guns, and blew up the roads. They turned the industrial suburb of the Cité St. Antoine, with its large railway yards, into an artificial lake by flooding the marsh between Lens and Avion. The new lake, a mile long and half a mile broad, prevented Avion from being encircled from the north, while westward and southward the village was heavily wired and mined, and full of machine-guns. Yet Canadian patrols continued to work forward into the Avion system, and by June 28 they reached the hamlet of Eleu dit Leauvette, by the Souchez river, and penetrated the defences of Avion in two places.

Immediately after this success all the heavy British guns crashed upon Lens in a tumult, increased by a thunderstorm. The midland troops who had taken Hill 65 again stormed forward and captured a line of the main defences of the city. Then, under cover of high-explosive barrage and smoke curtains, the Canadians stumbled, slipped, and slid into the streets of Avion, where, checked by machine-gun fire at Fosse 4, they swung around this stronghold and occupied the north-western and south-western sides of the colliery slums.

Complete success was prevented by the torrent of rain that accompanied the thunderstorm. The flooding river poured into the lake, and the lake spread out into new swamps, while the shell-ploughed ground between was turned into a general bog. The resulting delay enabled the German machine-gunners to emerge from their cellars into their forts before the Canadians could get within bombing distance of the principal fosses. Yet most of the Avion objective was won in the half-hour elapsing between the crash of the British barrage and the bursting of the waterspout. At the same time as the action at Lens opened, a force of English troops attacked the German position at Oppy, beyond the Vimy Ridge, and, on a front of two thousand yards, took all their objectives and two hundred and forty prisoners.

Ludendorff claimed to have won a great victory. This was exactly what Sir Douglas Haig wished him to do. British raids had been made during the bombardment all along the line of gun fire. As the raiding-parties quickly withdrew the local German commanders were induced to think that they had repelled a great British offensive movement. They were also disturbed by the number of guns brought against them, and induced to ask for more artillery in the Lens sector at a time when General Plumer was completing his preparations at Ypres. German infantry reinforcements as well as additional guns were brought to the secondary British theatre of demonstration in order to press the Canadians back. Thereby the lieutenant of the Crown Prince of Bavaria won some advanced posts in the night of July 1, but he could not shake the Canadian and British troops on the west and south of the town.

July 1, 1917, the anniversary of the opening of the Battle of the Somme, was a suitable day for reckoning up the results achieved. In the course of the year the new armies had taken more than 70,000 German prisoners, including 800 officers, with

CANADIAN VALOUR

450 German guns and more than 2,000 machine-guns, trench-mortars, and other minor pieces. Three formidable ridges—the Albert, Vimy, and Messines—had also been captured.

Meanwhile, the tremendous struggle for the Passchendaele Ridge went on. On August 15 the Canadian army corps attacked, with fine impetuosity, the German defences around Lens. It shifted its main thrusting power from the southern inundations at Avion, it relieved the British forces about Loos, and struck at the famous Hill 70. The assault was made under surprise conditions. There was only a brief bombardment of the enemy's positions at four o'clock in the morning. Before the sky was clearly lighted the Canadians went over the top, thrusting into Lens on their left, storming over Hill 70 in their centre, and taking Bois Rasé and part of Bois Hugo on their left.

The whole of the two industrial suburbs of Cité St. Enile and Cité St. Laurent was captured. The Canadians, at one point, penetrated nearly a mile into the German defences. The recapture of Hill 70, up the slopes of which the London Irish had dribbled a football in the old offensive, while alongside the pipers played ahead of Scottish battalions, proved, quite unexpectedly, to be an easy affair. The defences were intricately strong. The irregular ground was a lacework of trenches, knotted with many machine-gun redoubts and other concrete works, all thickly wired and swept by crossing fires. The local German commander had been so confident of this hill fortress that he had garrisoned it largely with young recruits. Older German troops tried to stand their ground, and the Canadians did not win all along the line without some fierce and stubborn actions. After the victory the German artillery turned the lost ridge into a volcano of flame-shot black smoke, and smashed up the lost Cités (or mining villages) with heavy shells. By this time, however, the victors were sheltering in the great concreted dug-outs from which they had driven the enemy. By their successful frontal attack the Canadians threatened to take the whole of Lens by a turning movement between Loos and Hulluch. Their advance brought them against the front and partly against the flank of the Cité St. Auguste.

On August 14, 1917, the Cité St. Auguste was no longer the last line of the enemy's defence. Eastward of it was a series of equally strong positions, and there was a large German reserve ready for rapid transport to any weakening sector. Part

of this reserve was hurried towards the northern defences of Lens, with the object of stone-walling any farther Canadian advance. But the Canadians did not attempt such a movement. Their real work was accomplished. By aggravating the menace to Lens they had disturbed the plans of Ludendorff and compelled him to detach part of his great central reserve. The German commander-in-chief therefore drew on that part of the reserve likely to be needed on the French front. As soon as this was known, General Pétain thrust forward on either side of the Meuse and gained a very important victory at Verdun.

Ludendorff held a large number of divisions directly under his orders, in the more central districts, and despatched part of them by railway to any sector that required strengthening. His method was characterised by extreme centralisation on a vast and intricate scale. In regard to Lens, he ordered that Hill 70 should be recovered at any cost. He was able to despatch fresh divisions to the battlefield south of Lille as well as to the battlefield north of the city, though he had to weaken his defence against the French armies in order to do this.

The advanced forces of the Canadians, on the low rise between Loos and the Cité St. Auguste, were first attacked by the 4th Prussian Guard division. The Guards were seen marching in column towards the rows of miners' cottages below the hillock. The Canadian forward observing officers allowed the long, narrow mass to come well within range, and then turned every available gun on the leading brigade. The other brigades changed formation, and worked forward in artillery order towards the Cité St. Auguste and towards the deep chalk cutting lying between the suburb and the lost hill. The Canadian and British gunners made a heavy barrage around the positions which the Guardsmen were trying to reach and broke up their formations before they reached the shelter of the Cité St. Auguste.

The Prussian Guardsmen, however, reorganized and again came forward in waves. Between them and Hill 70 was a lower swell of ground, and, as they topped it, their figures stood against the sky-line. Down upon them crashed the withdrawn British barrage. Two waves of attack were shattered by artillery fire. The third wave moved forward more rapidly, escaped some of the shell fire, and stormed up the hill. The last man fell seventy yards away from the Canadian position. Rifle fire and machine-gun fire completed the terrible work of the guns.

LUDENDORFF'S MOVES

Before the local German commander could get any supporting force through the British barrage, which had again shifted eastward of the Cité St. Auguste, the Canadian infantry went over the top, swept down the eastern slopes of Hill 70, bayoneted some 700 Germans, and then bombed their way into the cellars of the western part of the Cité. This victory provoked Ludendorff to fierce efforts that seemed to be out of proportion to the occasion. By every road eastward of Lens and Hulluch and Fresnoy he hurried forward fresh divisions the following night and early morning. He also sent more heavy artillery and a larger supply of shell against the Canadian force, and ordered that a bombardment of the utmost intensity should be maintained over all the area occupied by the troops of General Currie.

In the afternoon of Thursday, August 16, when the great German counter-attack was forcing the Irish and English troops back across the swamp at Ypres, a similar counter-offensive was undertaken against the Canadians. At six o'clock in the evening the Germans came out, under cover of a terrific bombardment, and attacked along the entire Canadian front above Lens. All storming forces were broken before they could get to close quarters. Two hours afterwards another grand attack was made, and also shattered. At eleven o'clock at night a third attack was made, and this was also crushed by Sir Henry Horne.

When the broken enemy fled, or crawled back, the Canadians again followed him, and captured some works southward in the Cité St. Theodore, and occupied another portion of the German front line. Another night and day passed, while Ludendorff detached more of his general reserve for the counter-offensive at Lens. Then, in the evening of August 18, a great gas-shell bombardment poured upon the Canadian army, and, under the screen of an ordinary high-explosive barrage, a remarkable number of flame-throwers tried to burn the Dominion troops out of the large area of ground they had won.

Behind the men carrying on their backs containers full of petrol, which they pumped out alight from nozzles held in their hands, there rushed some ten thousand of the best storm troops that Ludendorff could spare from the Ypres battlefield. The scheme completely failed. The Canadian riflemen and machine-gunners shot steadily at the advancing flame-jets, brought all the flame-throwers down, and then maintained such a machine-gun and musketry barrage that the German shock troops could

not live through it. Later another violent attempt was made to reach the southern flank of Hill 70 by a flame and shock attack upon Cité St. Emile. At the same time a northern thrust against the hill was attempted at Hugo Wood. While these two operations were proceeding, another general assault along the entire eastern front was undertaken at about half-past one in the morning. The Canadians had fierce and prolonged fighting on all three sides of Hill 70, and the ground westward in their rear was flooded with poison gas.

When the enemy at last drew back in the flaming, thundering, poisoned darkness of the summer night another grand victory had been added to the list of the Dominion men. They still held Hill 70, and all the captured ground in front of it. Four broken German divisions drew away from them, in none of which there could have been left more than three thousand men still fit for action.

After breaking the last German counter-attacking force—the 220th division—the Canadians once more attacked the weakened enemy, early in the morning of August 21, and thereby created a remarkable situation. The Germans had arranged to begin a storming operation a few minutes before dawn. The Canadian commander had also fixed his attack for that time. British and German artillery opened a bombardment at the same moment. Simultaneously, the infantry on both sides scrambled over parapets and out of redoubts and followed their barrage. An early autumn mist clung to the damp earth and blurred the faint light of daybreak. Each storming force was partly smashed by the opposing barrage, and then the equally surprised survivors met in No Man's Land, and between the two walls of deafening shell explosions the conflict was fought to the death.

The ragged but victorious Canadian line then pressed onward to the German position by the Cité St. Elizabeth, north of Lens. The works were formidably fortified and belted with two zones of wire. In the trenches was a second strong German support force, waiting the signal to follow and support their shock troops. The Germans fought with bombs, revolvers and machine-guns; the Canadians continued to use only their bayonets. They were in very uneven formation, having advanced some hundreds of yards by exceedingly bitter fighting. By downright impetuosity and individual enterprise they

LENS ENCIRCLED

managed to get through the barbed-wire entanglements, climb the parapet, and clear part of the long trench. The successful men unlocked the position for those that had been checked, and when the artillery on either side ceased for a while to fire, all the line was occupied by remnants of the first thin Canadian wave of attack. The action was one of the bloodiest in the war, for the German forces had, as usual, been used in much denser formation than was employed by British commanders. The Canadians also pressed in towards Lens from the south-western and western sides, taking the defensive works by Fosse St. Louis, which was the last formidable barrier to the old, inner town. During the struggle in this sector Lens itself was penetrated around the point where the main roads met close to the railway-station. The next day the Germans again counter-attacked persistently but in vain.

On August 23 General Currie's two divisions attacked the Green Crassier, a weed-grown slag-heap by the great railway yards of Lens. Driving their way through hedges of quick-set steel, and storming over tunnelled machine-gun posts, they topped the crassier, enveloped its eastern defences, fought against the resurgent German forces in the afternoon, and, though losing the top of the crassier, were still clinging doggedly, when night fell, to the western side of the hill of cinders.

By this time it was reckoned they had shattered six German divisions—the 4th, 7th, and 8th Guards divisions, the 1st Guards reserve, the 220th division, and the 11th reserve. There were also some brigades, at least, of the 185th and the 36th reserve divisions employed against the Canadian army corps.

While the Canadians were thus pressing the enemy at Lens another British attack was organised, in continual torrents of rain, against the enemy's critical position on the Fassinendaele Ridge. Undoubtedly the weather interfered with the plan of the British commander-in-chief. Even when he succeeded in weakening the enemy at Lens, all the immense work of bringing forward the heavy artillery at Ypres was so delayed that Ludendorff won sufficient time to make his own full counter-preparations. The decisive incidence of the mutual process of terrible attrition could not be estimated until the close of the war.

CHAPTER 10

French Offensive on the Aisne

IN the early weeks of 1917, General Nivelle, the French commander-in-chief, decided to attack the German position on the Aisne between Soissons and Reims, and fixed April 16 as the date of his offensive. The French general staff believed that the German losses on the Somme had been far greater than they actually were and that a vigorous blow would result in a break-through. The immediate objective was to reach the herringbone of small connected tablelands running three hundred feet above the Aisne from Laffaux to Craonne.

The attack was to be prepared by a British offensive at Arras, designed to attract as many German reserves as possible, while to set free French troops the British line was extended. Four French armies, averaging nearly 200,000 men apiece, were to be employed: the 6th (Mangin) on the left, attacking from Laffaux to Hertebise farm, west of Craonne; the 5th (Mazell) centre, attacking between Craonne and Reims; and 4th (Anthoine), east of Reims; and the 10th army (Duchesne) was in reserve. The total front of attack was about 50 miles. On the German side the 7th army (Boehm) extended from La Fere to near Craonne, and the 1st (Below) from Craonne eastwards; both were under the orders of the Crown Prince, and in all mustered about 650,000 men.

The situation on the Aisne had changed since the first battle in 1914, owing to the German local success in 1915, which gave the German Army a narrow strip on the south bank from Missy to Chavonne. The German positions were of quite extraordinary strength and fortified with special care. They had been greatly improved since the first battle of the Aisne, when they had proved strong enough to defy the Allied attack. The Germans had, in the first place, the advantage of good observation; they were generally on the high ground all along the dominating ridge, where ran the Chemin des Dames. Secondly, they had connected the numerous caves in the limestone with tunnels, and had thus converted them into shell-proof shelters.

THE ATTACK BEGINS

General Nivelle's plan contemplated no slow and gradual advance by a series of blows, each aiming at a strictly limited objective, such as had been dealt in the battle of the Somme. He sought to penetrate the German front by a single great operation—such a battle, in fact, as more than a year later Foch organized and carried out with triumphant success after the German reserves had been exhausted.

On April 16, at 6 a.m., after a ten days' bombardment, the French delivered their attack between Lauffaux and Reims. They surrounded Lauffaux, but could not take it; they crossed the Aisne at Chavonne, which place they reached, only to be beaten back to the river. At every point their progress was impeded and communications were hindered by squalls of sleet and snow that blinded their airmen and prevented their heavy artillery from carrying out effective counter-battery work.

Near Courteçon, however, Moroccan troops succeeded in advancing west for some distance along the Chemin des Dames, and threatened the whole German force fighting at Chavonne and in the salient. Farther east the outskirts of Craonne were reached and the Bois des Buttes was stormed after a desperate struggle by infantry and tanks, though not without heavy loss, the French tanks suffering greatly from defects in their construction. Berméricourt and Courcy, north of Reims, were both carried, but Berméricourt could not be held. Thus the first day of the great battle closed with a slight advance of the French line and the capture of 10,000 prisoners. It was a victory, but not the decisive blow that had been expected by the French public, which had looked for an advance to Laon.

On April 17 the front of battle was extended to Moronvilliers, east of Reims. The French attacked the German positions on the high ground north of the Aisne, in their left centre, and fought their way to the outskirts of Bray. Near Reims there was little gain of ground; east of it, however, the French reached the summits of two important heights, which were regarded as the keys to the Moronvilliers positions. There they penetrated the German trenches to a depth of a mile, despite machine-guns and uncut wire. On April 18 the attack was renewed with the utmost determination on the whole vast front. The German bridge-head south of the Aisne was carried, with the villages of Condé, Vailly, and Chavonne. North of Chavonne the French stormed Ostel and fought their way through Bray, and for

FRENCH OFFENSIVE ON THE AISNE

more than half a mile to the north of it. They beat off a German counter-attack which was launched in great strength, inflicting heavy losses, and established themselves firmly on the Chemin des Dames and the high ground. Near Moronvilliers they made some advance. During the day, the 10th French army was put in between the 5th and 6th armies on both sides of Craonne. By nightfall the total of prisoners had risen to 17,000, and 75 guns had also been taken.

On April 19 the French made important gains at the Soissons end of their front. Laffaux was stormed and the Germans evacuated the Fort de Condé, north of the village of that name. Most of the garrison were killed by the French artillery fire, or taken prisoner. Aizy and Jouy, villages north of Vailly, were also captured, the centre of the Chemin des Dames was cleared, and two German counter-attacks were repulsed near Moronvilliers, where the fighting was extraordinarily severe. The French took the important height south of that village known as the Téton, but the Germans were in such strength, supported by so powerful an artillery, that progress was slow and difficult. Auberive was stormed at the extreme east end of the front of attack, and a long system of trenches connecting the village with the German positions at Moronvilliers also fell.

On April 20 the French at the west end of the front took Sancy, but could not reach the west end of the Chemin des Dames, which was still strongly held by the Germans. A German counter-attack, made with large effectives, was shattered west of Craonne. At Moronvilliers the French cleared more of the heights, including Mont Haut, the dominating point at this part of the line, and beat off repeated counter-attacks.

From this date the fighting died down to an artillery struggle, punctuated at intervals by German attacks, which were uniformly repulsed. The material results of the battle to this point were stated by the French staff as follows: prisoners taken, 20,780; heavy guns and field guns, 175; machine guns, 412; and trench mortars, 119. Ground had been gained and heavy losses inflicted on the Germans, but at the price of heavy French casualties; and the Germans still had a grip on the Chemin des Dames, and still held Laon and the Moronvilliers positions.

At the end of April General Pétain, with whom General Foch was soon associated, approved a resumption of attack by General Gouraud on the Moronvilliers system. The action began on

THE FIGHT FOR MONT CORNILLET

Monday, April 30. After an intense artillery preparation the French infantry stormed forward in clear daylight from Mont Cornillet towards Nauroy village. The main advance was supported by demonstrating attacks on either side, and but for the thick pine woods, in and behind which the Germans were entrenched, the assaulting force would have had a comparatively easy task. The Germans burrowed below the roots of the tall, red trunks, bound their finger-thick wire from bole to bole; kept their machine guns underground during the bombardment, and survived in sufficient numbers to come to the surface in strength when the French gunners ranged upon their rear and allowed the French infantry to advance. When the battle was joined, the batteries on either side concealed themselves from counter-firing by clouds of screening smoke. The German underground works were swamped with gas from tens of thousands of shells, but the charging French infantry had likewise to go across a gas-shell barrage, through which hundreds of thousands of shrapnel bullets also rained.

Attackers and attacked wore eye protectors against blinding gases and breath protectors against poison fumes. Just before the assault the German commander had reinforced with a new division his troops in the line. The Germans fought desperately for every trench and redoubt, and when their efforts proved unavailing against the vehemence of the French troops, reserves were brought forward for counter-attack after counter-attack against the captured positions. The flank of the left French wing was exposed to German guns in the Beine Woods and on the Berru slopes. In front of it were strong redoubts, such as the fieldwork north of Grille Wood. The French forces on and around Mont Cornillet nevertheless won their objectives within an hour. They carried the enemy's fortified lines to the south of Beine village, and thus lightened the task of the centre.

In the centre the assault was delivered from Mont Haut, down the northern slopes of the valley through which ran the road from Moronvilliers to Nauroy. The bottom of the valley was reached, but the Germans managed to maintain their position on the two downs south of Moronvilliers village. These two downs, known as the Casque and the Téton, flanked the valley road westward, and gave observation over part of the eastern side of Mont Haut. They also commanded the roads running southward and south-eastward to the French lines. The

FRENCH OFFENSIVE ON THE AISNE

Germans also held a series of lower but very useful heights beyond the Casque and the Téton. In all the dead ground on the northern slopes they had parks of howitzers, mechanically firing at fixed ranges, in answer to the bright rocket signals which their infantry sent up. The original Saxon garrison was reinforced by Brandenburg and Baden divisions, and after a swaying struggle south of Moronvilliers, the French centre drew back from the Casque and the Téton, and only the attacking left wing around Beine and Nauroy achieved any important gains.

Nevertheless, the operation by General Gouraud was far from being fruitless. It was principally designed as a preliminary measure to draw off forces from the Aisne front by shaking the enemy's left wing and threatening him with a great new offensive all along the Champagne line. On May 1 the German command resumed the Moronvilliers battle, and after a violent artillery action tried in vain to recover the ground that the French had won around Casque Down.

For some weeks afterwards there were only local hand-bomb actions and raids amid the clump of Champagne Downs. Yet the German Command remained apprehensive of the consequences of the loss of the chief heights in the great buttress-system of its central line. Hindenburg came in person to inspect the sector, and discussed with Ludendorff the prospects of a new counter-offensive. Preparations were made for a grand attack, but they were anticipated by General Gouraud and the staff of General Pétain. Barely two days before the German arrangements were complete, the French commander of the Champagne front again struck in the direction of Moronvilliers.

On Sunday, May 20, the French guns opened a terrific bombardment on Casque Hill, Téton Down, and the neighbouring points. The reinforced German artillery replied with equal intensity. In the end the gunners of France won the mastery. Under the cover of their fire their infantry carried the larger part of Casque Hill and Téton Down, and threw the enemy from trench after trench on the northern slopes of Mont Cornillet. A thousand prisoners were taken, and all the most important observation-posts in the Moronvilliers buttress were finally occupied by the victors.

The plight of the local German commander in the Moronvilliers sector led him to adopt desperate measures. He lashed all his lost positions and all the French front as far as the old

THE USE OF PERISCOPES

Roman road with shrapnel, high explosive, and gas. He turned the chalk summits of the downs from patched green into dirty white, and fired tempests of death over the saddle of land between Mont Haut and Mont Blond. All the shell accumulated for a great German offensive was expended in this extraordinary counter-bombardment. When, however, the German shock troops, with strong ordinary infantry supports, endeavoured to regain the lost downs they were in turn swept by tempests of French shrapnel, followed by plunging machine-gun fire and short-ranged volleys of hand grenades.

Again there followed a long pause in the Moronvilliers battlefield. Both armies began to burrow deeply in the chalk, sap up and down to each other, make tunnels to secure their communications, and drive mining galleries under enemy posts. In this kind of mole warfare the industrious and hard-driven Germans proved somewhat more effective than the easier-going and more talented Frenchmen. In the chalk downs of the Moronvilliers system the Germans tunnelled completely under some of the downs and created northern and southern entrances and defences. Then, up the northern slopes of their lost crests they burrowed, until in places their advanced posts were within twenty yards of the forward French positions. Bit by bit they won back part of the western slope of Mont Haut. Far more important was the position the Germans succeeded in maintaining on the saddle between Mont Blond and Mont Haut. They erected armoured observation posts on this neck of downland, and by means of long periscopes, continued to direct their howitzer fire upon part of the French communications.

In the first week of July, Ludendorff again resolved to make a strong effort to recover the Moronvilliers Downs. Soon afterwards it was known that the Germans had three fresh divisions placed in echelon on an attacking front of five miles. As before, General Gouraud prepared to anticipate the hostile offensive. On July 12 he opened a heavy bombardment on all the German lines, and continued it day and night on a widely extended front, varying his volume of fire so as to leave it uncertain at what point he intended to attack. The French infantry went forward at eight o'clock in the evening of July 14. The saddle between Mont Haut and Mont Blond was quickly carried on a front of eight hundred yards for a depth of three hundred yards, and the German position on Téton Down was stormed

FRENCH OFFENSIVE ON THE AISNE

to a similar depth on a front of six hundred yards. Slight as these gains seemed in comparison with the enormous French bombardment, they decided the long struggle in the Moronvilliers Downs. All night the stubborn forces of Prussianism surged up the northern slopes, only to be shattered by the fire of hundreds of defending guns directed from the newly-won observation-posts. The Chief of Staff of the Crown Prince of Prussia, returning to Verdun, reconcentrated there his artillery forces in the design to effect a diversion.

At the beginning of May the Chemin des Dames remained one of the lines of fiercest conflict in military history. The mutual bombardment never ceased, and infantry fighting went on continuously. After a struggle of more than three hundred hours, in which both French and Germans showed marvellous powers of endurance, the attacking forces began slowly to extend their hold upon the northern Hog's Back of the Aisne. Along the larger part of the great river valley the Chasseurs, Zouaves, Moroccans, and infantry of the line had climbed three hundred feet above the river, fighting through ravines, limestone caverns, quarries, and stone-built villages, and over cliffs through which the enemy had driven tunnels from the reverse slope to the front face. There were holes, seeming like entrances to ordinary dug-outs, into which the first troops of assault merely threw bombs in passing, with the result that their successors had to spend weeks, and sometimes months, in clearing them of the enemy.

The crest, along which ran the Chemin des Dames, was pierced: so that German forces could move from the Ailette Valley to the Aisne Valley, and make surprise attacks upon the French advanced forces. The rock was a kind of hard chalk of limestone quality, and some of it had of old been used in building Reims Cathedral; but the percolating water had eaten into the lime, dissolving it and washing it away, so that German sappers discovered, during their long mining operations, new caverns of which the French themselves were unaware. No gun could penetrate such places as the Dragon's Cave near Hurtebise. There were seventy feet of limestone between the surface of the ridge and the roof of the immense German shelter. All that the French artillery could do was to drive the German soldiers to earth, shatter some of their periscopes, and give the attacking infantry a brief respite from close-range machine-gun and rifle

THE HUMAN FACTOR

fire. As the Germans retained the highest parts of the great ridge, they could discern many of the movements of preparation, spot the field-guns firing across the river, and direct their parks of heavy artillery concealed in the woods.

Aeroplane observation was becoming by this time somewhat restricted in scope. Batteries in action were often surrounded by smoke-producing machines, placed ten yards apart. These machines covered the guns in clouds of fume when a hostile aeroplane was seen, and the guns then fired through the smoke in a mechanical way, as directed by far-distant observing officers. The Germans employed characteristic energy in developing the smoke tactics which the British army had first introduced. They built smoke machines in tens of thousands, and complicated their system of mole-warfare with strange devices. Yet, when the French armies resumed the grand assault upon the northern rampart of the Aisne, all the increasing machinery of war merely served to reduce the final, decisive stage of combat into more savage hand-to-hand fighting.

The larger machines on both sides tended to balance each other. Gun was arrayed against gun, forts were opposed to batteries, trench-mortars, and tanks. When the mechanism of attack became equal to or superior to that of the defence, it restored to the human factors in battle their ancient power of decision. The infantryman was the king of the battlefield. With high-explosive bombs in his hand, and light machine guns and portable mortars immediately behind him, he was a more terrible figure than any foot-soldier of former days. The famous Alpine division, formed of mountaineers of France, was given the task of carrying Craonne and the high plateaux above the village. Under General Brissaud-Desmaitet, the invincible hillmen stormed upward to Craonne with irresistible dash.

A series of fierce thrusts at other points in the German line on May 4 greatly facilitated the main operation. At Vauxaillon, south of Coucy Forest, a salient in the Hindenburg line was destroyed, and around Laffaux Mill, at the western end of the Chemin des Dames, the German positions were carried as far as the road running from Soissons to Laon. Then at Bray, in the centre of the Chemin des Dames, a French army corps broke into a stretch of two and a half miles of the Siegfried line. German columns moving up to reinforce the battle-line on the great ridge got caught by the heavy French artillery and were

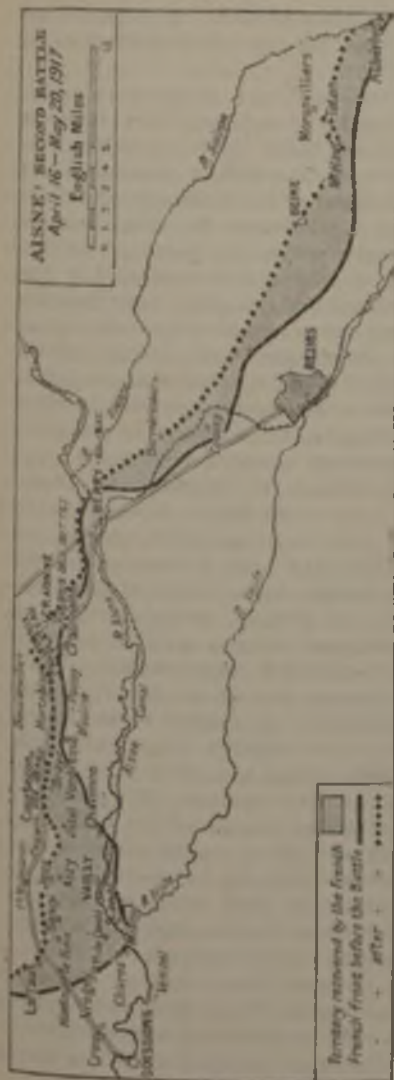
FRENCH OFFENSIVE ON THE AISNE

dispersed. Below the cliffs of Craonne the German reserves were diverted from the vital scene of combat by another French thrust between Berry-au-Bac and Reims. At the same time the action in the Moronvilliers hills was resumed.

The British armies also attacked the enemy from the south of Lens to the north of St. Quentin. The result was that the principal forces of Germany were subjected to immense strain along a front of nearly a hundred and fifty miles. Each local action had its carefully designed place in the combined plan of General Petain and Sir Douglas Haig. Each stroke was a sledge-hammer blow directed at some critical point in the long hostile line. At the most critical point the German defence was completely broken. The Alpine troops rapidly overran the trenches surrounding Craonne village, and then, in wide order, swept over the California Plateau and the Casemates level. After fighting along and across the Chemin des Dames the Alpine division and their comrades connected with the French forces already established near the Napoleon monument by the farm of Hurtebise. The new howitzers of France ranged exactly upon the enemy's topmost redoubts; his tunnel ways were seldom penetrated, yet the entrances were often blocked up by the explosion of huge projectiles.

It was by no means an easy victory. All German commanding officers had orders to hold their positions at any cost, and they handled their men with desperate rigour. They still had many first-rate troops, who fought hard and stubbornly; but the French light Alpine infantry, forming the spear-head of the attacking army corps, were not to be denied. Too quickly and too fiercely they moved, under the cover of their superb curtain fire, for the Germans to counter them. When they had completely topped the flat and spreading summit, and descended into the wooded Ailette Valley, the local German commander sent a division of the Prussian Guard against them. But in the fighting amid crags, woods, and ravines above the Aisne and the Ailette the quick-minded "blue devils of France," as the Germans called them, wore down and threw back the Prussian Guard. In intervals of combat they laboured amid the broken earthworks of the enemy, turning parapets about, rearranging machine-gun positions, and gathering hand-bombs and other ammunition for the defence of the supreme bastion of the fighting-line in Western Europe. The German gunners

IN THE AILETTE VALLEY



poured shells upon them, covered their communications with shrapnel, ploughed up their lines with high explosive, and drenched them with poison gases. But the masked figures patiently went on with their work, though falling in hundreds. They reorganised, with their comrades, the small California level and the larger Casemates Plateau, and connected their new lines with the downward sloping Forest of Vauclerc.

Across the Ailette valley, which dipped some three hundred feet between the opposing ridges, the Germans held the more northerly hill line running above St. Croix, Chermizy, and Neuville. Around this northern ridge some thousands of hostile guns were placed in screening woods and hollows. By reason of their position the German artillerymen could bring a shorter-ranged and better-directed gun fire to bear in the Ailette Valley than the French gunners could send across the Aisne. Moreover, the German artillery, sited about the lower ground east of the Craonne cliffs, had a large

FRENCH OFFENSIVE ON THE AISNE

arc of fire against the northern Aisne Plateau. It could enfilade the easternmost French positions from the observation-posts on the St. Croix Hills.

For these reasons the victorious French troops were unable to extend very far from Craonne or approach the town of Corbeny, lying on the main road north of Ville aux Bois. In order to achieve an assured success the French commander had to limit his efforts to the conquest of the California and Case-mates Plateaux, and thereupon withstand the sledge-hammer blows by artillery and infantry which the Germans directed against him from two sides, eastward and northward. The victorious forces of France carried out this plan: after breaking the Prussian Guard, the Alpine troops remained upon the highest and easternmost part of the Chemin des Dames, in the position of a menacing spear-head, poised high above the German forces. In co-operation with their fellow-countrymen operating in other sectors, the mountaineers captured in three days 8,200 prisoners.

On Tuesday, May 8, Ludendorff issued a remarkable communiqué, which said: "The French, in fruitless and costly attacks, attempted to wrest from us the high positions between Hurtebise and Craonne, but were not successful anywhere." Then, in order to make good this statement, Ludendorff ordered General Bohm, commanding on the Aisne front and the Chief of Staff to the Crown Prince of Prussia, to retake the lost positions. Large forces of German infantry were successively sent forward under cover of whirlwind bombardments. They attacked, in succession, the ground near Cerny, the Hurtebise position, and the California Plateau. In spite of terrific losses, the grey waves surged up the Ailette Valley, the top of which was flaming with French machine-guns and rifles. Only for a few minutes did the Germans gain the summit. They tried to hold the north-eastern, horn-like projection of the California level, which they temporarily won by a double flank attack. The Frenchmen, however, returned with the bayonet and pitchforked the enemy back into the valley. Then, in the evening, the defenders of Craonne in turn attacked the weakened assailers and carried nearly a mile of line north-east of Chevreux.

The German commander, General Bohm, had to abandon for a while his attempts to recover the Hog's Back and employ his forces around Chevreux. He sent forward a new division to drive the French back to Craonne, but his fresh troops were

PETAIN SATISFIED

caught under artillery fire and shattered by machine-guns. Instead of recovering any ground, they lost two important forts. In the hope of relieving the position around Chevreux the German general once more attacked the French lines on either side of Cerny village, and after fierce hand-to-hand fighting his men were thrown back. This last counter-attack, delivered on May 10, marked the close of the second and completely victorious French offensive on the Aisne. Yet, after a short interval of inaction, the German commander renewed the struggle. The earlier pause was due to shortage in munitions and a lack of reserves. As soon as more shell and fresh troops arrived, the great ridge again became veiled in flame-shot smoke from Laflaux Mill to Chevreux. For weeks the gigantic struggle went on, in daylight and darkness, between the Soissons-Laon Road and the Moronvilliers Downs. Ludendorff's clear intention was to devote all guns and men that he could save from the British front to the task of wearing down the spirit of the French army. He tried to turn the Chemin des Dames, with the hill near Berry-au-Bac and the downs above Auberive, into the theatre of a battle of attrition.

The distance between the Chemin des Dames and Paris was so short that the incessant rumble of the opposing batteries was often borne by favouring winds to the strained ears of the people in the capital. The design of the German staff on the Chemin des Dames was quickly to shake France into a desire for a negotiated peace, at the expense of Russia, in much the same way as Great Britain was designed to be reduced to a condition of war-weariness by submarine operations and daylight and nocturnal air raids.

General Pétain was, however, well content with the situation that he had obtained. His artillery power had vastly increased since he saved Verdun in February, 1916. He at last possessed guns which enabled him and his lieutenants to display their great skill in combination with terrific strength. Whenever the enemy wearied of counter-attacking, the French commander made some small but intense thrust at the last observation points dominating the Ailette Valley or the Moronvilliers region. The blows were always delivered by gun-power, and often little more than a company of infantry was sent forward to occupy and organise the new position. Thereupon, the Germans flooded the ground with poison gas, ploughed it up with shells, and

FRENCH OFFENSIVE ON THE AISNE

sent out strong storming forces, with ordinary infantry support. Again the French guns created an impassable curtain of fire, causing the enemy to fall back.

At the beginning of June the German High Command launched a grand counter-offensive against the plateaux above Craonne. After a mighty bombardment day and night along the great ridge, two German divisions climbed, in five columns, towards the Vauclerc and California Plateaux. At some points the assailing Germans were packed shoulder to shoulder. The heads of the columns were blown away by the massed fire of the heavy French artillery, but one of the main bodies succeeded, by means of a liquid-fire attack, in burning out the garrisons of some of the French forward observation-posts. Part of the main French forces then came into action, and bombed and bayoneted the Germans from the edge of the high level, and pursued them down the northern slope. It was the Alpine division which had taken Craonne on May 4 that broke the two enemy divisions, and special German shock troops deployed in front of the routed forces.

About this time German troops began to arrive in large numbers from the Russian front, and were thrown in violent counter-attacks against the French and British lines. Along the Chemin des Dames the wastage of this large fresh enemy reserve proceeded at a rapid rate, as General Bohm continued to employ forces that often amounted to a whole division in monotonous attempts to drive in some famous French ridge position. Laffaux Mill, Filain, the Panthéon, Royère and Froidmont Farms, the Hurtebise Saddle, and the California Plateau were mentioned almost daily in official reports.

The German commander delivered whirlwind bombardments on a large front, and then sent his infantry forward on a comparatively small line of attack. The French forces used their 3 in. quick-firers in the manner of machine-guns, mowing every yard of ground over which the enemy was advancing. Success largely depended upon the condition of communications between French forward observing officers and their light batteries. Continual progress was made in the means of communication between infantry and artillery. Wires were sunk more deeply, and written messages were pitched from the firing-line into the artillery line by means of special mortars. Each improvement of this kind strengthened the French system of defence.

MONKEY HILL

Throughout June the French commander remained largely on the defensive. General Pétain had to take very long views, by reason of the chaotic weakness of Russia and the unpreparedness of the United States. The French armies above the Aisne and below the Suippe river became, for the time, the anvil of the Entente, on which the northern British armies were intended to hammer. Between anvil and hammer the strength of Germany was to be so broken as to allow Pétain, by the time October arrived, to renew his offensive on the Aisne ridge.

Meanwhile, nearly all the early line of attack of the Franco-British offensive, from Lens to Auberive, was transformed into a line of resistance. The enemy then had the choice of trying to win back, with the guns and men he was bringing from Russia, either the Vimy Ridge and the Monchy position of the British, or the Craonne Ridge and dominant Moronvilliers Downs of the French. Ludendorff selected the new French front for persistent and methodical counter-attack. North of the Aisne the Germans had retained a strong and dominating position around Fort Malmaison. From this position they still overlooked part of the Aisne Valley. They also possessed a great upland cavern near Hurtebise Monument, and along most of the high line their advanced forces were within rushing distance of many vital observation points.

The French situation was tantalising to the enemy. At Vauxaillon there was a height known as Mont des Singes (or Monkey Hill), commanding the ravine through which the railway ran to Laon and overlooking the western end of the Ailette Valley. The Germans were entrenched on the reverse slope of this hill, and had only to climb a few yards in order to snatch all the advantages of the position from the French. The result was that the German commander first employed companies, then battalions and brigades, in repeated attempts to regain this critical summit. Finally he sent an entire Prussian division against Mont des Singes in the last week of June, reinforced by a very large body of shock troops, which gained a momentary footing in the trenches; but after a bitter struggle, lasting a day and night, a much smaller French force counter-attacked and returned to the summit. About the same time the French in turn stormed the enormous grotto that ran below the Hurtebise position. At Hurtebise, the Plateau of Vauclerc was joined to a saddle of high land, at which several

FRENCH OFFENSIVE ON THE AISNE

roads met. The saddle was in many ways the critical position on the ridge, and the French forces could not completely master it because the enemy held the Dragon's Cave.

The French themselves had held this cave in 1915, but had lost it owing to a chance German howitzer shot closing the only southern entrance and imprisoning two of their companies. In turn, two German companies occupied the grottoes and apparently enjoyed perfect safety. They had large entrances on the northern and southern sides, and several new vertical exits into the German trenches overhead, around the monument of Napoleon's victory; and their position was so close to the French trenches that artillery preparation was not possible.

On June 25 the Dragon's Cave was recovered, in spite of the work that the enemy sappers had spent upon it. The lowest cave was assailed before the action opened, and made uninhabitable. Then the nests of machine-guns, guarding the main shaft above ground, were overwhelmed by a liquid-fire attack, while the main exit northward was blown in and filled up by heavy howitzer fire based on aerial photographs and directed by pilots. The French infantrymen swept up behind their line of liquid fire and captured all the German machine-guns that were above ground before the enemy gunners were able to fire. There followed, however, an amazing scene of confusion. The victors could not find the remaining entrance into the grottoes. They were fiercely countered on their left, and compelled to give ground, and swept by a hurricane of barraging shell, for which there was complete shelter beneath their feet, if only they could find it. By a superb rally they recovered the German trenches on their flank.

In the meantime their chaplain, Father Py, descending an apparent dug-out in search of wounded, entered the main cavern, in which more than three hundred Germans were collected. He argued with the enemy officers for a quarter of an hour, and succeeded in inducing them to acknowledge they were prisoners; and they undertook to lead their men into the French lines. When, therefore, General Bohm launched his main counter-attacks, the men of the 152nd regiment, which was originally from the Vosges, had the caves as cover against the hostile preparatory bombardment, and in almost undiminished strength met and shattered the fresh German forces. The 152nd regiment was intimately acquainted with Prussianism of the

THE PRUSSIAN GUARD

school of Zabern. For this reason the men always fought in such a manner that all Germans, northern and southern, called them the men of the "devil's regiment." After the capture of the Dragon's Cave and the Napoleonic monument on the Hurtebise level, Pétain relapsed into a state of quiescence. All his local attacks were designed to lure the last reserves of Germany on to the slopes overlooked by his observation officers.

Towards the end of June the German commander, after an intense artillery preparation, endeavoured to break through the western defences of Verdun between Dead Man Hill and Avo-court. After this diversion a great German offensive was launched, along a front of ten and a half miles, upon the Chemin des Dames above the Aisne. The French troops held remarkably firm, and, by July 9, had recovered most of the forward positions relinquished under the pressure of overwhelming numbers. This condition of things did not suit Ludendorff. He was in extreme need of a victory on the western front, in order to strengthen the movement for a negotiated peace, which was being engineered, under his hidden direction, by a majority of the members of the Reichstag. The offensive against the high French positions north of the Aisne was therefore immediately renewed, with an increased number of men and guns. In the evening of Saturday, July 14, a large German force, including a division of the Prussian Guard, made an attempt to recover all the ridge positions between Cerny and Craonne.

Yet, brave and highly-trained as they were, the Guardsmen met their masters in the comparatively small French garrison clinging to the battered, smoking ground along the eastern part of the ridge. Scores of Germans using flame-projectors were killed, and although their survivors drove the French out of part of their first line and enabled the shock troops to penetrate some supporting trenches, all positions of importance were recovered by the main body of French troops in an intense nocturnal combat that ended only when dawn broke. Scarcely more than five hundred yards of the forward French line was retained by the Prussian regiments. This small loss was more than balanced by answering French thrusts in the Verdun sector and the Moronvilliers sector, in which Hill 304 was outflanked on the west and Mont Teton carried on the north-east.

The grand attempt of the Germans to push the French forces from the dominating eastern end of the Aisne Plateau was

FRENCH OFFENSIVE ON THE AISNE

renewed on July 19. Only two and a half miles of high levels, between Craonne and Hurtebise, were assailed, and a special force of highly-trained veterans, formed into a 5th division of the Guard, was sent forward, with additional contingents of shock troops. At seven o'clock in the morning the Germans came over their parapets in close formation, and made a frontal attack on the Casemates and California uplands. On the wider parts of the plateau, where the French artillery had space for barrage work, every assault failed, and a single French company on the west of the Casemates broke every attack there in a conflict lasting for nearly forty-eight hours. Only on the narrow strip of ground between the two main levels was the enemy able to obtain a footing.

Although the French fell back at this point, they held on to the trench running along the southern edge of the ridge. When they were at last reinforced they swept the Germans down the northern slope in a nocturnal battle, and recaptured every observation-post. Still, General Boehm did not abandon hope of recovering the ridge. He re-formed the new and broken Guards' division, and added to it the 5th reserve Prussian division and the 15th Bavarian division. He also increased the number of his guns; and just before dawn on July 22 he smote the eastern end of the ridge with such a bombardment as had never before been seen on the French front.

The gun fire lasted only an hour. At dawn the three German divisions climbed up the southern slopes of the Ailette Valley against the Casemates and California Plateaux. There were some thirty thousand Germans, closely arrayed on a front of less than 4,500 yards, with an entire army in immediate support behind them. At the cost of disastrous sacrifice the Germans at last reached the first line on the Plateau of California, and managed at nightfall to cling to the edge of the level. The whole of the California position measured only four hundred yards by two hundred and fifty yards. The area of the neighbouring Casemates level was sufficient to allow the French artillery to keep the enemy off, and on the smaller plateau the Germans won only the foremost line.

The battle continued for six days. In the end not a green thing could be seen on the Chemin des Dames. The ridge was an indescribable dirty-white chaos of tumbled, dusty chalk. Yet, on July 24 the men of the 152nd Regiment were perched

THE AUBERIVE SALIENT

upon the extreme northern edges of the California and the Casemates levels, their bayonets red, their faces white with chalk-dust and fatigue, and their eyes blazing with victory. The hillmen of France had conquered. Amid the continuing bombardment, they again looked down upon the Ailette Valley, Laon Cathedral, and the Champagne Plain. Pétain was at last in so strong a position around Craonne that he could prepare to renew the Aisne offensive eastward against the triangle of fortified hill ground around Fort Malmaison.

Both armies were practically blinded by the weather. The French artillery could only continue to register upon known or suspected hostile gun sites, while the German artillery could merely proceed, with decreasing vigour, to maintain a shrapnel curtain over all ways of approach, and over any German positions which were definitely known to have been lost. A high wind made air scouting almost impossible, and the extraordinary late, April, snowfall completed the difficulties. Nevertheless, the French troops that went up and over the white slime of Champagne between Prunay and the ground east of Auberville, on a front of about nine and a half miles, took all the first line of downs. Mont Cornillet, 850 feet high, was carried, and all counter-attacks were shattered.

Developing their advantage, the forces of the left French wing of attack conquered in two days a block of hills and valleys some three miles square between the village of Moronvilliers and the hamlet of Nauroy. Besides Mont Cornillet, Mont sans Nom, and Mont Blond were occupied, and important ground was won around the central height of Mont Haut. General Gouraud, who conducted the action, deployed only four regiments in attacking the great clump of Champagne downs. Among the troops were the famous thrusting forces of Africa, composed of French planters, Arabs, and Sudanese. Alongside the African battalions was the Foreign Legion.

Since the first French offensive in Champagne, Auberville had become one of the most extraordinary fortresses. It was belted with a two-mile line of redoubts, and also cavered, tunnelled, and overlaid with thick concrete. The defences, however, proved but death-traps. The tremendous weight of the French artillery was irresistible, and the Auberville salient was overrun on the first day of the offensive.

CHAPTER 11

Battle of Messines Ridge

THE attack, in June, 1917, on the Messines and Wytschaete ridges, which was made by the British 2nd army, under Sir Herbert Plumer, must always count as one of the best planned and most successfully executed operations of the war. As early as the spring of 1916, preparations were being made to relieve the Ypres salient from the menace which these high ridges held as long as they were in the hands of the Germans. From their observation posts every daylight movement of troops or transport in the neighbourhood of Ypres could be overlooked—and it was essential that this disadvantage should be removed before any attack on the German positions as a whole could be mobilised with any hope of success.

Demands for reinforcements from other fronts, however, kept Sir Herbert Plumer's army, for over a year, too weak to attempt the offensive at Messines. Mining operations were continued, but the delay was accompanied by constant anxiety that these should be discovered and the mines destroyed before they could be put to the desired purpose.

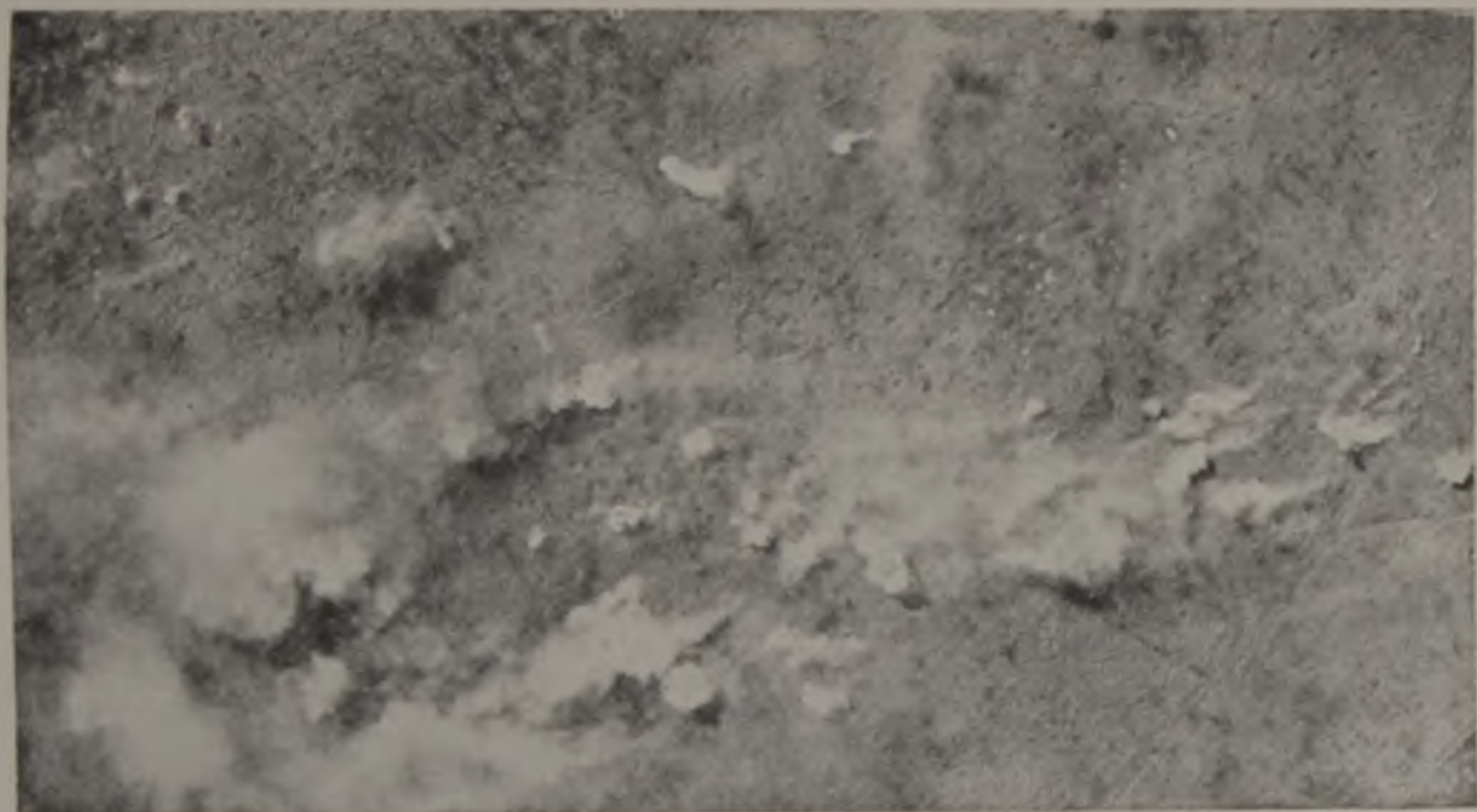
The Germans on the Messines Ridge possessed advantages in position. They had dominating observation over Ypres northwards, and over Ploegsteert Wood southward; and although the centre of their ridge was in places slightly below the hill positions occupied by the British on Kemmel Hill, west of Wytschaete, they could bring enfilading gun and machine-gun fire to bear upon the low British lines northward and southward. In regard to mining operations, however, the British sappers in the low marshy ground were able to tunnel deeply under the ridge from comparatively shallow saps in their own lines. They were at the start a hundred and fifteen feet below the ridge they proposed to blow up. So great was the depth of ground above their galleries that the enemy did not hear the enormous work that was going on. Moreover, there was a stratum of impervious clay in the low ground through which British miners worked, and above the clay there was merely sand.

*Imperial War Museum*

SPOIL OF WAR ON WYTSCHAETE RIDGE. The operations known as the battle of Messines were a continuation of the British 1917 offensive, but directed rather to the coast than to the outflanking of the Hindenburg Line. They involved the Messines Ridge itself, where the attack was opened by the explosion of nineteen enormous mines, and the Wytschaete Ridge, its extension dominating the Ypres salient. Both were captured. The illustration shows a German field gun being hauled off near Wytschaete on June 10.



REHEARSING FOR THE MESSINES BATTLE. This photograph shows British troops who were to take part in the great attack on the Messines Ridge studying an elaborate and detailed model of the terrain so as to familiarise them with the exact nature of the ground they had to cover. This method of training was frequently used in the later years of the war.



Royal Flying Corps

EFFECT OF A PRELIMINARY BOMBARDMENT. The Messines Ridge had to be captured since it dominated the Ypres salient on the south. The battle of Messines was staged on June 7, 1917, and as usual the attack was preceded by an artillery bombardment, the effect of which can be judged from this air view of part of the Ridge on June 5. The visible shell bursts should be counted, remembering that the exposure is instantaneous.



MINE CRATER AT MESSINES. One variation from the normal artillery battle was provided at Messines by the explosion of nineteen huge mines beneath the German defences on the Ridge immediately before the attack. Twenty had been dug, but one was discovered and destroyed. The moral effect of this move was shattering; but the craters, which soon became tarns, did not make advanced communications easier.

PLUMER'S PREPARATIONS

In regard also to artillery attack, Sir Herbert Plumer and his gunners had, from the beginning of the operations, a certain advantage of ground. They held, near the Spanbroek Inn, west of Wytschaete, part of the summit which was nearly forty-nine feet above the centre of the German ridge. Then when the British artillery became more numerous than the German artillery, the north-western and south-western sides of the hostile ridge were liable to be smashed by downright, overwhelming gun fire, with cannon as well as with howitzers.

In the spring of 1917 Sir Douglas Haig was in the happy position of being able to refrain from withdrawing divisions from the 2nd army. Not only was Sir Herbert Plumer allowed to keep his forces intact, but finally his left flank was gradually strengthened by the transport of Sir Hubert Gough's army from the Bullecourt sector to the northern Ypres sector.

A great bombardment was opened upon Wytschaete on Thursday, May 24, 1917, after reconnoitring raids had gone on for a week. The bombardment continued to grow more intense and increase in depth and width. Above the flaming parks of artillery, British and German pilots fought for the mastery of the air, while the British infantry raided the enemy's lines as far as the support trench around Wytschaete. By the end of May all the northern British front from Ypres to Armentières flamed and thundered, and the defences of the Flemish coast were shelled by British warships.

Plumer could not conceal his main preparations. There were large new railway junctions just behind his lines. Hundreds of new locomotives and thousands of trucks had been added to the rolling stock. Though many enemy scouting planes were brought down and a complete local mastery of the air obtained, Sixt von Armin, the commander of the German 4th army, was well aware that something was intended. He and his chief of staff, General von Lossberg, had distinguished themselves in the Somme battles by preventing a complete rupture of their line in the autumn of 1916. They were two very capable men, and the choice of them for the Ypres sector showed that Ludendorff was alert to the danger of a Flanders offensive.

Nevertheless, the German High Command, which was hard pressed both around Arras and along the Aisne, did not immediately proceed to shift its main force towards the new front of danger. Either Ludendorff thought that only a strong British

BATTLE OF MESSINES RIDGE

demonstration was impending, and feared to move his grand reserve from the old battlefields, or General von Armin was so confident of the strength of his ridge position that he hoped to escape the fate of the commander of the Vimy Ridge, and achieve a result at least equal to that effected by the German commander along the northern Aisne plateau. He brought up many more large guns and a few fresh divisions, but he had no reserve such as had been arrayed behind the Hindenburg system.

The British attacking forces were comparatively small, but their backing of artillery was tremendous, and the infantry training was remarkable for its minute perfection. General Plumer ordered the construction of a model of the ridge, in which the nine miles of German front was reproduced on more than an acre of ground. Every detail of contour and natural and artificial feature was studied by officers and men. Bit by bit the battle was rehearsed, until all the soldiers had memorised their parts. They manœuvred over the reproduction of ruined farms, winding roads, trenches, and woods. Writing of these rehearsals the historian of the 47th (London) division says: "How useful and important was this training over taped-out courses was shown on the day of the attack, when both officers and other ranks found the trenches almost identical with those that had been laid out for them to practise over." Sir Herbert Plumer was laboriously and precisely careful in organizing his battle. He rehearsed his artillery with his infantry. Sometimes the gunners swept part of the ridge with a devastating whirlwind bombardment. On one occasion, at least, the grand barrage was flung out in full intensity, while forward observing officers and aerial scouts studied it in the hope of being able to suggest some improvements in detail.

The plight of the German garrison became desperate, as is shown by the following extracts from the diary of a stretcher-bearer at Messines:

May 27.—The English are firing on us heavily.

May 28 (Whit Sunday).—We have two dead and two wounded. This is a charming Christian festival. One despairs of all mankind. This everlasting murder!

June 1.—The English are bombarding all the trenches and, as far as possible, destroying the dug-outs. They keep sending over shot after shot. To-day we have a whole crowd of casualties. The casualties increase terribly.

ZERO HOUR

June 2.—The English never cease their bombardment. All the trenches are clodded up. Nothing more to be made of them. Casualties follow on casualties.

June 3.—The English are trying to demolish our dug-out, too.

June 4.—The casualties become more numerous all the time. No shelter to bring the men under. They must now sleep in the open; only a few dug-outs left.

June 5.—Casualty follows casualty. We have slipped out of the dug-out and moved elsewhere. There are many buried by earth. To look on such things is utter misery.

June 6.—The English are all over us. They blow up the earth all around us, and there is shell-hole after shell-hole, some of them being large enough for a house to be built in. We have already sustained many casualties.

On June 7 the attack was made. Zero hour was 3.10 a.m. Following the explosion of nineteen mines a most intensive artillery bombardment fell on the German lines. The infantry advanced with the support of forty Tanks, covered by a creeping barrage. All the dreadful characteristics of the action of Vimy Ridge were reproduced upon the low Flemish slopes, with many technical improvements and a great increase of power. A million pounds of ammonal were exploded at the end of the nineteen mining galleries of extraordinary length and depth.

The English, Irish, New Zealand, and Australian troops were impeded by the effects of the great volcanoes that broke through the first German system. It was death to enter the huge craters filled with the gas from tons of ammonal. Even soldiers who approached near the lips of the gigantic holes, when trying to skirt round them and help the thrusting movement on the flanks, became dizzy and sick from the drifting fumes. The Germans on the slopes were appalled by the awful nature of the greatest mining operation in the war. The ground around them shook in earthquake tremors, amid the continual explosion of shells of all sizes, from 15 in. down to shrapnel.

Barrels of burning oil tumbled into the enemy trenches and broke in floods of flame into the dug-outs that remained uninjured. The concrete caverns and cellars of the villages, representing the highest developments in the German arts of defence, were turned into death-traps. The forts of the new model, first known as M.E.B.U.'s and "Maybushes," and afterwards by the more familiar term of pill boxes, proved

BATTLE OF MESSINES RIDGE

to be no more protection than the Hindenburg tunnel had been. All definite trench systems, carefully devised by Armin and Lossberg, in accordance with the lessons they had learnt on the Somme, went the way of the older works, designed when the London Scottish were thrust out of Messines during the first battle of Ypres and the British cavalry were driven out of Wytschaete.

The attack was made on a front of about nine miles, from Mont Sorel, south-east of Ypres, to Douve river, above Ploegsteert Wood. Through Battle Wood, north of Hollebeke, English troops, with north country units, advanced. London men fought along the spoil-banks by the Ypres-Comines canal towards the White Château. From St. Eloi, English county regiments moved south of the canal into Damstrasse. Welsh troops stormed into the Grand Bois, north of Wytschaete, and fought their way far across country into Oosttaverne village. The ridge and village of Wytschaete were carried by Ulstermen and southern Irishmen (the 36th and 16th divisions). The lowish saddle between the Wytschaete and Messines heights was gained by English battalions.

Messines was assailed by a New Zealand division, through which Australians passed to extend the advance. When the infantry went over the top of the assembly trenches there was moonlight dimmed with mist over the country, but these natural conditions were smothered in the great orange and scarlet flames of the mine explosions, the bursting of barrels of burning oil, rainbow splashes of signal rockets, white star-shells, and the fire and fume of millions of projectiles. The British artillery was reported to have fired four million shells, and to have made a hole in every nine square yards of the ground. The German artillery endeavoured to shelter their men by the usual mechanical barrage over the ground of advance, but in many places the hostile batteries were unable to carry out their work. Over each long-studied German battery site there fell a British standing barrage.

At the northern end of the fighting line the famous Hill 60 was the scene of a long engineering struggle for some months before the action opened. Australian and British miners bored an elaborate network of galleries and chambers under the ground. The Germans were also boring at a higher level. Once, without knowing it, the Germans dug so close to one of the

IN BATTLE WOOD

Australian chambers that they brought the roofing down upon the tins of ammonal. On another occasion a hundred miners were kept working at an almost unendurable stretch in a gallery, four hundred feet long, pumping out water to save the operation. When at the opening of the battle two great craters were blown in Hill 60, the survivors of a Württemberg regiment holding the ground were easily conquered by the Australian miners themselves, who had joined with the attacking infantry in order to see at first hand the effect of their labours.

After the explosion, however, Hill 60 remained a very strong position. The vault of the observing chambers consisted of sixty-pound rails, riveted solidly together, and embedded in six feet of concrete. From the opening in the outer wall a complete panorama of the British line at Ypres was obtained. When the victors first looked through the slit in the clearing air they saw all their positions minutely exposed. Some of the most important of their places were visible in spite of the camouflage designed to hide them. They could only wonder that the German artillery had not utterly destroyed them.

Between Hill 60 and the Mound rising near the Comines canal there was a large patch of broken trees, wired trenches, and underground and concrete forts known as Battle Wood. It was a most difficult sector to attack, and still more difficult to hold. Being on the flank of the battle line, it was subject to the cross-fire from German guns on three sides. Moreover, the German commander could pour in reinforcements from Gheluvelt and Shrewsbury Forest, as well as from the fields and slopes around Zandvoorde. Some English troops who rose to attack Battle Wood were flung down by the force of the explosion on Hill 60.

Happily, their comrades met with very little resistance, though very heavy fighting had been anticipated. The men of the Württemberg division that garrisoned the large wooded tract had been badly hammered in the long bombardment, and were so weak and weary that their central redoubt was speedily silenced. After losing five hundred and forty prisoners the Württembergers were driven out of the wood. Thereupon, another German division, the 11th, which had been punished in the Arras battles and sent to Bruges to rest, was ordered to make forced marches to the southern end of Battle Wood, and there strengthen the men of Württemberg. The new division had had no draft since its withdrawal from the southern battle,

BATTLE OF MESSINES RIDGE

and the wasted regiments had little desire for fight left in them. They were driven back to Shrewsbury Forest, a mile beyond Hill 60, until, with the exception of one corner in the wood, the British line ran without any serious bend from a point about a mile below Hooze to a point about two miles west of Armentières.

On the southern bank of Battle Wood ran the Comines canal, close to the ruined park and country-house known as the White Château. The position formed the side of the great German ridge salient, and was itself bastioned by the low hillock near St. Eloi known as the Mound, which the Canadian troops had vainly tried to hold earlier in the war. South of the manor-house extended a level drive. Part of it was banked above a low plain between St. Eloi and Hollebeke, and part of it was cut through the higher wooded ground. This drive was the famous Dam Strasse, upon which German engineers had laboured since October, 1914. Rows of concrete forts were constructed above underground shelters along the Dam Strasse and the Comines canal. Then, mounds of excavated earth, called by engineers 'spoil-banks', were hollowed out by the waterside, roofed with concrete and riveted rails, and armed not only with machine-guns but with artillery. The manor house was continually strengthened by the engineers according to the experience obtained in all the battles between Neuve Chapelle and Vimy.

Until the third week in May, 1917, the enemy regarded this northern flank of the Wytschaete Ridge as the most impregnable part of his fortress system. When, however, the heaviest British guns began exactly to register upon concrete armour-plate and the earth cushions above the roofs, there was nothing to withstand the tons of steel and high explosive except the oldest and easiest form of cover. Only where there was an immense cushion of soft earth to act as a pillow to the monster British shells, did the garrison beneath escape. The spoil-banks survived, together with the great Mound and part of the sand-bagged roofed cellars under the broken walls of the country house. Although six feet of concrete and steel could not be broken by 5.9 in. German shells, when enemy gunners were registering upon positions lost by their infantry, the new 15 in. British shell either tore into the forts, or, bursting outside the observing slits, killed or incapacitated the men within by shock.

WORK OF THE FLYING CORPS

The Mound was blown up in the same way as Hill 60. Of the garrison only three stunned Germans remained alive when the huge new crater was explored. It was then discovered that the British infantry had had a narrow escape from the same fate. German miners working from the Mound had driven a shaft a hundred and twenty feet into the British lines on the plain south of Ypres. As had happened in other battles, there had been a miners' race below the opposing fronts, and it was partly the fact of the British attack occurring at least two or three days before it was expected that saved the assailing troops from a great German mine.

London men, county regiments, including a force of Welshmen and Irish, were drawn up between the canal and the ground around the Dam Strasse. Some of these troops, who were completely overlooked by enemy observers on high ground, had no assembly-trenches, and gathered for the attack in shell-holes where they were espied by the enemy. Happily, the German officer commanding in the section thought that only a raid was intended. As he did not like unnecessarily to expose all his battery sites, he shelled only a small part of the unprotected men. Excellent work was done by the Royal Flying Corps. Pilots descended to within fifty feet of the ground, shooting at gunners, dispersing infantry, blowing up ammunition dumps, and searching for guns amid all the devices of concealment practised by the enemy. A single British squadron marked down some 290 German guns, and directed an intensely heavy fire upon them until every gun was put out of action. Another British aerial unit of larger size sent 390 calls for fire upon gun positions, and directed hits upon nearly all the objectives.

This was the main reason why some of the English battalions were able to assemble in shell-holes in No Man's Land without being wiped out before the infantry movement opened. The German was so completely mastered in the air that his guns were practically an encumbrance to him, except on the northern and southern wings. He began moving his artillery back a day or two before the assault, and as his retiring batteries had to pass through the persistent barrage maintained by British heavies on the hostile communications, the Germans were far from saving all the guns they hastily withdrew.

A large number of the seven thousand prisoners taken in the battle maintained that they had been betrayed by their

BATTLE OF MESSINES RIDGE

general in command. They had been told in an Order of the Day, issued early in June, that the ridge had to be held at all cost by the infantry and machine-gunners, because all positions would be recovered in a great counter-attack for which everything had been made ready. The withdrawal of many of their guns made the Prussian and Bavarian foot soldiers rather doubt the order given to them. The increasing intensity of the opposing artillery fire deepened their doubts, and when the great mine explosions occurred, followed by cascades of burning oil, tempests of gas-shells, and tornadoes of high explosive, the spirit of the German soldiers was generally broken.

In spite, however, of the large tendency to demoralisation there were detachments of Prussians and Bavarians that went on fighting with great courage. Troops of the 47th division, who had to clear the spoil-banks along the Comines canal, met with fierce resistance. By means of skilful rush approaches, trench-mortar fire, and hand-bombs, the Londoners managed to work through and around the largest of the works formed out of earth excavated from the bed of the canal. But beyond this triangular system was a smaller oval earthwork, embedded in the water-side, which could not be taken. Neither the ordinary creeping shrapnel barrage that forced enemy garrisons underground nor the heavier roof-smashing line of high-explosive shell was of avail. The loose, deep earth cushioned all the explosions, and the firing slits below could never be reached by shrapnel, and seldom by direct machine-gun or rifle fire. Any attacking party that came close enough to fire at the slits fell under a lash of bullets from another direction. It took a week of concentrated gunfire and gradual infantry approaches along new saps to break into the oval work.

Checked on the canal, the London battalions entrenched between the spoil-banks, cleared the Germans out of the dug-outs on either side of the low water, and connected up with other metropolitan battalions who were also fighting under great difficulties around the White Château. As already explained, this country-house, the proper name of which was Château Matthieu, had been transformed into a semi-underground fortress. Near it was a lake—by which were the ruins of what had been fine stables, the whole being surrounded by a wilderness of stumps, broken wire entanglements, and sunken redoubts.

BATTLE OF MESSINES RIDGE

Germans to emerge for breath, and surrender. The stream running from the lake to the canal had been cleared and occupied, bringing all the Londoners on either side of the historic waterway into a new line partly bent around the oval work.

On the right of the London troops were county English battalions, which had advanced from the Mound after the great explosion. They pressed forward into the chaos wrought by their artillery and, after a bitter fight with a German detachment, stormed along a ravine where the survivors of a Prussian division were suddenly launched against them in a counter-attack. A Kent battalion which was heading the advance in the ravine, made a successful assault, and 800 Germans were taken between the Mound and Ravine Wood, together with a store of war material.

Several Tanks climbed over the broken ground in the hope of sharing in the fighting, but they did not find much work to do. The enemy's strongholds were shattered by shell, and all his troops broken or dispersed, when they arrived. "So rapid was the advance of our infantry," said Sir Douglas Haig in his despatch, "that only a few Tanks could get forward in time to come into action." German batteries were found knocked out, with the gunners lying dead around them.

The Dam Strasse, near by, had been a source of great anxiety to the general commanding the British troops in this sector, and also to the staff of Sir Herbert Plumer. Aerial photographs had revealed the extraordinary strength of the enemy's defences in the hollow ground along which the drive was made. Special artillery preparation was therefore made in regard to the street of concrete block-houses, and, such was the penetrating power of the storms of heavy British shell that the enemy garrison was practically put out of action before the attacking infantry arrived. The larger part of the street of fortresses was broken, and the survivors surrendered in hundreds. The unexpected speed with which this victory was gained enabled the English county regiments quickly to bomb their way along the road and reach Ravine Wood in time to break the Prussian counter-attack with the bayonet.

In the afternoon, when the London troops beyond White Château and their countrymen at the end of Ravine Wood had consolidated on their new line, other English forces went through them in order to drive the enemy farther back to Hollebeke.

WELSH BATTALIONS

The left wing at first marked time, covered by the wall of smoke and flame in front of them, and the right wing, which had a larger stretch of ground to cover, wheeled onward, fighting all the way. Throughout the 2nd army, all advances were made with almost mechanical precision with the aid of synchronised watches. In the present case the two variously manœuvring wings bore down all the enemy's resistance. They captured six field-guns and some special trench-mortars, with many machine-guns and three hundred prisoners. Furthermore, the wings joined together on their new line within thirty seconds of each other. The entire casualties, light and serious, were less than the number of German prisoners.

East of the wood was a very formidable obstacle just over the brow of the ridge. It was known as "Obvious Trench," because it was the reverse of obvious, being quite invisible. Happily, it was not invisible from an aeroplane, and the guns had been so exactly directed upon it that all wire entanglements had been cut, and much of the trench and underground work destroyed. There were still many Germans in this high position, but they could not prevent an attacking Welsh battalion from climbing the slope and capturing the position. On the ridge behind the trenches was a hollow in which twelve guns and two heavy trench-mortars were taken. Then beyond the artillery position was a farm building known as North House, which was a nest of concrete caverns and gun shelters. This was bombed and taken, with a large garrison.

The Welsh troops pushed through Oosttaverne Wood, and extended their line beyond Oosttaverne village. The German losses in this night attack were uncommonly heavy, by reason of the fact that the Welshmen were engaged in hand-to-hand nocturnal combat with large enemy reinforcements and partly reorganized survivors of the battle of the Ridge. After overcoming and routing the Germans, the men of Wales proved their qualities as a mining race by digging themselves in deeply and quickly. It was well for them they did so. They had reached, at Oosttaverne, the extreme limit of a safe advance, and the long-ranged heavy German artillery shelled them furiously for a night and a day. The victors, however, had few losses, owing to the cover they had made for themselves. When the German infantry at last counter-attacked them on their right and on their left, they suffered quite inconsiderable

BATTLE OF MESSINES RIDGE

loss; for their own artillery had then been moved up in the interval, and the hostile waves were broken and dispersed before the Welsh infantry could fire on them.

South of the Grand Bois was Petit Bois, with another wood east of it and the village of Wytschaete beyond. There was about three-quarters of a mile of rising wooded ground from the trenches of the attacking force to the northern fortress village on the ridge. Here the left wing of the Irish regiments advanced, while the right wing started from high ground, by Mont Kemmel, over more level ground. At first there was little opposition of importance in Petit Bois, where the Germans were so shaken that many at once surrendered. In Wytschaete Wood, a tract of ploughed earth bristling with branchless and broken trees, sharp fighting occurred. The wood was about eight hundred yards away, and connecting with it was a ruined hospice and the village on the crest. The Germans had several tunnels, through which they could move quickly without being seen. Moreover, the Irish riflemen on the surface were impeded by broken entanglements, holes, and general wreckage.

There were concrete forts remaining uninjured among other shattered redoubts, from which came streams of machine-gun fire and red and white signals for the support of German guns. Upon a neighbouring tree a brave German non-commissioned officer stayed and signalled to his artillery as the Irishmen swept forward from the smoky darkness. He was made a prisoner, and the fort was captured. The removal of this obstacle allowed the attack to sweep on to a further intact block of the enemy's defensive work in the broken circular line around Wytschaete. The fresh Irish waves of attack went through the first forces at the newly-won line near the crest, and won the village with remarkable facility. A severe loss was sustained by the 16th (South Ireland) division through the death of Major William Redmond, brother of the Irish nationalist leader, who was killed in action near Wytschaete. He had volunteered for service when well over middle age. "He had striven all his days for Irish unity" it has been written . . . "he had lived to see that union of spirit realized, if not in the dusty *coulisses* of politics, in the nobler arena of battle, and it was an Ulster ambulance that bore him from the field."

The Ulstermen set out alongside the Dublins, and began by breaking a brigade of the 4th Prussian Grenadiers. The

PROWESS OF THE ULSTERMEN

German commanding officer placed all his men in action, with the result that all lost heavily and rapidly. One company was destroyed by a gigantic explosion of the mine at the point known as Peckham. Amid the flaming confusion and smoking obscurity, the Northern Irish charged and broke the German Grenadiers: two other brigades of the 2nd Prussian division were also routed in the first phase of the advance. Therefore, about noon, General von Armin threw into the battle all his 1st reserve division; but, as this was thinly extended from the south of Wytschaete to Messines, it could not withstand the combined pressure of Irish, English, and Anzac troops. The Ulstermen also took prisoners from the 40th Saxon division and from the 3rd Bavarian division.

On the right of the Ulstermen was an English force which connected southward with New Zealand troops. Some of the hardest work in the battle was given to the Englishmen. The distance from their starting-place at Kruisstraat Inn to their objective over the ridge was two thousand yards. Fronting them was the Bois de l'Enfer. North of the wood was a system of concrete blocks which was hell itself; while southward, behind a labyrinth of fortifications, was Hell Farm. These places formed the central defences of the saddle of the ridge between Wytschaete and Messines, and the enemy fought with especial fierceness in the hope of being able to make a counter-attack from a position that flanked both hill villages.

On the night before the assault some north country troops crawled out into No Man's Land and excavated an assembly-trench four and a half feet deep and two-thirds of a mile long. They had scarcely any casualties while thus reducing the distance between them and the Bavarians and Saxons. When the men left this trench at ten minutes past three, after a most laborious night, they broke through uncut wire, stormed fort after fort, and, against the German resistance advanced according to time table.

By the rapid conquest of the Bois de l'Enfer and of the farm beyond, a gap was closed and the attacking line was brought forward to the road connecting Wytschaete and Messines. Running beyond, and parallel with, the road was an undamaged system of defences known as the October Position. Some Ulstermen had taken part of the trenches, and had orders not to go any farther. They saw the English forces sweep forward

BATTLE OF MESSINES RIDGE

on their left, and arrive against a belt of uncut wire near some ruined buildings known as Middle Farm. Enemy gunners and riflemen rose above the parapet and shot down the men who tried by every means to climb over or through the uncut entanglements. With heavy loss, some Englishmen got through and began to clear the enemy trenches, but, as the garrison consisted of nearly three hundred Germans, the odds were extremely heavy against the attackers. The Ulster troops then joined in the attack and took the German position on the flank. Again the English division closed the gaps in its battle-front and carried it, unbroken, down from the eastern slope of the ridge. On their left they passed another farm, against which their flank and the Ulster flank seemed likely to be checked. But a party went forward with two Lewis guns, stormed into the fortified ruins, and made some prisoners. The battle everywhere proceeded with marked success, and when, by the evening, the Oosttaerne line had been taken, the British objectives had been gained. Captures during the fighting had amounted to 7,200 prisoners, 67 guns, 94 trench-mortars and 294 machine-guns.

The night was spent in the consolidation of the captured positions. Tanks patrolled the ground east of the Oosttaerne line and were useful in repelling a German counter-attack which developed in the early morning of June 8 in the Wambeke valley, but it was not till 7 p.m. on the same evening that the Germans counter-attacked in force along the whole line. Sir Herbert Plumer was fully prepared for this assault, and it was successfully repulsed at all points.

During the next four days, consolidation of the new line was carried out with great thoroughness, and at this time further advances were made in the capture of La Potterie farm south-east of Messines and of the village of Gapaard. The Germans now began to evacuate their positions between the Lys river and St. Yves, which had become extremely dangerous for them to hold. This movement was followed closely by British patrols, and by June 14 the whole of the old German front and former support lines north of the Lys were occupied by the British. On the same evening further attacks were made south and east of Messines and on both sides of the Ypres-Comines canal. Enemy strong points were captured and nearly the whole British line was advanced on the front from the river Warnave to Klein Zillebeke.

HAIG THANKS HIS MEN

At this point Sir Douglas Haig decided that the 2nd army had taken as much ground as was then desirable, and gave orders that the new front line should be placed in a state of defence and forward posts established. Thus the operations at Messines came to an end, and in an order of the day the British commander-in-chief summarised the features of the operation and congratulated his 2nd army and its commander. Sir Douglas Haig said:

The complete success of the attack made yesterday by the Second Army, under the command of General Sir Herbert Plumer, is an earnest of the eventual final victory of the allied cause. The position assaulted was one of very great natural strength, on the defence of which the enemy had laboured incessantly for nearly three years. Its possession, overlooking the whole of the Ypres salient, was of the greatest strategical value to the enemy. The excellent observation which he had from this position added enormously to the difficulty of our preparations for the attack, and ensured to him ample warning of our intentions. He was therefore fully prepared for our assault, and had brought up reinforcements of men and guns to meet it. He had the further advantage of the experience gained by him from many previous defeats in battles, such as the Somme, the Ancre, Arras, and the Vimy Ridge. On the lessons to be drawn from these he had issued carefully-thought-out instructions.

Despite all these advantages, the enemy has been completely defeated within the space of a few hours. All our objectives were gained with undoubtedly very severe loss to the Germans. Our own casualties were, for a battle of such magnitude, most gratifyingly light. The full effect of this victory cannot be estimated yet, but that it will be very great is certain. Following on the great successes already gained, it affords final and conclusive proof that neither the strength of a position nor the knowledge of and timely preparation to meet an impending assault can save the enemy from complete defeat, and that, brave and tenacious as the German troops are, it is only a question of how much longer they can endure the repetition of such blows.

Yesterday's victory was due to causes which always have given and always will give success—namely, the utmost skill, valour, and determination in the execution of the attack, following on the greatest forethought and thoroughness in preparation for it.

This initial enterprise having been carried out, Sir Douglas Haig then began intensive preparations for much wider attacks farther north.

CHAPTER 12

Third Battle of Ypres

AFTER the successful battle of Messines Sir Douglas Haig was free to concentrate on his preparations for that series of offensives which came to be known as the 3rd battle of Ypres, July 31—November 6, 1917. The preparations included a re-shuffling of the British forces. Sir Henry Rawlinson, with part of the old 4th army, moved north from Artois to take up a position around Nieuport. On his right was the Belgian army, and on his left the 1st French army, under General Anthoine. Sir Hubert Gough's 5th army was on the right of the French and Sir Herbert Plumer's 2nd army joined up with the 5th army at or about the Ypres-Commines canal.

When the whole salient was alive with transport and the movement of troops, there occurred a reverse on the north of the line which, though of a minor character, was a depressing prelude to the main attack. The Germans sought to forestall the offensive by a break through in the Nieuport-Lombartzyde sector. On July 10 the German marines attacked, taking the British at a disadvantage, and by using bombs and liquid fire soon reduced the small garrison to a mere handful. The attack was preceded by an intense bombardment of the positions held by the 1st and 32nd divisions. The defences in this marshy region were breast-works, and these were quickly flattened. The German guns ranged accurately on the bridges over the Yser below the Geleide wreck and destroyed them. The garrisons on the north bank were thus cut off. They were composed of the 1st Northhamptons and the 2nd K.R.R.C., and fought gallantly until they were overwhelmed. Even then some four officers and 70 men succeeded in swimming back to their support lines across the Yser during the nights of July 11 and 12. Meanwhile preparations for the main offensive had become far advanced, but not without considerable handicaps.

Dealing with this operation Sir Douglas Haig wrote:

The various problems inseparable from the mounting of a great offensive, the improvement and construction of roads

THE PILL BOXES

and railways, the provision of an adequate water supply and of accommodation for troops, the digging of dug-outs, railways and trenches, and the assembling and registering of guns, had all to be met and overcome in the new theatre of battle, under conditions of more than ordinary disadvantage.

On no previous occasion, not excepting the attack on the Messines—Wytschaete Ridge, had the whole of the ground from which we had to attack been so completely exposed to the enemy's observation. Even after the enemy had been driven from the Messines—Wytschaete Ridge, he still possessed excellent direct observation over the salient from the east to south-east as well as from the Pilkem Ridge to the north. Nothing existed at Ypres to correspond with the vast caves and cellars which proved of such value in the days prior to the Arras battle, and the provision of shelter for the troops presented a very serious problem.

The great concentrations of men, of guns and material were therefore carried out, often with heavy loss, before they could be used to serve the ends of battle. Along the Boesinghe canal front the guns stood wheel to wheel with little protection. Movement was generally impossible in the forward areas except at night, and this became increasingly the case as the battle-front was moved forward over boggy ground in which it was impossible to dig adequate communication trenches. Before the attack was launched an aerial offensive was begun which enabled the British batteries to engage in counter-work and force the Germans to withdraw some of their guns to positions of greater safety.

Preparations on the German side were made with the greatest energy and foresight. The local German commander, General Sixt von Armin, accelerated the production of armoured concrete forts, known familiarly as pill boxes. These rapidly-made standardised redoubts were manufactured in such large numbers that the sand-pits of Belgium and the Rhineland were insufficient to supply the material needed. Vast quantities of sand and gravel were obtained from Holland, and mixed at Antwerp with cement to make concrete blocks around the Ypres battle-line. In addition the Germans brought large quantities of men and guns from the Russian front. The British staff knew something of what the German staff was doing, and trained the infantry in special ways of attacking the new block-houses, while large additions were made to the parks of siege-artillery.

THIRD BATTLE OF YPRES

The British artillery bombardment which preceded the infantry attack by many days was one of the heaviest known, and in addition to ground casualties, the Germans suffered considerable losses in the air. On July 29 it was discovered that on the northern part of the British 5th army front the Germans had withdrawn from their forward defence system. Advance parties of the Guards, operating with the French on their left, crossed the Yser canal and established themselves on a front of 3,000 yards east and north of Boesinghe. This enabled the troops in rear to erect bridges over the canal and thus to remove a serious obstacle to the main advance.

Zero hour on July 31 was 3.50 a.m., when the attack was opened on a front of fifteen miles from the Lys river opposite Deulemont northwards to beyond Steenstraat. The main assault was entrusted to the British 5th army on a front of about seven and a half miles between the Zillebeke-Zandvoorde road and Boesinghe. Under Sir Hubert Gough's command were the 2nd corps (24th, 30th, and 8th divisions, with a brigade of the 18th), the 19th corps (15th and 55th divisions), the 18th corps (39th and 51st divisions), and the 14th corps (the 38th and Guards divisions). The 1st French army moved across the Yser canal and the Dixmude road towards Bixschoote and the German position south of Houthulst Forest. Just below Dixmude the British army assailed Pilkem and all the swamps and low undulations eastward of Ypres, and some of the ground eastward of the Wytschaete-Messines Ridge.

The main objective consisted of an arc of small hills, rising like the half rim of a saucer, in front of the British valley positions around Ypres. The attack made south of these observation positions was of secondary importance. Sir Douglas Haig's intention was to grind the enemy down between Houthulst Forest and the village of Gheluvelt on the Menin road, between which points there was a crescent of comparatively high ground known as the Passchendaele Ridge. The ridge overlooked on one side all the basin of Ypres, and on the other side it gave observation over the Flemish plain as far as Bruges.

In addition to the advantage of possessing the encircling ridge, the Germans had a series of important southernly buttresses at Hooze, Shrewsbury Forest, and Zandvoorde. These heights gave shelter against observation and direct fire from the Wytschaete-Messines Ridge, which was some four miles south-west

THE GERMAN DEFENSIVE SYSTEM

of Zandvoorde. Their main forces were on higher and drier ground, and their forward observation officers could observe the movements of British troops in the swamps and bring to bear upon them a curtain of heavy shell. They made the 5.9 in. howitzer the mainstay of their system of field fortification. This system had been altered in accordance with the lessons of the Somme and Scarpe river battles. The German commander relied on a deeper zone of garrisoned shell-holes and concrete forts, in order to impede and disarrange attacking infantry. There was no definite network of trenches and communicating-ways as in the previous grand battles. Neither the long Hindenburg tunnel system nor the separate great cavern system was used as a backbone for the machine-gun defence.

To a considerable extent the aeroplane had destroyed the value of intricate earthworks. The system of defence, therefore, had to be made as inconspicuous as possible. The numberless craters, made by both masses of artillery, afforded the best means of concealment, and into carefully-selected groups of these craters parties of machine-gunners and snipers were placed, often with a hidden concrete fort behind them. Each fort was constructed with a strong top, and with three strong sides facing the approaches of assailing troops. But the fourth side was usually thin, so that it could more easily be penetrated by the guns of the defending army if the stronghold were stormed and occupied by British soldiers.

Formidable as these forts were, by reason of their number, they did not form the principal obstacle to attack. The low-lying, stream-fed ground of approach, swampy by nature in days of peace, had been rent and wildly tossed about by thirty-three months of incessant battering by heavy artillery. All the drainage system was gone. Old shell holes had silted up and been re-excavated, filled again with mud, and again turned into craters.

To this grave disadvantage of ground there was added an unaccountable disadvantage in weather conditions. The signal for attack was almost invariably the signal for a renewed and protracted downpour. From July 30 to August 6 there was only one day without rain, and that day was a day of mist. During some of the most important operations aerial fire control was almost impossible, and the Tank temporarily lost much of its high value.

THIRD BATTLE OF YPRES

Many British soldiers found themselves up to the armpits in mud. When comrades tried to pull them out the result was that the would-be helpers were pulled in. Entire platoons were overwhelmed in bogs like quicksand. In such circumstances the first attacks were remarkably successful. Just as dawn appeared over Menin and Roulers, on July 31, French and British infantrymen waded forward between the flooded land below Dixmude and the misty valley of the swollen Lys river. At the northern point men of the 1st French division crossed the Yser canal on a front of nearly two and a half miles and captured the villages of Steenstraate and Bixschoote.

Along the canal, south of the Frenchmen, were the British Guards, who attacked the enemy's intricate system north of Pilkem village. Pilkem itself was carried by the 38th (Welsh) division. English troops in large proportion executed the great central attack, and pressed the Germans back towards Passchendaele Ridge and Zandvoorde Ridge. On the south, English troops also fought forward along the spur running from Oost-taverne, on which the Welshmen had got a footing in the Messines battle. Then the Australians advanced against a network of fortifications eastward of Messines, while the New Zealanders stormed into the village of La Basse Ville.

The French operation was conducted with uncommon skill and crowned with high success under General Anthoine, who, as chief of staff to General Castelnau, at the end of August, 1914, took a leading part in snatching victory out of defeat by a flank attack delivered from the heights around Nancy upon the Bavarian army, and in April, 1917, commanded the army that carried Auberive in Champagne and worked up and over the highest hills around Moronvillers. French, British, and Belgian batteries from Dixmude to Boesinghe maintained a smothering fire over all known hostile gun sites, and through the torrent of rain the northern French army worked along the road from Lizerne towards Dixmude, capturing the important bastion village of Bixschoote, together with the the British and French forces. By two o'clock in the afternoon the French 1st division had broken into the German defences to a depth of nearly two miles. The number of their prisoners was larger than their own total casualties. The conquered positions were of the highest value, as they formed both the rampart and the pivot of the British movement.

ST. JULIEN ASSAILED

The fiercest opposition to the British attack was met with east of Ypres where the Menin ridge crosses the Wytschaete-Passchendaele ridge. Here men of the 24th, 30th and 8th divisions fought their way forward and captured Stirling Castle, Hooge and Bellewaarde ridge. By nine a.m. the whole of the second objectives north of the Ypres-Roulers railway were in British possession with the exception of a strong point north of Frezenberg, known as Pommiern redoubt. Within an hour this stronghold fell to the West Lancashire Territorials (55th division), who captured it with the assistance of a tank.

The commander of the 4th German army placed strong advanced forces in his fortified lines, and held still stronger reserve forces under cover of the reverse slopes of the long crescent of the Passchendaele ridge. At Pilkem, where he was assailed both front and rear, he could not bring his main battle divisions into action in a straightforward, sweeping manner. Much of the ground of approach there was held by Frenchmen and the British Guards in the afternoon and evening; but the central line, of which Inverness Copse was the decisive point, and along the southern flank, of which Zandvoorde Hill was the observation pillar, he had abundant room for movement, and only the blind, standing barrages of the British artillery to struggle against. The rain screened the movements of his principal battle forces, which, under cover of rain and mist and artificial smoke-screens, managed to escape from the British artillery, and gather in force along the high ridge around Ypres.

Over the rough ground of advance there was some stiff infantry fighting. When a wide band of uncut wire before the village of St. Julien was met, a tank slid through the edge of the British barrage and rolled up and down the entanglement, flattening it out, and driving the garrison behind into their dug-outs. This enabled troops of the 39th division swiftly to press into St. Julien and to capture it by ten o'clock in the morning. Fifteen 5.9 in. howitzers were taken, together with a large dump of 5.9 in. shell. The German batteries then threw a heavy barrage upon the village, and exploded their lost ammunition dump. In spite of the furious barrage, English county battalions continued their advance beyond the village. They arrived at another German trench, defended by four hundred yards of uncut wire, eighteen feet deep, stretched below a rise occupied by hostile machine-gunners. Overcoming this obstacle

THIRD BATTLE OF YPRES

they won the position and took a considerable number of prisoners. They were, however, obliged to retire on St. Julien again in the face of a strong counter-attack.

About 9.30 a.m., batteries of British field artillery began to move up to more forward positions, and battalions in support were engaged in establishing or strengthening lines of communication over the newly-won ground. Northward of St. Julien, Highland territorials (51st division) and Welsh and Guards battalions secured the crossings of the Steenveek. At that point of the line where the French were co-operating with the British Guards division, a strong hostile counter-attack was completely repulsed.

Especially fierce opposition was met with in front of Inverness Copse and Glencorse wood and further south at a strong point in Shrewsbury Forest, but men of the 8th division continued their advance north of Glencorse wood and captured the surroundings of Westhoek. During the remainder of the day energetic counter-attacks developed in many places, chiefly south of the Menin road and northwards to St. Julien. With the help of artillery fire, however, these attacks were generally met successfully and the British occupation of the Pilkem ridge was not shaken. Commenting on the results achieved on this eventful day, Sir Douglas Haig said:

... our troops on the Fifth Army front had carried the German first system of defence south of Westhoek. Except at Westhoek itself, where they were established on the outskirts of the village, they had already gained the whole of the crest of the ridge and had denied the enemy observation of the Ypres plain. Farther north they had captured the enemy's second line also as far as St. Julien. North of that village they had passed beyond the German second line, and held the line of the Steenbeck to our junction with the French.

On our left flank our Allies had admirably completed the important task allotted to them. Close touch had been kept with the British troops on their right throughout the day. All and more than all of their objectives had been gained rapidly and at exceptionally light cost and the flank of the Allied advance had been effectively secured.

Meanwhile the attack on the Second Army front had also met with complete success. On the extreme right New Zealand troops had carried La Basse Ville after a sharp fight lasting some fifty minutes. On the left English troops (41st Division) had captured Hollebeke and the difficult ground

GERMAN COUNTER ATTACKS

north of the bend of the Ypres-Commines Canal and east of Battle Wood. Between these two points our line had been advanced on the whole front for distances varying from 200 to 800 yards.

In summing up the material successes of the day's fighting, the British commander-in-chief recorded the capture of over 6,100 prisoners, including 133 officers. Over 25 guns also fell into British hands.

Any possible chance of exploiting immediately these successes was destroyed by continued bad weather. All through the night of July 31 it rained steadily and for four days afterwards the downpour was continuous. The sky was overcast and the condition of the ground deplorable. Sir Douglas Haig thus described it:

The low-lying, clayey soil, torn by shells and sodden with rain turned to a succession of vast muddy pools. The valleys of the choked and overflowing streams were speedily transformed into long stretches of bog, impassable except by a few well defined tracks, which became marks for the enemy's artillery. To leave these tracks was to risk death by drowning and in the course of the subsequent fighting on several occasions both men and pack animals were lost in this way.

The Germans made determined efforts to regain their lost positions. Their chief assaults were made against the high ground between the Menin road and the Ypres-Roulers railway and the trench system between Frezenberg and St. Julien. These attacks were generally repulsed, but a temporary retirement became necessary from St. Julien on the night of July 31. The village was recaptured on August 3. Another minor action which was completely successful was carried out a week later by men of the 18th and 25th divisions. This resulted in the capture of the whole of the village of Westhoek.

The earliest date on which the general offensive could be resumed was August 16, and at 4.45 a.m. on that day an attack was launched north and east of Ypres. The French again co-operated on the left of the British line where the British 29th division had taken the place occupied by the Guards on July 31. The army of General Anthoine was remarkably successful. The Frenchmen moved along the flooded Steenbeck river towards the great inundation below Dixmude. The ground was a

THIRD BATTLE OF YPRES

morass, islanded by floods, and stretched in a tongue of mud to Drei Grachten, which was a junction of Flemish canals. Owing to the shattering power of the French barrage little resistance was encountered in this naturally difficult peninsula. Only in two isolated masses of fortified ruins, Champaubert Farm and Brienne House, did the German garrisons try to make a determined stand. Their positions seemed to be impregnable. But hundreds of French guns, heavy and light, shelled the farm and the house, until the garrison hoisted the white flag. Then the French infantry began to repair the broken German works against counter-attack.

General Anthoine, however, did not allow his foes even to attempt to return to the long slice of ground they had lost. Strong German reserves had been gathered in Houthulst forest in anticipation of the resumption of the offensive. This concentration was effectively paralysed by the continuous bombardment of the forest area. The French troops continued to advance to Lilas farm.

At the same time the British 29th and 20th divisions had captured the hamlet of Wijndendrift and advanced to the outskirts of Langemarck, by which ran the railway line to Staden and Bruges. The Upper Steenbeek river ran below Langemarck, and the Saint Jean Kortebeek stream ran above it. A region of ooze and waterlogged craters extended eastward from the Steenbeek, beyond the line that had been won by the Guards and the Welshmen on July 31. The roads had disappeared in a chaos of shell-holes, and the village was only a clump of grey or blackened ruins, surrounded by rusty wire entanglements.

In the morning mist and battle smoke the village was hidden, and the attacking forces were compelled to advance so slowly that enemy machine-gunners were able to bring their weapons into play between the barrage and the infantry assault. There was strong resistance at the fortified position of Au Bon Gîte, where the concrete works were, in places, ten feet thick and the entrance was closed by massive steel doors. The fortress, manned by some fifty Prussians, rose on the eastern side of the Steenbeek, and commanded a considerable stretch of country. After a prolonged resistance it fell during the afternoon.

Between Langemarck and St. Julien the English troops met with determined resistance round Kersselaere and Winnipeg

PLUMER'S OPERATION

farm, on the road from Langemarck to Zonnebeke, and around the brook-moated stronghold of Schuler farm. By bitter fighting in the great streaming swamp they won ground to the depth of a thousand yards, and approached Wurst farm, which had been reached by the Lancashires in the first offensive. In the afternoon, however, the advanced troops were compelled to draw back to the thousand-yards limit and establish themselves behind good defences. Not only did the Germans begin to counter-attack in strength, but the right flank of the English troops became unfortunately exposed, owing to a serious check on the British centre. All along the upper course of the Steenbeek, running by Spree farm, Iberian farm, Borry farm, Vampire works, Potsdam redoubt, Sans Souci works, and Nun wood, British attacks were held up, and in the southern part of the line, by Nun wood and Inverness Copse, a London division also encountered great difficulties.

When the Germans began to develop their counter-attacks, visibility was so bad that no warning could be given from the air; in consequence infantry battalions were obliged to meet them without artillery support and in several places were driven back from the positions they had gained earlier in the day. Sir Douglas Haig expressed himself as not displeased with the general result of the day's fighting, for "a wide gap had been made in the old German third line system, and over 2,100 prisoners and some thirty guns had been captured."

By the second week of September, there was a heavy concentration of artillery behind the British lines at Ypres in preparation for the battle of Menin road ridge. This was entrusted to Sir Herbert Plumer and the 2nd army and was "a single, self-contained operation" with support from the 5th army. Labour battalions laid cables ten feet below the ground, made new gun positions nearer the enemy's lines, built railways and tracks across the swamps, and accumulated shell within reach of the batteries. A bombardment opened on September 14 and went on increasing in destructiveness for five days.

General von Armin could see what was about to happen. What he did not know was the hour fixed for the British attack. He came near to guessing it, however, and about one o'clock in the morning of September 20 he placed a heavy barrage upon the northern part of the British line. It was a black night, with low-hung clouds and drizzling rain. British and Australian

THIRD BATTLE OF YPRES

troops were assembled for an attack at dawn, and in one place the Royal Scots were only forty feet from the German position. A grand German barrage might have done great damage, but only a partial bombardment was opened.

Countering the German guns, the British batteries put scores of them out of action and flooded the gunners with poison gas. Through all the remaining hours of darkness the attacking artillery continued to beat down the defending artillery, and at the same time hammer the German infantry. Then, as the British and Australian soldiers were about to advance, at twenty minutes to six in the morning of September 20, an improved system of barraging the hostile ground was successfully executed.

There had been continual developments in gun fire since the British invention of the creeping barrage and the French invention of block-system fire. In the present case there were several distinct zones of travelling shell fire in front of the attacking infantry. Each main class of gun was organized into a grand group by means of sunken telephone cables. Then each grand group was connected with the others, so that all enemy forces were subjected to a series of sweeping hurricanes of shell. Sometimes the survivors of the first barrages thought they could emerge and make a stand against the usual infantry attack; but instead of any line of khaki figures appearing, another unexpected barrage from a fresh group of guns came roaring over the Ypres swamp.

This system of artillery preparation for infantry advances destroyed to a considerable extent the value of the block-house method of defence. The garrisons in the concreted works were unable to anticipate the onset of the attacking infantry. They did not know which barrage playing upon them was the last. The result was that the larger part of the German advanced forces were still crouching in their shelters, and often suffering from concussion effects, when the first British troops began to work around the muddy flanks of the fortresses.

The front of the attack extended from the Ypres-Comines canal north of Hollebeke to the Ypres-Staden railway north of Langemarck, a distance of eight miles. The zero hour on September 20 was 5.40 a.m. On the right of the line the 19th division gained all their objectives. So did the 39th division, who, after fighting their way through the Shrewsbury forest, established themselves in the valley of the Bassevillebeck.

A SATISFACTORY RESULT

Battalions of the 41st division succeeded in crossing the upper valley of the Bassevillebeck and establishing themselves on the further slope by Tower Hamlets. Troops of the north country (23rd) division captured Inverness Copse and Veldhoek. On their left were units of the Australian 1st and 2nd divisions who successfully attacked Glencorse wood, Nonne Boschen, Polygonveldt and the former German third line to the north.

These movements of the 2nd army were supported by attacks delivered further north on the 5th army front. Here the 9th division captured Zonnebeke, the Bremen redoubts and the hamlet of Zevenkote. The 55th division (West Lancashire territorials) south-east of St. Julien, captured their final objectives in the afternoon. The 58th and 51st divisions of London and Highland territorials, after heavy fighting, had by mid-day taken all their objectives north of the Langemarck-Zonnebeke road. Sir Douglas Haig thus summed up the position as it appeared on the evening of September 20 :

As the result of this most successful operation the whole of the high ground crossed by the Menin Road, for which such desperate fighting had taken place during our previous attacks, passed into our possession. Important positions were won also on the remainder of our front by which the right of our attack was rendered more secure and the way opened for the advance of our left. In the attack, as well as in the repeated counter-attacks which followed, exceedingly heavy casualties were inflicted on the enemy, and 3,243 prisoners, together with a number of guns, were captured by us.

The Germans counter-attacked persistently and with great determination. After a misty morning the atmosphere became clearer and aeroplane observers were able to direct artillery fire, with great accuracy on the concentrations of counter-attacking troops. Where the British troops gave ground they were able to re-capture it on the following day. This satisfactory result was achieved east of St. Julien and north of the Menin road.

In the final attack of September, the battle of Polygon wood (so named because in its centre was once the racecourse, *polygone*, of Ypres), the chief aim of the British commander was to conquer in a decisive manner the dominating ground along and on either side of the Menin road between Clapham Junction and Gheluvelt village. He thus had to engage the enemy between

THIRD BATTLE OF YPRES

Langemarck and Zonnebeke in order to occupy him along the Passchendaele Ridge line, and prevent him from concentrating guns and men entirely around the Menin road. General von Armin knew the value of the Menin road positions as well as did Sir Douglas Haig. The task of the British commander was to compel Armin to deploy a considerable part of his reserve forces along the subsidiary northern sectors. It was the thrust of the South Africans in the direction of Zonnebeke, and the support afforded to them by the capture of the hills and ridges on their northern flank, that forced the German commander to divert a large number of his reserve divisions from the defence of the southern part of the long ridge.

About seven hundred yards behind Zonnebeke village the Passchendaele Ridge rose to a plateau a hundred and ninety feet high, where the road from Passchendaele to Becelaere crossed the highway from Zonnebeke to Moorslede. The hamlet of Broodseinde rose by the cross-roads on the plateau, and from Broodseinde there was observation over all the heights of the Passchendaele Ridge, with the exception of the south-eastern knoll at Clapham Junction. To the Germans, Broodseinde was more important than Inverness Copse and Glencorse Wood; for it was under cover of the valleys below the Broodseinde plateau that the German commander collected and manoeuvred his principal infantry forces. He had, therefore, to make violent and sustained efforts to defend the approaches to Broodseinde, and, though immediately in front of the plateau he was defeated by the South Africans, he continued to assail them indirectly in counter-attacks upon the northern British flank from Rose Farm to Hill 37.

His expenditure of large forces above the Zonnebeke road resulted in a British victory on the Menin road sector. Immediately south of the South Africans, Scottish regiments drove forward to protect the northern flank of the central Australian troops. The Zonnebeke Redoubt, around the Roulers railway, was the final objective. This work was one of the strongest of all the German defences east of Ypres, being a massive concrete structure at the fork of the Roulers railway and the Zonnebeke road. The British had to fight through fields broken by little copses, with small and large block-houses skilfully placed for cross-firing effects. They rushed from crater to crater along the long railway embankment, cleared them with bomb and

THE AUSTRALIANS IN ACTION

bayonet, and broke up the 7th Reserve Infantry regiment that tried to counter-attack in the early phase of the battle.

The Australians had a hard time. An intense German barrage fell on their foremost waves. Their line of attack stretched from Anzac Corner to the neighbourhood of Clapham Junction. They fought over the ghastly slopes of Glencorse Wood, on the north-western edge of which there was a long struggle for a block-house. The garrison refused to surrender, and was put out of action by a bombing - party. Beyond the wood, on the long Hill 60, from which the knoll of Clapham Junction rose, a line of German flame-throwers was surprised and shot down, and connexion made with the English troops who were fighting along the southern side of the Menin road.

Meanwhile, the Australian centre, based at Westhoek Ridge, advanced into Nun Wood, a difficult region of watery

marsh, bristling with splintered stumps that served the enemy as supports for his wire entanglements. There was stiff fighting in this boggy maze of shattered trees and buried, oozing springs from which the Hannebeek arose. The German garrison had chosen the driest parts of this drainage patch, and the succession of British barrages did not destroy all their cover.

They managed to get a shell curtain over the Australians just as the infantry attack opened, and, in the close fighting



THIRD BATTLE OF YPRES

that followed, the Germans enjoyed considerable advantages. Their weak points had been strengthened since the last English attack ; new ambushes had been made, and the ground altered by means of mines, diverted water and new entanglements. The Australians stubbornly fought through this wood, however, and debouched into the eastern open fields for the grand assault upon Polygon Wood as soon as the work between Nun and Glencorse woods was subdued. Between them and their goal there was then a stretch of open ground four hundred yards broad. At the end of it, Polygon Wood was not visible; for all the tall forest trees, through which Sir Douglas Haig and the 1st division under his command moved in October, 1914, had disappeared.

In the continued advance there was a struggle round a group of concreted craters at the edge of the wood. In this chain of holes were some sixty Germans with six machine-guns and a large store of grenades. By short rushes the Australians got within bombing distance of the crater position and engaged the Germans in a grenade duel, while another party worked around the Germans, stormed them from the rear, and took half the garrison prisoners. The six machine-guns with their ammunition were employed against the enemy, together with a useful stack of hand-bombs. The Australians won the western part of Polygon wood by eleven o'clock in the morning, little more than five hours after they had entered the battle. They had some fierce combats at the southern end of the wood, by Black Watch Corner and Carlisle Farm.

The Germans came out into the open and offered so strong a resistance that the first advance into the wood did not end in a straight line. At the bottom was a loop, making a bend westward, and the Germans still held out above the sheltered valley of the Reutelbeck. A fresh Australian force was ordered forward for the work of straightening the line. When they arrived on the ground they were not needed. The first Australian waves of attack had, in spite of the check, carried on and cleared out all the nests of snipers, bombers, and machine-guns, and formed a straight line south of Polygon wood by Hill 55, where the little Reutelbeck rises.

At the northern end of their new line the Australians had another bout of hard fighting around the work named in their honour—Anzac Redoubt. They fought forward through patches

ON THE MENIN ROAD

of shattered timber and fields of ooze, alongside the Scottish troops, across the road running from Westhoek and Zonnebeke. The Germans overlooked them from Hill 50, above Polygon wood, and from Hill 40, by Helles Point, and the garrison of the Anzac Redoubt fought stubbornly and skilfully; but at the end of four hours they surrendered, and an hour later the objectives in Polygon wood were secured.

At noon the German reserve forces began to counter-attack from the valley of the Polygon brook and the Reutelbeek. They were broken up by artillery fire. At two o'clock in the afternoon another force tried to strike downward from the hills about Zonnebeke village. They also were scattered by artillery fire. The Australians then had a quiet night. But at seven o'clock in the morning of September 21 another concentration of German troops was perceived. Once more the powerful British artillery threw out a great shell curtain, and no Germans came within fighting distance of the Australian lines.

In the southern sector of the Ypres battlefield the success of the home troops was as remarkable as that of the overseas soldiers. The north country troops, who fought on the right of the Australians, advanced along the Menin road upon Inverness Copse. The ground in the blasted park-land of Herenthage Château was like putty, and wherever the attacking troops plunged into it a shower of bullets beat upon them. The Germans had turned a derelict British tank into a redoubt in Inverness Copse by running cement around it. A wrecked mansion north of the road had been changed into a chain of forts by the process of expanding its system of cellars, and this new work, from which machine-guns swept along the Menin road, was linked by firing slits on its northern side with the machine-guns in Fitz-Clarence Farm, rising between Inverness Copse and Glen corse Wood.

Then on the south side of the Menin road were the ruins of Herenthage, a building which was moated by two sheets of water, through which ran two scarcely discernible footways, both covered by German machine-guns. The artificial lake south-west of Herenthage Château, known to British soldiers as Dumbarton Lakes, had been transformed by inundation into a lagoon, covering the ground for a quarter of a mile. Immediately above the lakes was Hill 55, with Stirling Castle above it, another high hill below it, and Bodmin Copse, Clonmel

THIRD BATTLE OF YPRES

Copse, and the woods of Pappottje Farm, all connecting in a south-westerly direction with the fifty-metre hill, covered by the deep mud and tree-stumps of Shrewsbury forest.

The Bassevillebeck, a small brook running from Dumbarton Lakes towards the neighbourhood of Hollebeke, formed a division between the enemy's main positions around Gheluvelt and Zandvoorde, and his advanced positions near Green Jacket Ride and Shrewsbury Forest, Bulgar Wood, and Hessian and Belgian Copses southward. The marshes of the Bassevillebeck valley were defended northward by the inundations of Dumbarton Lakes, and eastward by a great fortress system on the spur of Tower Hamlets Hill. There were many other block-houses, underground works, and organized defences along the Bassevillebeck area. All the ground from the Menin road to Hollebeke Cemetery had to be forced in order to permit the English divisions to co-operate with the Australian forces in the attack upon the German centre. Veldhoek had to be reached to safeguard Polygon Wood ; Tower Hamlets Hill had to be attained to prevent a great flanking counter-attack upon Veldhoek and Inverness Copse ; and the Bassevillebeck valley had to be secured to permit the attack upon Tower Hamlets. The southern conflicts may therefore be regarded as a single action. The troops engaged achieved one of the most notable victories in the Ypres campaign. Their movement was checked by the southernmost point, between Hollebeke Cemetery and Shrewsbury Forest, but this made no difference to the general result.

The Germans always fought with special strength at the southern basis of the Ypres salient. From the action in Battle Wood in June, 1917, to the end of the Ypres campaign in November, 1917, they made a most determined stand in the Hollebeke sector. They were able to bring up reinforcements from their unengaged wing and launch a flanking counter-attack upon British forces moving forward from the Ypres crescent. On September 20 the English troops waged a series of long and bitter combats between Hollebeke and Shrewsbury Forest, where they were directly overlooked from the Zandvoorde Ridge. They captured one of the copses, but failed to break through Hessian and Belgian woods. Nevertheless, their terrible and apparently almost fruitless struggle helped to the main victory. They kept the enemy fiercely engaged around the southern pivot of the moving British battle-line, and thereby



Imperial War Museum

ON THE ROYAL TRAIN AT AUDRUICQ. Both King George and Queen Mary visited the West Front on various occasions. This photograph, taken on June 7, 1917, shows the Queen with a British officer in one of the trucks which formed part of the royal train. At Audruicq, 12½ m. S.E. of Calais, the Queen inspected factories turning out war materials, and British supply centres.



Imperial War Museum

QUEEN MARY AT CALAIS. Taken on June 14, 1917, this photograph shows Queen Mary accompanied by a nurse, in the grounds of the Duchess of Sutherland's hospital at Calais before embarking for Dover. She again visited France with King George in July.



Spout and General

A ROYAL SERVER. This happy photograph from the autumn of 1917 shows Queen Mary with Princess Mary serving at an East London mission kitchen. It is yet another reminder of her Majesty's war-time activities at home and in France.



Imperial War Museum

KING GEORGE INSPECTS A GERMAN HELMET. During the King's visit to France in July, 1917, he was accompanied by Queen Mary. Here he is seen with General Byng, then in command of the 3rd army, on the high ground of the Butte de Warlencourt. This eminence, lost by the British at the end of 1916, was retaken during the Spring offensive of 1917. His Majesty, with whom on this visit was the Prince of Wales, is examining a German helmet.

SHREWSBURY FOREST

formed themselves into an active-defensive flank, behind which their comrades stormed forward to victory.

Just above them the high hill of Shrewsbury Forest, which overtopped the enemy's main position at Zandvoorde, was conquered in a fierce fight. The high ground was very difficult, and full of new traps as well as strengthened old defences. When the eastern slope of Shrewsbury Forest was reached the difficulties of the advance greatly increased. The Germans could bring machine-guns into action from the Zandvoorde Ridge across the Bassevillebeek valley. They could also watch, from their artillery observation positions, every English infantry movement and barrage it with strong shell fire. There was no forest screen to serve as cover for the attacking troops, as all the trees had been destroyed by bombardments. Nevertheless, Bulgar Wood was carried to the east of Shrewsbury Forest, and the series of strong redoubts at the southern edge of it were reduced after fierce fighting.

The Shrewsbury Forest victory was an important element of success in the great advance along the Menin road. It exposed the southern flank of the German centre. The action was also one of great local value. It completely reversed the British and German positions in the Zandvoorde sector, for the German commander at once organized a tremendous counter-attack across the Bassevillebeek valley. He collected brigades and massed them on the Zandvoorde heights. Several of his battalions could be seen forming in columns of fours for an old-fashioned mass attack. Indeed they were so well observed that they formed an easy mark for the British guns, which were able to check them before they could make the assault.

As the infantry action in Shrewsbury Forest was raging, the English troops swept over Green Jacket Ride northward into Clonmel Copse, Bodmin Copse, and Hill 55, rising between Dumbarton Lakes and Clapham Junction. Everything at first went according to programme. There were scattered actions up and down the line between the Menin road and Shrewsbury Forest, but no serious check occurred until the attacking battalions came upon the uninjured works at Pappotje Farm, between Clonmel Copse and the upper waters of the Bassevillebeek. The British troops lost their barrage while they were overcoming the garrison of the fortified farm. Yet this did not keep them from their goal. They worked round the woodland

THIRD BATTLE OF YPRES

fortress, broke into it and took many prisoners and then fought downward into the brook valley.

In front of Dumbarton lakes was one of the most formidable defensive systems in the battle-line. It consisted of a large quadrilateral work, with wing trenches and redoubts on either side, made of steel girders overlaid with concrete. British shells of the largest size had made no impression upon the thick roofs and walls of this great fortress. It rose on a spur of the Tower Hamlets Ridge and commanded the approaches to the high ground of the neighbourhood.

Every rush the English infantry made with bombs and machine-guns upon this great modern stronghold was broken by a stream of bullets from the loopholes in the castle of armoured concrete. Crawling from shell-hole to shell-hole, the Englishmen managed to form a "pocket" round the position, and in reduced strength worked forward on either side of it and occupied the Tower Hamlets Ridge. The Tower Hamlets position, on the southern side of the Menin road, was about half a mile below the village of Veldhoek. Being a hundred and ninety feet high, it overlooked the Gheluveld Hill, which was a hundred and eighty feet high, and it still more completely dominated the Zandvoorde Ridge, in direct line with it southward, which was one hundred and forty-four feet high.

On the southern side of the Menin road, Tower Hamlets Hill was the supreme summit on what remained of the German portion of the Passchendaele Ridge pillars. Its rapid and definite conquest in the morning of September 20 would have completed the Anglo-Australian advance. Owing, however, to the fire which the Germans kept up from the Bassevillebeck, where the quadrilateral fortress was still unreduced, the attacking troops had to fall back later in the day from the Tower Hamlets height. The German counter-attacks in this area were ill-prepared, and prisoners captured in them stated that their forces were in considerable confusion, owing to the commanding officers of the fresh forces having no maps of the ground. The Englishmen, on the other hand, were well aware—by experience as well as study of aerial photographs—of the lie of the land and the position of hostile points.

They resumed their attack upon the great quadrilateral system on the spur of the ridge, and by capturing it on the morning of Friday, September 21, recovered the Tower Hamlets height and

ROADSIDE CELLARS

completely ensured their hold upon it. Again the Germans counter-attacked with large forces, but after heavy fighting their broken forces were thrown back from the last easterly high position at the end of the Passchendaele Ridge.

While the fight for Tower Hamlets was proceeding amid the lakes, woods, and river marshes south of the Menin road, York-shiremen and other Northern English forces drove directly at the centre of the German defences. They worked along the straight highway towards Gheluvelt, that strangely resembled the battle road to Bapaume, being barred by trenches, lined with fortified ruins, and flanked by shell-ploughed pasture, thickly sown with pits of sharpshooters and machine gunners and concrete works.

There was a long series of fiercely contested actions in the Herenthage Park, beginning in Inverness Copse, through which the Menin road ran, and continuing amid the fallen trees and sodden ground southward. The chain of little forts, built out of the château north of the highway and known as the Towers, was stormed at the same time as the German cross-firing work at FitzClarence Farm was surrounded by English bombers. When all the timbered tract was cleared, the attacking troops advanced across an open field north-eastward against Northampton Farm and against the larger redoubt built out of the ruins of cottages at Veldhoek.

Other English parties continued to work directly along the Menin road towards the hamlet of Kantintje Cabaret. This was a succession of underground shelters connecting with the fortress system of Gheluvelt. Most of these roadside cellars were abandoned by the Germans when they lost Inverness Copse. As the German forces fled, the victors climbed the northern part of the Tower Hamlets on the left, and reached the Veldhoek work on the right. They saw the ground between Polderhoek and Gheluvelt dotted with fugitives, and they covered the open field with a machine-gun barrage northward, while charging with the bayonet below the Menin highway. Very few Germans got through the machine-gun barrage to Polderhoek, while hundreds surrendered near Gheluvelt. Counter-attacks in this area suffered severely from British gunfire and from aerial bombardment.

For three days the German commander tried to win back the most important ground he had lost by means of a stream of reinforcements. He attacked from Schreyboom, where the British infantry had resumed their action in the evening of

THIRD BATTLE OF YPRES

September 20 and attained all their objectives. He also launched by day and night large new forces against the troops who had regained the Tower Hamlets Ridge. On Saturday, September 22, the troops holding the ridge were put to a final test of endurance. Three times in the course of the day the Germans gathered around Gheluvelt and tried to storm up the northern slopes. On each occasion the attacks were repulsed. Farther south, similar German attacks were repeated, and here the advanced English troops were compelled to fall back slightly from part of the ground they had gained on September 21. Nevertheless, all the main positions won in the grand battle on September 20 were retained around the Bassevillebeek valley.

On September 22 the autumnal mist settled upon the Ypres swamp and on the low heights about it. Both the British and German commanders organized again for battle, under cover of the haze that continued to prevail for the larger part of a week. Aerial observers from both sides crossed the lines and, flying very low, caught glimpses of the new preparations. General von Armin was the first to strike, and he made a series of furious efforts to break up the British order of battle. At dawn on September 25, when the mist was very thick, he attacked the Australians in Polygon Wood, and the Scotsmen and Englishmen around Veldhoek and Menin road and Tower Hamlets Ridge. The Australians beat back all assaults, but to the south of their position, at Cameron House, the German shock troops came up the Reutelbeek valley, under the screen of a hill, and broke into the British lines for a short distance. There was another gap in the British line north of the Menin road; so, after the attack he made at dawn and fiercely continued all the morning, the German commander tried to make a complete rupture in the British line by launching a second grand assault at noon. No further ground, however, was gained by the Germans. As they weakened, the British forces returned, and, charging back over their lost ground, re-established their original front.

On September 26 the British advance was strongly resumed along a six-mile crescent, extending from London Ridge to Tower Hamlets Ridge. Once more victory was achieved. The London troops who had mastered Schuler Farm went on across the ridge to Aviatik Farm and the hamlet of Boetleer, lying due east from Wurst Farm. In and around these patches of tumbled ruins, concealing concrete fortresses, the London men

THE CAPTURE OF ZONNEBEKE

took prisoners from a Saxon division; but after defeating the German front-line troops with comparative ease, they had to stand a series of counter-attacks. The German gunners threw out so heavy a barrage that, by shell fire alone, they hammered the London men out of the works they had won. Behind this travelling blanket fire the German supporting troops advanced. But as soon as the artillery fire passed, the Londoners reformed, and reoccupied the block-houses.

On the right of the London Territorials, North Midland troops worked across the marshland towards Dochy Farm, on the road running from Zonnebeke to Langemarck. The ground was not very wet, and after some stiff fighting the road was crossed and more ground won close to Gravenstafel and Abraham Heights, above Zonnebeke, and in the direction of Passchendaele village. Farther south there was an important rise, Windmill Cabaret height, or Hill 40, that covered the north of Zonnebeke village and the railway to Roulers. At this point German machine-gunners, firing from the hill-top, gave a good deal of trouble, and the German commander reinforced them by sending strong counter-attacking forces down the track of the Roulers railway. He succeeded in retaining the eastern slopes of the hill, but the English troops were merely pressed back for two hundred yards. When night fell they were still clinging to the western side of the rise, though German gun fire upon the summit and upon the farther slopes prevented them from occupying further ground.

Zonnebeke village was conquered from the 23rd German Reserve Division. The main German battle forces, that made the counter-attack along the railway track, succeeded in winning back a small part of the ruins. They could not, however, shake the British hold upon this important strategic point by the centre of the ridge. The British troops held the ruins of the manor-house, the church and cemetery, and the houses on both sides of the Ypres highway, while enemy machine-gunners remained in the wreckage of the station and on the high ground around the plateau of Broodseinde. Below Zonnebeke village the Australian troops completed their occupation of Polygon Wood in the course of three hours. They went forward by means of rifle fire, using few bombs; and, by shooting down the enemy at a distance, they escaped heavy casualties themselves and inflicted great losses upon the enemy. Only one of their battalions was seriously weakened by some unexpected gusts of machine-gun

THIRD BATTLE OF YPRES

fire. The Australians crossed the Race-course, and fought the enemy out of the mound that rose by the end of the race-track.

The Germans had tunnelled under this mound and erected machine-gun posts along it; but the garrison was kept down by rifle fire and then compelled to surrender. The advance to the eastern face of the large wood was made in two leaps. On the northern side, flanking fire was encountered from the hamlet of Molenarelsthoek, on the slopes of the Passchendaele Ridge. Here there was a row of posts that maintained a machine-gun barrage, which was supported by rifle fire from many nests of sharpshooters. The German commander sent forward a fresh division, but this force was observed by the British artillery, and so scattered that its operations had to be postponed for some hours. When at last the counter-attack was made, only two of the waves managed to get within range of the rifles and machine-guns of the Australians. In the night, some of the remnants of the ten thousand men broken on the Noordendhoek fields, came into the Australian lines and surrendered themselves. In the morning the victors extended their front from the south-eastern corner of Polygon Wood and advanced against little resistance along the Reutelbeek.

In this sector, running from the neighbourhood of Cameron House towards Menin road and Tower Hamlets Ridge, the new British movement of offensive did not meet with the same success as in the northern sectors. The thrusts made by the enemy the day before the British attack checked to some extent the forward sweep of the English and Scottish troops around Menin road. The German positions between the Reutelbeek and Polderhoek village, Gheluvelt and Tower Hamlets Ridge, were strongly held, and the German artillery arranged in an arc behind Zandvoorde, Kruiseik, and Becelaere, maintained a converging fire upon the British troops.

In the broken ground on either side of Gheluvelt there were winding hollows, in which the German troops could collect with fair security against every form of attack, except direct howitzer fire directed by aeroplane spotters. The British troops were pressed on two sides, and furiously barraged. Nevertheless, they surged forward in a series of violent and sustained hand-to-hand actions, and when the swaying battle ended they were about half-way between their starting-point and their objective at Polderhoek.

ARMIN'S FURTHER EFFORTS

In the region of Tower Hamlets the capture of the spur was successfully completed, and the strong German field-work on the eastern slope was taken and held against fierce counter-attacks from Gheluvelt. Between four o'clock in the afternoon and seven o'clock in the evening the Germans made seven powerful but fruitless attempts to recover their lost ground. The next morning, they tried again with smaller groups, that worked forward slowly and in open order on the Australian side of the Menin gate. The Australians picked them off with the rifle, and took three officers and some 60 men prisoners.

On September 29 fresh battalions of German storm troops emerged from the shell-holes between Polygon Wood and Menin road, were caught by artillery fire, and scattered. Again, in the moonlight at 1 a.m. on Sunday, September 30, hostile forces tried to recover some of the ground round Polygon Wood, and were shot down before they could engage. Some six hours afterwards another picked force advanced against the outworks of the Tower Hamlets Ridge but failed to secure a hold.

Later in the day General von Armin made three more ambitious efforts. He began by directing a large force towards the southern part of Reutelbeek valley. This was overwhelmed by the British artillery before it could come within fighting distance. Then a stronger force came along the Menin road, preceded by a grand barrage, while, with a travelling line of smoke-shells, the shock troops made the attack. The only result of this costly action was that one advanced British post was occupied until the defending troops returned with bomb and bayonet, killed many of the Germans, took some of the others prisoners, and shot at the rest as they retreated. The third attack, which was also made in strength, was completely broken before close fighting became necessary.

The German counter-attacking operations continued on October 1. Three long waves stormed forward between Polygon Wood and Tower Hamlets Ridge. The first wave was stopped by rifle fire, the second was completely wiped out by artillery; and the third wave, after being badly broken by gun fire, was swept by the machine-guns and rifles of the British infantry, who then charged and occupied the line from which the Germans had started. The net German gains in five days and nights of continual battle were two isolated posts south-east of Polygon Wood, known as Cameron Covert and Joist Farm.

CHAPTER 13

The Advance from Bagdad

THE story of the British campaign in Mesopotamia was brought down to the end of April, 1917, in chapter I. of this volume. Bagdad had been captured by Sir Stanley Maude, and a number of successful minor operations around that city were to the credit of the British forces, who were masters of the Euphrates as far as Feluja. The present chapter recounts the further victories over the Turks in Mesopotamia in 1917.

For a time Maude left the scattered Turkish forces alone, and began sending a proportion of his troops on leave to India. The summer heat imposed an armistice upon the principal combatants. Only the marauding Bedouin continued some show of activity, and the Indo-British Expeditionary Force saved itself from idleness by some successful operations against the wilder tribesmen of the Upper Tigris and Euphrates.

So complete was the new system of ice—and pure water—supply that Sir Stanley Maude was able to make some surprising thrusts into the desert at a time when the Turks were prostrate from the heat. In May, 1917, his patrols skirmished around Deli Abbas and other northern hill outposts, capturing a hundred and twenty-five prisoners. Then, in June, a British garrison worked along the caravan route between the Diala river and the Mandali petroleum wells to the marsh of Beled Ruz, to guard the flank of the Bagdad army, which had become exposed by a Russian withdrawal.

General Baratoff and his Cossack force, which had come down from Persia to the Diala river, were compelled by the climate to retire into the highlands of Persia at Kirmanshah and leave a great gap through which the Turks might have turned the British flank at Bagdad had they been able to overcome transport difficulties.

General Maude was master of the situation so long as the Russian army in the Caucasus continued to press against the principal Ottoman force. When, however, the disintegrating

ARRANGING THE CAMPAIGN

influence of Bolshevism made itself felt, the British commanders in Mesopotamia and Egypt had to alter their plans. General Falkenhayn took over from Field-Marshal von der Goltz the command of the Turkish armies, and, fixing his headquarters at Aleppo, began to threaten equally Sir Stanley Maude and Sir Edmund Allenby. He occupied at Aleppo the central position between two widely separated hostile forces. He could strike along the Gaza line or along the Euphrates line, apparently, before any combined British movement on these fronts could be conducted against him. But his advantage was an illusion: his railway system was inefficient. The system of transport between Great Britain and India on the one hand, and Egypt and Mesopotamia on the other hand, was admirable.

The principal movements in the campaign against Falkenhayn were arranged in London by the chief of the general staff, Sir William Robertson, in telegraphic collaboration with Sir Charles Monro in India, Sir Stanley Maude in Mesopotamia, and Sir Edmund Allenby in Egypt. Slow and roundabout as this system seemed, it led to the complete upsetting of Falkenhayn's plan of attack on Mesopotamia. A strong thrusting movement of Sir Edmund Allenby's army compelled Falkenhayn to move his principal forces southward, where they were broken and scattered beyond Jerusalem. This remarkable interplay of long-distance forces must be borne in mind when following all the events in the Tigris and Euphrates valleys after the British capture of Bagdad.

Every British movement was designed and executed with far-reaching aim. Especially after the complete bankruptcy, in July, of Russian military power, the situation on the Middle East battlefield became intricately delicate. Every symptom of strength or weakness in the Russian army of the Caucasus was reflected in an increase of either caution or audacity on the part of the commanders of the British forces opposing the Turks.

Sometimes the British general made a daring stroke at the nearest hostile force before this could be strengthened by Turkish forces brought from the Caucasian front. At other times he retreated from the scene of a swift victory, because he knew that the enemy was receiving reinforcements, and that his own men would be placed at a disadvantage if they fought another battle far away from their own river base. It was by magnificent rapier play that Sir Stanley Maude and his able

THE ADVANCE FROM BAGDAD

lieutenant, Sir William Marshall, saved the army of Mesopotamia from severe pressure during the long, difficult period between the development and failure of Falkenhayn's plan and the new situation created by the later Turkish advance through Russian territory into Northern Persia.

No doubt Falkenhayn selected the Euphrates line for his main movement of concentration because of the apparent facility of river transport from the Aleppo railway, along the Upper Euphrates, down to the country below Hit, where the great waterway of the desert swerved within twenty-five miles of Bagdad. Immense, however, were the difficulties of conveying material down the Euphrates, for some five hundred miles of bends and twists, without modern craft.

On the map General Maude was much farther from his bases than Falkenhayn was. But the great new British engineering works in Lower Mesopotamia, the new river-side railway line, and the comparative abundance of engined river-craft made the British commander master of the situation; for he enjoyed the advantage of a central position, with interior lines, against the three Turkish forces about him—by the Persian frontier northward, the Tigris river-head north-westward, and the Euphrates river-head westward. He could suddenly concentrate in superior force against separated enemy divisions, although the Turks generally outnumbered his men. Often he was able to anticipate the movements of the German strategist and so quash them that Enver Pasha and the Young Turk camarilla refused at last to allow Falkenhayn to waste their forces in both Palestine and in Mesopotamia.

Such was the superiority of British means of movement that, even in the most terrible period of summer heat, General Maude could speed his forces across the desert in a surprising way. On July 8, for example, he made a leap up the Euphrates from Feluja, and, at a distance of twelve miles from his outpost line, arrived within striking distance of the important Turkish entrenchments at Ramadie. In spite of the fact that a heat wave of unexpected intensity made the desert intolerable, an Indo-British attacking column traversed the flaming wilderness and engaged the enemy.

In ordinary circumstances no troops could have survived the long, quick march; but the Indo-British force was partly transported by motor-vans and motor-lorries, and provided

THE TURKISH POSITION

with special supplies of ice and water. Making their final movement under cover of night, the troops surprised the heat-wasted Turks, and in an action lasting from four till a quarter past eight o'clock in the morning of July 11, captured the enemy's advanced positions.

Just as the final assault was about to be launched, in conditions that seemed to ensure a decisive victory, a blinding sandstorm overwhelmed the contending forces, and the alarmed, half-vanquished Turks were able to strengthen their lines and obtain reinforcements. As soon as the heat abated, General Maude prepared another attack upon the southern Turkish front at Ramadie. Under Major-General Sir H. T. Brooking, an attacking force of two infantry columns and cavalry was again concentrated within striking distance of the Ramadie dunes and canals.

The Turkish position was based upon the Musbaid Ridge, rising sixty feet above the desert plain, moated on the north by the Euphrates river, and on the south by the salt lake of Habbaniya. About three miles behind this formidable ridge position the German engineers with the Turkish force had constructed a large crescent of main entrenchments, extending about a mile round Ramadie. The eastern front was protected by the valley canal of the Euphrates, while the southern front was still more strongly reinforced by a line of large sand-dunes in which machine-gun positions had been constructed.

In so flat a country the altitude of Musbaid Ridge was of great observation value, and, after the abortive British surprise attack of July, the German and Turkish officers had measured all the artillery ranges on and about their advanced ridge position. General Brooking bridged the Euphrates and openly prepared an attack upon the enemy's river-line in the morning of September 26. In the evening, however, the two infantry columns and the cavalry made a night march around the southern flank of the ridge. A small infantry force worked along the northern edge of Habbaniya Lake, and before day broke these troops captured the dam across the valley canal, which was passable by all arms, and occupied the ground behind the ridge.

Then, at dawn on September 28, General Brooking threw a fierce barrage upon the outflanked ridge. The enemy commander withdrew his infantry, and in turn lashed the ridge of

THE ADVANCE FROM BAGDAD

sand with a tempest of shrapnel, expecting to catch the storming waves of British and Indian troops.

But these troops did not attack ; they manœuvred. The cavalry rode from the right flank to the left, crossed the conquered dam, and pushed across a canal running behind Ramadie, reached the road to Aleppo in the afternoon, and occupied a line of dunes stretching to the riverside, right in the rear of the trapped Turkish army.

While this astonishing movement was beginning, the left infantry column closed southward upon the enemy. The Dorsets and the 5th Gurkhas especially distinguished themselves. While the Turks were furiously but vainly fighting against this left Indo-British column, General Brooking swung his right column away from the Euphrates and again struck the enemy on his southern flank, by a line of dunes.

As the two Indo-British columns worked forward and round the enemy, across the bare stretch of sand to the low pebbly rises, the enemy artillerymen swept the ground with intense flanking fire, while their riflemen and machine-gunners poured a frontal rain of bullets upon the attacking waves. Nevertheless, the British and Indian soldiers won to the high ground, and there dug themselves in. When night fell, the Turks were held down from the river and along the southern edge of the desert, and cut off from all hopes of retreat by way of the road running to Aleppo.

Ahmed Bey, who commanded the enveloped force, had fought the British along the Euphrates since the action at Shaiba, in March, 1915. His Turkish troops were reduced to a few thousands. Many Bedouins, who had answered the call of the Ottoman Khalif, had either gone over to the more victorious of the combatants or retired into the waterless sands, where they knew of secret oases in which they could live undisturbed by Turk or Briton, and sally out to plunder the side that lost.

In the night of September 28 Ahmed Bey moved his men from the east and south toward the western road to Aleppo, and about three o'clock in the morning of September 29 endeavoured to break out between the Euphrates and the sandhills held by the Indo-British cavalry. The Turks, however, were caught by shrapnel gusts from the Horse Artillery, raked by Hotchkiss fire, and finally broken, just before dawn, by the Hussars and a squadron of Indian cavalry.

THE BATTLE OF RAMADIE

As soon as the sky lightened General Brooking launched the 39th Garhwalis and the 90th Punjabis from the southern front. The Garhwalis stormed the canal bridge-head by the Aleppo road, while the men of the Punjab drove into Ramadie. The Indo-British cavalry, watching the action from the western dunes, saw the Turks advance in a mass against the Indian battalions, and expected a wild struggle.

To their amazement the Turkish guns became silent and white flags went up from the hostile multitude. It was a general surrender of Ahmed Bey and his division. Three thousand two hundred and sixty-five unwounded officers and men were taken, with thirteen guns, two steam launches, several miles of railway tracks, parts of five unassembled engines, and a large quantity of equipment. Only a score of Turkish infantrymen, with a small detachment of cavalry, managed to escape by swimming the Euphrates. The victory was of more importance than the number of troops engaged in the action appeared to indicate. Ramadie was Falkenhayn's proposed jumping-off place for a return swoop on Bagdad. It was also a central place from which the desert tribes could be controlled.

Finally, the possession of Ramadie and its canals was necessary to the development of the great Euphrates irrigation scheme, which, neglected by the Turks, became the glory of the new conquerors of Mesopotamia. Hundreds of disused canals were cleared and connected with the new irrigation works by the Shatt-el-Hilla, and 300,000 acres of barren land were rapidly brought under cultivation. The land by the Shatt-el-Hindiya was also irrigated. Vast quantities of seed grain were planted in the newly-watered territory.

Friendly Kurds secretly opened negotiations with the redeemers of the parched and desolate ruins of Eden, begging Sir Stanley Maude to liberate them from Ottoman rule. Across the Persian marches came a wilder cry for help from tribesmen wasted by the invading Turk and reduced to utter famine amid their burnt and plundered homes.

The mosquito-bitten, fly-tormented, thirsty British soldier, suffering from prickly heat, did not regard himself as a hero; yet the work he did at Samarra, Shinafiyah, Hilla, Feluja, and many other places eclipsed all that accomplished by hundreds of conquering forces between the age of Sargon and the age of Alexander. Inheriting the genius of the race that gave

THE ADVANCE FROM BAGDAD

mankind the gigantic powers of steam, the Briton was really what the Teuton pretended to be—the superman.

He outflew the bird with his aeroplane, he outsped the Arab racehorse with his motor-car ; and there was a legend, brought by folk from the Persian Gulf, that he could outswim any fish and move through the depths of the sea. He overwhelmed the Bedouin by the exhibition of powers exceeding those of all the magicians in "The Arabian Nights' Entertainment" ; and, after commanding awe, elicited, if not downright affection, at least that kind of gratitude consisting in a lively sense of favours to come. Moreover, a considerable number of troops in the Ottoman forces almost loved the Briton, and rather enjoyed an honourable opportunity of surrendering to him. Proud when victorious, yet rather pleased when captured, they blamed Enver Pasha and the Young Turks for having separated them from their old ally and placed them under the control of the German.

The Turk could not be made to fight against the Briton with that racial and religious ardour with which he battled against the Russian. This was one of the reasons why the Germanic controllers of the Turkish armies were unable fully and immediately to profit by the melting away of the Russian army of the Caucasus during the Bolshevik régime.

The Turks were not unwilling to reoccupy the Caucasian territory lost in former wars ; and, when there, it was fairly easy to move them by stages towards Persia and the northern overland route to India. But it was very difficult for either General Falkenhayn or his successor, General Liman Sanders, to arrange for a strong reconcentration of the Ottoman forces, on strict strategic lines, against the Indo-British army around Bagdad.

There was, however, always a possibility that the German commander would try to retrieve the disasters on his Palestine and Euphrates fronts by drawing a part of the eastern Ottoman army down through Mosul for a direct resumption of the Bagdad battle along the Tigris. In the Jebel Hamrin, a long range of low hills running from the Diala River to the Lesser Zab River, was a screen behind which the northern British flank could be threatened. On October 16 there began a converging British movement of liberation from this menace, and, two days afterwards, Deli Abbas was taken, and the Turks were outflanked by a night march. They slipped away across the river along

MAUDE'S SWOOP

the northern road to Kara Tepe, giving Sir Stanley Maude all the important ground at remarkably little cost of life.

While the British commander was obtaining control of the Diala Gorge, which was the northern gate of invasion of the fertile Bagdad region, the 18th Turkish army corps, on the Tigris at Tekrit, endeavoured to relieve the British pressure against the northern hostile force by a counter-movement down the river. The Turks advanced some twenty miles along the waterway, cautiously entrenching at Dur and Huveslat, and extended within striking distance of the Indo-British outpost. But it was not they who struck. General Maude made a series of spectacular leaps upon them that carried him to Tekrit.

He began by a nocturnal surprise swoop on Huveslat on October 24, but drew back to his own base at Samarra. At the end of a week of quietness another remarkable night march again ended in a staggering Turkish defeat. At dusk, on November 1, two Indo-British columns concentrated at Samarra, and set out on both sides of the river in the darkness. By good scouting on the part of the advanced guards, and fine endurance on the part of the main forces, twenty miles of obscure, difficult country was covered by all arms by four o'clock in the morning of November 2. The Turkish main position was carried by assault, under a British barrage from field-artillery that supported the advance throughout, and by ten o'clock in the morning the Turks were fleeing from Dur, having been turned out of their position by an enveloping movement.

Protected by a rearguard, they fell back on Tekrit, the birth-place of Saladin, which had been transformed into a modern camp of great strength. The mediæval town rose from the river on bold bluffs, and from its ruins, roofs, and domes enjoyed a wide prospect over the alluvial plain. Round the town engineers had designed a belt of lines, seven miles long, with both ends resting on the high river banks. Kut was not comparable in strength with Tekrit, and the commander of the two Turkish divisions operating on the Tigris fancied he could beat off the British attack.

It was, however, with extraordinary ease that Tekrit was stormed. The infantry opened the assault in the morning of November 5, after another night march from Dur. First, the Turkish centre was drawn in by a splendid dashing advance over 1,200 yards of ground. Then, in the afternoon, a Scottish force,

THE ADVANCE FROM BAGDAD

with some sturdy Indian troops, slowly walked over 700 yards of flat plain on the Turkish left, screened only by a barrage from the sweeping fire of the defence.

When the Scotsmen halted, seventy yards from the Turkish line, for their own barrage to lift, the Turks saw the familiar tartan, and scrambled over the parados. But the Scotsmen, risking the last seconds of the barrage, doubled with the bayonet into the great entrenchment, taking most of the garrison captive, and further thinning out with rifle and machine-gun fire those that fled into the moving curtain of British shrapnel.

The second line of the Tekrit defences was rapidly reached and taken; then, on the extreme left, where dismounted horsemen had been containing the enemy and keeping down his fire, the Hussars and a squadron of Indian Lancers completed the panic. They jumped the trenches and charged the flank of the Turkish masses that were retreating in confusion before the infantry. For a thousand yards, through the scattering hostile brigades, the Hussars and Lancers rode, until they were swept at close range by machine-gun and field-gun fire. Wheeling about, the cavalrymen dismounted and covered their withdrawal.

The Turkish right was broken, and rolled back on the river under heavy fire from the British centre. Over the town, smoking with the explosions of British shell, abruptly rose columns of denser fume, indicating the firing of ammunition and supply dumps. Late in the afternoon the victorious force delivered another thrust, and entered Tekrit with slight loss and little opposition, while the Turks were retreating up the river. When day broke, white flags fluttered from every roof, and the townspeople welcomed the conquerors with joy.

Their joy was natural but short-lived. They looked forward to a life of plenty and prosperity, during which they would be able to sell their produce to the army, instead of having it seized. Order and commerce, they thought, would at once begin to obtain and flourish in Tekrit as in Bagdad. Sir Stanley Maude, however, arranged matters otherwise by making a complete withdrawal to Samarra as suddenly as he had made his advance.

The Tekrit position was too dangerous to hold at a time when the Turks were free to move their eastern forces from the Caucasus to the Upper Tigris. Tekrit was open to encircling rear attack from the north-western part of the Jebel Hamrin

SIR STANLEY MAUDE'S DEATH

hill screen, as well as to frontal assault down the river. All that the British commander had designed was to protect his river-line by destroying the enemy's base of operations. When this measure of active defence had been carried out, the Indo-British columns retired to their river-head at Samarra, feeling that they had placed another serious obstacle across Falkenhayn's route to Bagdad and the Persian Gulf.

The situation on the Tigris and Euphrates then was one of apparent military stalemate—and political success on the British side. The main opposing forces were too far apart for the delivery of any rapid blow, and all preparations made for the march of a Turco-German army from Aleppo to Bagdad, which should have taken place at this time, according to Falkenhayn's scheme, ended in a slow trickle of reinforcements and additional supplies of guns and munitions towards the Euphrates broken river-head.

General Maude was chiefly anxious to place a series of wide barriers between the enemy and his own civilising, busy forces camped upon the vast tract of good earth which he had just recovered from ruin and savagery. In particular, he wanted all the rampart of hills of the Jebel Hamrin to secure the outer defences of Bagdad and fully control the head-works of the canal watering a considerable and rich part of the country.

As soon, therefore, as he had completely disorganized the Ottoman forces on the Tigris, he began to make a new concentration northward along the Diala; but, by a strangely unhappy stroke, General Maude died of cholera on November 18, with all his plans for the salvation and reconstruction of Mesopotamia only half executed. Enemy agents had made several frustrated attempts to assassinate the British conqueror, who was carrying out in the desert of the great rivers a work equivalent to that accomplished by Lord Kitchener in the wastes of the Upper Nile.

The prestige of Sir Stanley Maude had become a valuable element in the moral power his country exercised over the stretch of troubled Moslem lands between Afghanistan and Arabia. The romance of his avenging victory at Kut, the glory of his swift conquest of the imposing city of Bagdad, and the later series of shattering blows he dealt the Ottoman forces, with all the magnificent and rapid engineering and irrigation work executed by the men under his control, made him a figure of wonderful influence.

THE ADVANCE FROM BAGDAD

Great, therefore, was the loss to his men and his country when he perished, at the prime of his power, through a graceful act of courtesy towards a native of Bagdad. During a simple school ceremony he was offered a cup of tea, into which some cholera-infected milk seems to have been poured. Rather than appear unbending, Sir Frederick took the cup and drank, and, not having been inoculated against the disease, he died with appalling suddenness.

Maude's able lieutenant, Lieutenant-General Sir William R. Marshall, succeeded to the command of the forces in Mesopotamia, being marked out for the position by the considered judgment of his late chief and the record of his achievements. A Sherwood Forester officer, Sir William had learned the art of warfare on the Indian frontier, and earned a lieutenant-colonelcy in the South African campaign. He had commanded a brigade in France in January, 1915, so successfully that in five months he was given a division, arriving at last in Mesopotamia, after the retreat of General Townshend, at the head of an army corps. His coolness and decision, his bold methods and rapid execution, were mentioned by General Maude.

Sir William Marshall promptly set his troops moving to cheer their spirits by fighting activity and forestall the Ottoman manœuvres. He sent Sir R. Egerlon northward to force the passages of the Diala and Nahrin Rivers, in the Jebel Hamrin range, and capture the passes; while an independent cavalry column worked up the Adhaim River towards the centre of the long stretch of hills, threatening to get on the flank of the Turks.

The operations began towards the end of November, when a Russian detachment, unaffected by Bolshevism, was able to give valuable help in strengthening the British right flank. Once more the Turks were manœuvred out of hill positions of great natural strength, being forced back to Kifri by December 5. The victorious troops made another leap forward, destroyed all enemy stores in a wide belt of country, and then, as at Tekrit, drew back towards their base.

This base was at last fixed along the line that General Maude had endeavoured to secure in April, when his cavalry failed to reach it through lack of water. The passes of the mountain range were retained and fortified, a bridge-head was constructed at Kizil Robat, and Khanikin (near the Persian frontier) was occupied, together with the Pass of Takigirra.

A GERMAN CONCENTRATION

Winter weather conditions on the Persian highlands prevented any further operations on a large scale there. Bad roads needed repairing, the Turk-ravaged mountaineers required food; the main work of the victorious force consisted in fighting the famine among the Persians and borderers by bringing up some of the produce of the newly-irrigated tracts between the great rivers. The conflict with the Turkish divisions that had fled to Kifri had to be postponed until the spring of 1918.

One reason for this was that the half-demoralised Kifri force was no longer a menace to the northern flank of Bagdad, while the westerly river-head, at Ramadie, on the Euphrates, was again becoming a storm centre. Throughout early winter the successor to Ahmed Bey, established by the bitumen fields of Hit, received reinforcements and huge quantities of artillery and rifle ammunition.

CHAPTER 14

Chemin des Dames and Verdun

AFTER his successes along the Chemin des Dames and the Craonne plateau in July, 1917, General Pétain, while adopting an actively defensive attitude until the U.S.A. army was ready, prepared to help Sir Douglas Haig's large operations by means of a skilful method of limited attacks. He sent a fine though small force, under General Anthoine, to operate upon the northern German flank at Ypres. In addition to giving his direct help to the 5th and 2nd British armies, he arranged to take such action in the most promising parts of his lines as would compel the German high command to maintain strong holding forces in men and guns along the apparently inactive French front.

As soon as the Germans began to concentrate along the Passchendaele ridge, in answer to the attacks made by the army of Sir Hubert Gough, the old battlefield of Verdun flamed into fierce activity. General Pétain went there in person. Two of his ablest lieutenants, General Guillaumat and General Fayolle, began, in the second week of August, to practise with parks of siege-guns sited on both banks of the Meuse. The bombard-

CHEMIN DES DAMES AND VERDUN

ment greatly increased in intensity at the beginning of the third week. The trenches, dug-outs, concrete forts, and communications on Talou Hill, Hill 344, and Hill 240 were filled with German dead, and made uninhabitable for the survivors of the front-line garrison. The German commander was obliged to deploy his troops in his second zone of battle divisions and keep his supports some miles away at Spincourt and Beaumont. His new positions, however, were discovered, and the French howitzer and high-velocity guns poured their thunderbolts into Spincourt and Beaumont Wood and other places of concentration for German reserves, while the medium artillery and quick-firers were turned upon the second German zone of defences.

The battle was won on the right bank of the Meuse between Talou Crest and the ground near Chaume Wood, a couple of days before the French infantry moved out to explore and collect and consolidate. On the left bank of the Meuse, however, where the Germans held Dead Man Hill and Hill 304, the German commander brought up larger forces. His hope was that, by crowding his front line, he would ensure sufficient survivors from the dreadful French gun fire to enable him to hold the French infantry back while his reserves could come into action. To a considerable extent he relied upon the great tunnelled shelters that ran from Dead Man Hill. There was the Gallwitz tunnel, provided with an electric railway and extending for more than six hundred yards into Crows' Wood, possessing at each end four branching passages opening out into well-sheltered ground. There was also the Crown Prince's tunnel, somewhat smaller in length, but equally valuable, both for bringing forward troops through a barrage and for affording shelter for the garrison during a bombardment.

A third tunnel served the same purpose in another direction. But the tunnels had been built in the days when German sappers did not know what a 16 in. French howitzer could do to their defences. First some middle-heavy French pieces choked the entrances to the tunnels on August 17. After the Germans had cleared away the earth brought down by the explosions, the 16 in. French pieces, by straightforward smashes on the chalk above the tunnel roofs, closed the galleries from the inside.

By August 19 Dead Man Hill and Hill 304 and the neighbouring heights were ploughed up, and all that the German com-

RATIONS FOR SIX DAYS

mander accomplished by reinforcing his front line was to double his losses. The bombardment continued the following night, and as day was breaking, with a river mist spread over the opposing lines, the French infantry came out and cautiously moved towards their line of shell fire. This suddenly increased in intensity and began to move forward. Thereupon, the German gunners placed their barrage upon the French trenches, completely missing the forces of attack who had already gone forward. Each French soldier was provided with a new wallet, known as the Pétain wallet, containing rations for six days. His old haversack for provisions was filled with an extra supply of hand-grenades. It was expected that the Germans could bring into action many guns that they had kept silent and concealed, and maintain a blocking curtain fire between their lost positions and the French lines, and then try to press the French infantry back with reserves. This was why the French soldier took a large stock of food with him and an additional amount of ammunition.

There was little hand-to-hand fighting in the first phase of the infantry action. On the left the height covered by Avocourt Wood was taken and the central ridge of Hill 304 was half encircled, while Dead Man Hill, Crows' Wood, and Cumières were being overrun. The Moroccan division and the southern French division that carried out most of the work on the left bank of the Meuse went through a Brandenburg division with remarkable ease. The French infantry could have occupied ground to a much greater depth than it had been ordered to do. Especially did the southern division want to flow round the sides of Hill 304 and push onward towards Forges. The general, however, after clearing out the tunnels, extended only into Crows' Wood and Cumières Wood. If he had occupied the northern side of the main central hill he would have exposed his men to curtain fire from German batteries about Montfaucon.

The enemy had the choice either of accepting defeat or of diverting towards the banks of the Meuse some of the artillery which he was moving from the Russian front to Flanders. General Pétain did not mind which of these two courses the enemy adopted. He was fighting with guns and employing men only to occupy the ground the guns won. On the right bank of the Meuse the French advance began at Talou Crest and at the village of Champneuville, lying directly opposite Dead Man

CHEMIN DES DAMES AND VERDUN

Hill and Crows' Wood. Hill 344, north of Talou Crest, was also taken, with Mormont Farm and 240-Metre Hill, north of Louvemont. Then on the north-east of Louvemont, the German lines, running through Fosses Wood and Chaume Wood, were broken, and parts of the wood were taken. As the German commander had withdrawn his front-line garrison, with a view to fighting an open-field battle, the advancing French forces went forward without difficulty.

When the time came for the French forces to stand up against the main strength of General von Gallwitz's army, their guns flooded with deadly gas the woods and hollows in which the German battle divisions were gathered, with the result that the intended grand counter-attack did not take place. The French troops, composed of two divisions under General Deville and General Caran, after taking thousands of prisoners, remained on the line assigned to them on a level with their comrades across the valley of the Meuse.

The combined lines of attack on each side of the river had a total length of about fifteen miles when measured on the map, and about twenty-five miles when all the windings of the downland entrenchments were measured. The Germans had seven divisions in line, four on the left bank, in and around Dead Man Hill, and three on the right bank above Louvemont. One of these divisions was completely destroyed; the others were so crippled that they could not act against the French advance. Some German forces on the extreme left swung round to counter-attack through Avocourt Wood, only to be raked by the mass fire of the French guns and broken in detail by the advanced French forces.

In the second day of the battle the French forces took Goose Ridge and the village of Regnéville, on the left bank of the river, while on the right bank they conquered Samogneux village and the formidable system of fortifications connecting the village with 344-Metre Hill. Regiments of southern French troops carried out this advance from Vacherauville across the large hilly bend of the Meuse to Samogneux. They had to go through clouds of poison gas, yet they took ground to a depth of two miles in less than one hour.

The village of Forges, north of the hill positions of Goose Ridge, Hill 268, and Regnéville Down, was also occupied by French patrols. The plan of General Guillaumat did not include

FRENCH SUCCESSES

the capture of Forges, Regneville, and Samogneux. Small parties of French soldiers, however, exploring the enemy's lines, found them so weakly held that the battle moved forward without directions from the victorious commander. All he at last had to do was to assent to the retention of positions that had been won. Fine intelligence work, as well as excellent aerial photography and artillery skill, went to the making of the victory.

So widespread was the destruction of the German works and so far-reaching and deadly the bombardment of the German reserves, that the French advance continued for some days after all the original objectives had been attained. Holding the enemy down day and night by overwhelming gun fire, General Guillaumat brought his quick-firers forward and, at dawn on August 24, sent his infantry forward for another mile and a quarter on the left bank of the Meuse. In a single movement the whole of Hill 304 was stormed, together with the line of forts north of it and the works along the Forges brook, between Haucourt and Béthincourt.

From Malancourt Wood and Montfaucon Wood two masses of German guns had been maintaining, since August 20, a smashing barrage between Avocourt Down and Dead Man Hill. By means of a high pylon observation station at Romagne, German gunner officers had directed searching flanking fire on their lost ground on the right. But a French observation officer brought one of his heavy pieces ranging on the pylon, as soon as Dead Man Hill had been won, and with a single shot destroyed the hostile fire-control station. The French troops drove into the outworks of Béthincourt and established themselves all along the bank of the Forges stream. Then, in the morning of August 26, after a new and vigorous artillery preparation, the right wing of the French 2nd army stormed through Fosses Wood and carried Beaumont Wood and Chaume Wood, finally attaining the outskirts of Beaumont village and the edge of Caurières Wood.

This fine French thrust was carried out on a front of only two and a half miles. It was calculated to provoke a fierce counter-attack of a similar kind. This was delivered from Wavrille, and was countered by such a hurricane of shell as left the advanced forces of French infantry little further work to do, except to collect more prisoners. Two new German divisions, thrown into Beaumont village, engaged in a savage hand-to-hand struggle in

CHEMIN DES DAMES AND VERDUN

Beaumont Wood. But an army corps of General Passaga, which had been fighting since August 20, inflicted a complete defeat upon the two fresh German divisions, and by August 27 brought the total of unwounded German soldiers captured on both sides of the Meuse to close on ten thousand.

On September 8, after the Germans had vainly reacted against the French advance, a part of General Passaga's army corps broke into the deep shelters of the German camp in Chaume Wood and won the mouths of the ravines eastward. The effect of this stroke, in which eight hundred prisoners were taken, was to ease the new French positions about Beaumont and provoke a German counter-attack, delivered by five thousand men, who failed to recover any of the ground. The defending French regiment, recoiling under the shock, left some advanced forces encircled by the enemy, but the regiment returned in a bayonet and bombing charge, rescued its men, recovered its positions, and scattered the enemy.

Throughout September no important French offensive could be undertaken with a view to helping the British armies struggling in the swamps around the Passchendaele ridge; but when the great Australian and New Zealand attack on Passchendaele failed in October and the presence of General von Below's army on the Italian front was known, General Pétain showed that the long preparations he had been silently making could give him at least a local victory when one was needed. Under the direction of another new French army commander, General Maistre, the Staff had been for months siting along the Aisne a very formidable park of howitzers.

General Pétain's plan was to complete the long battle of the Chemin des Dames by a final sudden blow. Between May and July the German command had used up forty-nine divisions on the Aisne front without being able to push the French army from the top of the great ridge. The Germans had delivered, since the date when General Pétain became Commander-in-Chief, twenty-one important attacks or counter-attacks, while the French had made, with more effect, eighteen strong attacks or counter-attacks. When the long and fearful wrestle ended, with the French forces entrenched on the highest eastern part of the plateau, the general situation was not satisfactory to either side. Indeed, the French positions practically invited the enemy to continue his counter-offensive. He did not do so,

AN OCTOBER FIGHT

because the French commander had covered all the ground with his guns. When the complete bankruptcy of Russia was apparent, General Pétain began to prepare for the great battle in the west. Having made Verdun secure by driving the Germans back almost to their original lines, he then, after another seven weeks of steady nocturnal preparation, employed the French 6th army to transform the entire plateau of the Aisne into the position of a grand buttress of France. The French high command never intended that the Germans should retain, in the grand natural fortress of France, the means of launching a supreme offensive between Noyon and Reims. Victorious as the 6th army of the Aisne had at last been, at Craonne and along part of the Chemin des Dames, it still remained with its back close to the river and its western flank exposed. When the river again rose in flood it was not unlikely that the Germans would endeavour to repeat on a great scale the stroke that had almost led to a grave French disaster early in 1915.

The entire conquest of the plateau was a matter of absolute necessity to General Pétain. This was recognised by General von Ludendorff. In the fourth week of October, when the German commander-in-chief was hard pressed around Passchendaele and left with a small reserve, owing to the despatch of General von Below's army to Italy, he retained strong forces of defence along the Aisne under General von Müller. In the centre were the 2nd and 5th divisions of the Prussian Guard, with the 13th division and the 47th reserve division on either side. Supporting these four divisions were the 14th and 211th German divisions, placed beyond the battle zone so as to arrive in time to fill any gap.

General von Müller had full notice of the intention of General Maistre, for a long and heavy bombardment was needed to break a path for the French infantry. The German defence was based upon the caverns and quarries in the limestone heights, and it possessed such strong natural shelters from shell fire as only the 15 in. and 16 in. French guns could wreck. The only element of surprise in the French plan of attack consisted in the number of monster guns employed in the bombardment. This began in a slow, methodical, but terrifying manner on October 7. While the battleplanes of France held the air, photographing air-men swooped over each target selected by the French gunners, and recorded the result of the firing. With remarkable speed

CHEMIN DES DAMES AND VERDUN

the photograph was developed and printed, and copies were given to the battery commander and his lieutenants. When it was found that more rounds were needed to achieve what was intended, firing went on against the target until the aerial photograph showed that the mighty thunderbolts had pierced the rock roof of the great grottoes.

The Frenchmen had for months been registering on their principal targets, and when they obtained all the ordnance they needed, they maintained a stream of monster shells, the effect of which upon the nerves of the Prussian Guardsmen and German infantry of the line compensated for the expense in munitions. For sixteen days and nights the bombardment went on. The greatest of the limestone caverns, such as that known as Montparnasse, were broken in from the top and closed at the entrances. The German commander lost so many men that he at last resolved, in sheer desperation, to attack.

This attack was fixed for half-past five in the morning of October 23, and was aimed at the French right wing below Filain village. The larger French attack was launched fifteen minutes before the hostile infantry had orders to move. The line of the French attack covered only the western wing of the German positions, on either side of the dismantled old fort of Malmaison, at the point where the Chemin des Dames ended on the road to Laon. A battle-front of scarcely more than four miles of ground was directly attacked, although it soon broadened out to more than six miles. The weather was as bad on the high ground of the Aisne as it was by the Passchendaele ridge. A dense fog shrouded the plateau, while a heavy drizzle of rain made the slopes slippery and turned the brown-and-white paste round the shell-holes on the Chemin des Dames into clogging mud. Under the perfect staff organization of General Maistre the attack developed with masterly regularity.

Somewhat after the manner of General Plumer's reproduction of the Messines Ridge there had been made, from aerial photographs, a model of the Aisne plateau and the heights north of it. This had been studied closely by the attacking forces, who had further been trained in a special method of assault. French Tanks were skilfully employed to help the infantry in overcoming strong points which the guns had not destroyed. Behind the Zouaves, Chasseurs, and French infantry of the line were brigades of African natives. The French negro, armed with

MALMAISON FORT

steel and hand-grenades, was a terrible man in a loose trench skirmish when the line was going forward victoriously; and his quick method of fighting enabled the French field-gunners to come up with surprising rapidity into the thick front of battle.

On the western side and in the centre the enemy had been so shattered by gun fire that only a sprinkling of machine-gunners remained in action above ground when the French infantry advanced under cover of the mist. The quarries of Fruty and Bohery were carried in a single storming movement, and soon afterwards the ruin of Malmaison Fort, in which some German machine-gunners were holding out, was conquered by the Zouaves. Malmaison was not much of a fort. It had been sold by the French Government, and part of the material had been used in building barracks at Laon. Nevertheless, the old work occupied a position of importance on a dominating knoll on the plateau. When it was strengthened by German sappers, and filled with machine-guns sweeping the long Soissons road and the lower ground directly southward, it stopped for months all French progress round the end of the Chemin des Dames.

But the 16 in. howitzer had robbed Malmaison Fort of all the new sources of strength that had been put into it. Owing to the fog the remnant of the German garrison could not see their assailants while the gradual converging assault was in progress. The fort was rushed with comparative ease about two hours after the infantry movement began. This was an unexpected stroke of good fortune for General Maistre. He had calculated that the old fort would have been connected with the great cavern of Montparnasse, a little distance behind it, and as Montparnasse was capable of holding at least ten thousand men, it had seemed likely that there would be a long struggle at Malmaison.

The Germans, however, had been so confident of the strength of their position that they had not troubled to drive a tunnel from the cavern to the fort. By means of carrier-pigeons the news of the fall of the fort was sent to Army Headquarters in about seven minutes, and General Maistre at once enlarged his plan of attack, and sent up fresh forces with more quick-firers. In the meantime excellent progress had been made on the left flank, where the villages of Allemant and Vaudesson were quickly conquered. On the right wing, where the German attack was forestalled and completely disorganized, less ground was won,

CHEMIN DES DAMES AND VERDUN

but the heights above Pantheon Farm and La Royere were taken, giving the French soldiers dominating positions from which they swept with fire the villages of Pargny and Filain. With both of his flanks strongly placed, General Maistre made another leap forward. His infantry, tanks, and quick-firing guns forced their way along the Soissons-Laon road into the village of Chavignon.

A large part of the German forces never came into action. In one cavern near Bohery Quarry three hundred Germans remained undiscovered till the action was over. They made no attempt to defend themselves, and surrendered as soon as they were found. In another shelter a brigade surrendered with its commander and all its officers, as also did the remnants of six German battalions that had been more severely tried by the French artillery.

At the end of the first day the French 6th army had taken eight thousand prisoners from eight German divisions, and had begun to capture men from other forces hastily diverted into the new battle-line. General von Müller had exhausted all troops within his reach in vain attempts to stay the first French advance. In the night of October 23, French patrols began to work forward against the broken German front between Chavignon and the Mont des Singes. General Maistre did not expose his men in large numbers to the hostile gun fire, but brought his own artillery down upon the German reserve positions, controlling his fire from the new line of heights that had been won, and sending searching-parties and Tanks into the copses and woods. In the morning of October 25 the German commander, surrendering some twenty-five square miles of territory, withdrew in haste from the Forest of Pinon to the edge of the canal connecting the Oise River with the Aisne, but he was caught by the advanced French forces, and lost more than two thousand prisoners and another score of guns. This brought the tale of French captures to more than 11,000 prisoners, 160 guns, and several hundred machine guns.

The last batteries of German artillery were captured intact near the marshy valley below the Aisne Plateau. French patrols ended their advance five miles from the hill town of Laon. On the right wing the brilliant division of Chasseurs, under General Brissaud-Desmallet, worked up against the village of Filain and the lake reservoir of the Oise and Aisne Canal, and extended eastward over the plateau above the Chevrigny spur. There were

A HURRIED RETIREMENT

were then indications that the French 6th army intended to move forward to a much larger achievement, after winning the grand observation positions on the northern side of the plateau. The German army was seriously enfeebled, and although it had been reinforced by five divisions, the artillery strength of General Maistre had been doubled by the gain of the best observation posts and the destruction or capture of nearly all the light and medium guns of General von Müller.

Where the Germans still held on to the Aisne plateau, above Froidmont farm, they were in a salient with two exposed flanks. On their western side, in the valley of the Ailette, they were also exposed to attack. Everything was then promising on the western front, and both General Pétain and Sir Douglas Haig were fairly confident of achieving important successes before the new hostile masses arrived from the eastern theatre. But the unexpected rupture of the Italian lines along the Isonzo interrupted the work, and General Maistre had to depart with General Plumer and assist in the reconquest of the mountain rampart above Asolo. The needs of Italy were so urgent that some of the best men and officers of the French 6th army had to be transported over the Alps to the mountain line of the Piave river.

At the beginning of November, while General Maistre was preparing to carry out his new work, Ludendorff ordered a general retirement from the endangered positions above the Aisne. He found that his forces were unable to maintain themselves at Chevrigny, Courteçon, and Ailles, by reason of the French thrust right through his flank at Malmaison. Ever since October 23 the powerful French artillery had been vigorously bombarding the German positions in the centre of the plateau. The fire steadily increased in intensity and accuracy, as batteries got into position on the conquered ground from which the valley of the Ailette could be enfiladed.

The Germans were fully aware that an attack was contemplated by the French commander, and were afraid that, if they had to fall back across the marshy valley of the Ailette river, under both front and flanking fire from the French artillery, a great disaster might ensue. They therefore retired about November 1, leaving a rearguard to maintain a show of activity during the night when the French patrols came forward. At dawn on November 2 a party of chasseurs discovered that the German

CHEMIN DES DAMES AND VERDUN

trenches were empty. Large cauldrons of still warm soup seemed to indicate that the German lines had been unexpectedly and hurriedly evacuated, but learning from previous experience, the Frenchmen went forward cautiously. It was well they did so, for there were many traps. At Courteçon, for example, there was a German helmet on a pole, and down the pole there ran a wire to a mine. All the ground was flooded with mustard gas, and it was not until the French guns counter-battered the German gas-shelling artillery that the entire plateau was occupied. It was an historic moment when the French troops, with the capture of forty more German guns, occupied all the flat top of the great long ridge between the Aisne and the Ailette, and worked down to the southern bank of the northern stream.

The German commander had clearly regarded the plateau as a position worth the utmost sacrifice, and for over six months he had utilised his best troops both in attack and counter-attack. Each side had massed hundreds of guns upon the strip of land on the summit, and their men had clung to the edge of it, being unable to yield any ground without losing the entire advantage of the position. There was a great raid on the German trenches on November 21, and four days later the army of Verdun made a short leap forward, above Samogneux, storming two enemy systems of deep fortification on the slopes of Caures wood. Then relative quietude prevailed while preparations were being made for the spring battles.

At Versailles, where the Allied war council sat, General Foch gradually rose into the position of generalissimo of the western front. General Pétain became subordinate to him, and Sir Douglas Haig was induced to take over the positions won by General Humbert between St. Quentin and La Fère, and place there the 5th British army, under Sir Hubert Gough, at the time when the Versailles staff foresaw that the supreme enemy offensive would be directed against this part of the allied line.

As was evident from the concentration of French forces, produced at the perilous cost of lengthening the critical British line, the man-power of the Republic was wearing under the tremendous strain of the prolonged struggle. The defection of Russia told most heavily upon her old ally in a moral as well as a material manner. The tardy increase in military strength of the British Empire could not fully compensate for the disruption and impotence of the power which for a century

CLEMENCEAU'S SPIRIT

had overshadowed Europe and Asia. And as the United States were not then ready to take the field in complete array, the leaders of France grew troubled in mind and tensely active.

Yet Clemenceau, once more in the ascendant as premier, with his fierce energy and grim gaiety, was symbolic of the indomitable nation which he inspired for the supreme effort. His body, which should have shown signs of wearing out, was like a thing of tempered steel, and his great mind worked with a reach and mastery of detail never displayed in its natural prime. He put into thorough execution measures disinfecting the country of the miasma of defeatism; he hastened the prosecution of Bolo and other suspicious personages; and by his example and his exertions he strengthened the country for the ultimate ordeal.

From the time of his appointment as prime minister of France in November, 1917, until the end of the war, Clemenceau continued with energy surprising in a man of 74 years of age to urge on the operations against Germany by every means in his power. Even in dark hours, he spoke with a certainty of success which calmed and steadied the nerve of the French people. He frequently visited the troops, seemed to court danger, tramped sturdily through trenches, and sowed confidence wherever he went.

Although he did not manage to prove his charges against M. Caillaux, denounced as the head of the gang to which Bolo and others belonged, the old man's campaign against traitors within the ranks struck fear into the hearts of any who may have felt inclined to become what the French press nicknamed defeatists. Clemenceau's vigour and pertinacity were just the qualities needed by France to carry her through the last years of the war. The Tiger had never before done his country such good service, or laid himself out with so single a mind to advance the national interest.

CHAPTER 15

Abortive Efforts for Peace

DURING the course of the war several efforts were made to bring it to an end, but these came to nothing, mainly because both groups of combatants were persuaded that, the issue being so immense, it must be a fight to the finish. The overtures for peace came from two groups of opinion: pacifists who believed war to be a moral wrong, and those who, while squaring war with their religious convictions, desired a speedy ending of the conflict, as they feared that a policy of attrition would sow the seeds of bitterness and revenge, and retard the establishment of a peaceful world.

As early as July 28, 1915, Pope Benedict XV. appealed to the belligerents.

Why not weigh at once, with conscience serene, the rights and the just aspirations of the peoples? Why not begin with willing minds an exchange of views, direct or indirect, with the object of taking into account, as far as possible, those rights and aspirations, and thus put an end to the immense struggle, as has happened in other similar circumstances? . . . The equilibrium of the world and the sure and prosperous tranquillity of the nations rest far more upon mutual goodwill and upon respect of others' rights, and of others' dignity, than upon the multitude of armed hosts and upon formidable girdles of fortresses. This is the cry of peace that bursts, high-toned, in this sad day from our hearts. And we invite all the friends of peace in the world to join hands with us in hastening the end of the war, which now for a whole year has turned Europe into a vast field of battle. . . .

In his Allocution of December 6th he repeated his plea in more direct words:

It is absolutely necessary that concessions by both sides shall be made with a good grace, even at the cost of some sacrifice, as the continuance of this shedding of blood, if prolonged, might mean the beginning of decadence in Europe.

Three days after the Pope's utterance in December, Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg, the German chancellor, announced his will-



WITH CLYDESIDE WOMEN WORKERS. The four days' visit paid by King George to the Clyde shipbuilding yards in September, 1917, was devoted to the inspection of works concerned only in the construction of ships and machinery. He is seen here being cheered by the workers.



AN OPEN-AIR INVESTITURE. Twenty-four V.C. heroes were decorated by King George V of Buckingham Palace on July 21, 1917, and eight Crosses were presented to the men who had fallen in action. Sergeant Alexander Edwards, of the Seaforth Highlanders, is seen here receiving the Cross awarded to him for gallantry north of Ypres.

Volume IV

Volume IV



TWO FAMOUS GENERALS AND AN AIR MARSHAL. Left, General Sir Herbert Plumer led the 2nd army and was responsible for the victory of Messines, June, 1917. Centre, General Sir Julian Byng became head of the Cavalry Corps, 1916, and the 3rd army, 1917-18. In November, 1917, he fought the battle of Cambrai.



Sport and General

INVESTITURE. Twenty-four V.C. heroes were decorated by King George in the forecourt Palace on July 21, 1917, and eight Crosses were presented to the next-of-kin of men in action. Sergeant Alexander Edwards, of the Seaforth Highlanders, is seen receiving the Cross awarded to him for gallantry north of Ypres.



Hussell

AND AN AIR MARSHAL. Left, General Sir Herbert Plumer led the British 5th army corps in 1915, and was responsible for the victory of Messines, June, 1917. Centre, Sir Hugh Trenchard was chief of the Cavalry Corps, 1915, commanded the Canadian Corps, and the 3rd army, 1917-18. In November, 1917, he fought the battle of Cambrai.



ENEMY SHELL BURSTING IN RUINED YPRES. The 1st battle of Ypres, in October and November, 1914, resulted in the enemy being repulsed with a loss of 150,000 men, and the 2nd battle ended without decisive result in May, 1915. This photograph was taken during the 3rd battle in 1917, when the British attacked and suffered heavily in one of the most terrible engagements of the war.

BETHMANN-HOLLWEG'S PROPOSAL

ingness to discuss peace terms. In Great Britain the following February, Mr. Philip Snowden and Mr. Charles Trevelyan urged the prime minister in the House of Commons to respond to the approaches of the German chancellor. Later in the year peace by negotiation was sponsored by the national council for civil liberties, which attempted to hold a peace conference at Cardiff. At this time there were differences of opinion in the Cabinet, and Lord Lansdowne circulated to the members a memorandum advocating a negotiated peace on the lines laid down in his famous letter of the following year. On the other hand, Mr. Lloyd George and those who followed him held that any overtures were premature and that the war must continue.

The German peace proposal to the Allies and President Wilson's peace note appeared in December, 1916. The discussions that took place in 1917 can be understood only in the light of these documents, which influenced the peace proposals of Charles of Austria and of the Pope. Bethmann-Hollweg's proposal, dated December 12, 1916, and addressed to the American chargé d'affaires in Berlin ran:

The most formidable war known to history has been ravaging for two and a half years a great part of the world. That catastrophe that the bond of a common civilisation more than a thousand years old could not stop strikes mankind in its most precious patrimony; it threatens to bury under its ruins the moral and physical progress on which Europe prided itself at the dawn of the twentieth century. In that strife Germany and her Allies, Austria-Hungary and Turkey, have given proof of their indestructible strength in winning considerable successes at war. Their unshakable lines resist ceaseless attacks of their enemies' arms. The recent diversion in the Balkans was speedily and victoriously thwarted. The latest events have demonstrated that a continuation of the war cannot break their resisting power. The general situation much rather justified their hope of fresh successes. It was for the defence of their existence and freedom of their national development that the four allied Powers were constrained to take up arms. The exploits of their armies have brought no change therein. Not for an instant have they swerved from the conviction that the respect of the rights of other nations is not in any degree incompatible with their own rights and legitimate interests. They do not seek to crush or annihilate their adversaries. Conscious of their military and economic strength and ready to carry on to the end if they must the struggle that is forced upon them, but animated at the same

ABORTIVE EFFORTS FOR PEACE

time by the desire to stem the flood of blood and to bring the horrors of war to an end, the four allied Powers propose to enter even now into peace negotiations. They feel sure that the propositions which they would bring forward and which would aim to assure the existence, honour, and free development of their peoples would be such as to serve as a basis for the restoration of a lasting peace. If notwithstanding this offer of peace and conciliation the struggle should continue, the four allied Powers are resolved to carry it on to an end, while solemnly disclaiming any responsibility before mankind and history. The Imperial Government has the honour to ask, through your obliging medium, the Government of the United States to be pleased to transmit the present communication to the Government of the French Republic, to the Royal Government of Great Britain, to the Imperial Government of Japan, to the Royal Government of Rumania, to the Imperial Government of Russia, and to the Royal Government of Serbia.

The reply of the Allied Powers to the German peace note was communicated to the United States ambassador in Paris on December 30, 1916.

The Allied Governments of Russia, France, Great Britain, Japan, Italy, Serbia, Belgium, Montenegro, Portugal, and Rumania, united for the defence of the freedom of nations and faithful to their undertakings not to lay down their arms except in common accord, have decided to return a joint answer to the illusory peace proposals which have been addressed to them by the governments of the enemy powers through the intermediary of the United States, Spain, Switzerland, and the Netherlands. As a prelude to any reply, the Allied Powers feel bound to protest strongly against the two material assertions made in the note from the enemy powers, the one professing to throw upon the Allies the responsibility of the war, and the other proclaiming the victory of the Central Powers.

The Allies cannot admit a claim which is thus untrue in each particular and is sufficient alone to render sterile all attempts at negotiations. The Allied nations have for thirty months been engaged in a war which they had done everything to avoid. They have shown by their actions their devotion to peace. This devotion is as strong to-day as it was in 1914; and after the violation by Germany of her solemn engagements, Germany's promise is no sufficient foundation on which to re-establish the peace which she broke. A mere suggestion, without statement of terms, that negotiations should be opened, is not an offer of peace. The putting forward by the

THE REPLY OF THE ALLIES

Imperial Government of a sham proposal, lacking all substance and precision, would appear to be less an offer of peace than a war manœuvre. It is founded on a calculated misrepresentation of the character of the struggle in the past, the present, and the future. As for the past, the German note takes no account of the facts, dates, and figures which establish that the war was desired, provoked, and declared by Germany and Austria-Hungary.

At The Hague Conference it was the German delegate who refused all proposals for disarmament. In July 1914 it was Austria-Hungary who, after having addressed to Serbia an unprecedented ultimatum, declared war upon her, in spite of the satisfaction which had at once been accorded. The Central Empires then rejected all attempts made by the Entente to bring about a pacific solution of a purely local conflict. Great Britain suggested a conference, France proposed an international commission, the emperor of Russia asked the German emperor to go to arbitration, and Russia and Austria-Hungary came to an understanding on the eve of the conflict; but to all these efforts Germany gave neither answer nor effect. Belgium was invaded by an empire which had guaranteed her neutrality and which has had the assurance to proclaim that treaties were "scraps of paper," and that "necessity knows no law."

As for the present these sham offers on the part of Germany rest on a "war map" of Europe alone, which represents nothing more than a superficial and passing phase of the situation, and not the real strength of the belligerents. A peace concluded upon these terms would be only to the advantage of the aggressors, who after imagining that they would reach their goal in two months, discovered after two years that they could never attain it. As for the future, the disasters caused by the German declaration of war and the innumerable outrages committed by Germany and her allies against both belligerents and neutrals demand penalties, reparation, and guarantees: Germany avoids the mention of any of these. In reality, these overtures made by the Central Powers are nothing more than a calculated attempt to influence the future course of the war, and to end it by imposing a German peace. The object of these overtures is to create dissension in public opinion in Allied countries. But that public opinion has, in spite of all the sacrifices endured by the Allies, already given its answer with firmness, and has denounced the empty pretence of the declaration of the enemy Powers. They have the further object of stiffening public opinion in Germany and in the countries allied to her, one and all, already severely tried by their losses, worn out by economic pressure and crushed by the supreme effort which has been imposed upon their inhabitants.

ABORTIVE EFFORTS FOR PEACE

They endeavour to deceive and intimidate public opinion in neutral countries, whose inhabitants have long since made up their minds where the initial responsibility rests, have recognized existing responsibilities, and are far too enlightened to favour the designs of Germany by abandoning the defence of human freedom. Finally, these overtures attempt to justify in advance in the eyes of the world a new series of crimes: submarine warfare, deportations, forced labour, and forced enlistment of inhabitants against their own countries, and violations of neutrality.

Fully conscious of the gravity of this moment, but equally conscious of its requirements, the Allied Governments, closely united to one another and in perfect sympathy with their peoples, refuse to consider a proposal which is empty and insincere. Once again the Allies declare that no peace is possible so long as they have not secured reparation of violated rights and liberties, recognition of the principle of nationalities, and of the free existence of small States; so long as they have not brought about a settlement calculated to end once and for all forces which have constituted a perpetual menace to the nations, and to afford the only effective guarantees for the future security of the world. In conclusion, the Allied Powers think it necessary to put forward the following considerations, which show the special situation of Belgium after two and a half years of war:—

In virtue of international treaties signed by five Great European Powers, of whom Germany was one, Belgium enjoyed, before the war, a special status, rendering her territory inviolable, and placing her, under the guarantee of the Powers, outside all European conflicts. She was, however, in spite of these treaties, the first to suffer the aggression of Germany. For this reason the Belgian Government think it necessary to define the aims which Belgium has never ceased to pursue, while fighting, side by side with the Entente Powers, for right and justice.

Belgium has always scrupulously fulfilled the duties which her neutrality imposed upon her. She has taken up arms to defend her independence and her neutrality violated by Germany, and to show that she remains faithful to her international obligations. On the 4th August, 1914, in the Reichstag the German Chancellor admitted that this aggression constituted an injustice contrary to the laws of nations, and pledged himself, in the name of Germany, to repair it.

During two and a half years this injustice has been cruelly aggravated by the proceedings of the occupying forces which

PRESIDENT WILSON INTERVENES

have exhausted the resources of the country, ruined its industries, devastated its towns and villages, and have been responsible for innumerable massacres, executions, and imprisonments. At this very moment, while Germany is proclaiming peace and humanity to the world, she is deporting Belgian citizens by thousands and reducing them to slavery. Belgium before the war asked for nothing but to live in harmony with all her neighbours. Her king and her government have but one aim: the re-establishment of peace and justice. But they only desire a peace which would assure to their country legitimate reparation, guarantees, and safeguards for the future.

Quite independently of the proposal of the Central Powers, President Wilson made a peace move. On December 18, 1916, he addressed a note to the Government of Great Britain. First of all explaining that he was not influenced by the parallel overtures of Germany, he went on to say:

The President suggests that an early occasion be sought to call out from all the nations now at war such an avowal of their respective views as to the terms upon which the war might be concluded, and the arrangements which would be deemed satisfactory as a guarantee against its renewal or the kindling of any similar conflict in the future, as would make it possible frankly to compare them. He is indifferent as to the means taken to accomplish this. He would be happy himself to serve or even to take the initiative in its accomplishment in any way that might prove acceptable, but he has no desire to determine the method or the instrumentality. One way will be as acceptable to him as another if only the great object he has in mind be attained.

He takes the liberty of calling attention to the fact that the objects which the statesmen of the belligerents on both sides have in mind in this war are virtually the same, as stated in general terms to their own people and to the world. Each side desires to make the rights and privileges of weak peoples and small States as secure against aggression or denial in the future as the rights and privileges of the great and powerful States now at war. Each wishes itself to be made secure in the future, along with all other nations and peoples, against the recurrence of wars like this, and against aggression or selfish interference of any kind. Each would be jealous of the formation of any more rival leagues to preserve an uncertain balance of power amidst multiplying suspicions; but each is ready to consider the formation of a league of nations to insure peace and justice throughout the world. Before that

ABORTIVE EFFORTS FOR PEACE

final step can be taken, however, each deems it necessary first to settle the issues of the present war upon terms which will certainly safeguard the independence, the territorial integrity, and the political and commercial freedom of the nation involved.

He then went on to suggest that the combatants should compare views as to peace terms. At the end of the document he says:

It may be that peace is nearer than we know; that the terms which the belligerents on the one side and on the other would deem it necessary to insist upon are not so irreconcilable as some have feared; that an interchange of views would clear the way at least for conference and make the permanent concord of the nations a hope of the immediate future, a concert of nations immediately practicable.

On January 10, 1917, the Allies, who had taken counsel on the subject, submitted to President Wilson a reply in which the following eleven points were made:

1.—The Allied Governments have received the Note delivered to them on 19th November in the name of the United States Government. They have studied it with the care enjoined upon them both by their acute sense of the gravity of the moment and by their sincere friendship for the American people.

2.—In general, they make a point of declaring that they pay homage to the loftiness of the sentiments inspiring the American Note, and that they associate themselves wholeheartedly with the plan of creating a League of the Nations to ensure peace and justice throughout the world. They recognize all the advantages that would accrue to the cause of humanity and civilization by the establishment of international settlements designed to avoid violent conflicts between the nations—settlements which ought to be attended by the sanctions necessary to assure their execution, and thus to prevent fresh aggressions from being made easier by an apparent security.

3.—But a discussion of future arrangements designed to ensure a lasting peace presupposes a satisfactory settlement of the present conflict. The Allies feel a desire as deep as that of the United States Government to see ended, at the earliest possible moment, the war for which the Central Powers are responsible, and which inflicts sufferings so cruel upon humanity. But they judge it impossible to-day to bring about a peace that shall assure to them the reparation, the restitu-

THE ELEVEN POINTS

tion, and the guarantees to which they are entitled by the aggression for which the responsibility lies upon the Central Powers, and of which the very principle tended to undermine the safety of Europe—a peace that shall also permit the establishment upon firm foundations of the future of the nations of Europe. The Allied nations are conscious that they are fighting, not for selfish interests, but, above all, to safeguard the independence of peoples, right, and humanity.

4.—The Allies are fully alive to and deplore the losses and sufferings which the war causes neutrals, as well as belligerents, to endure; but they do not hold themselves responsible, since in no way did they desire or provoke this war; and they make every effort to lessen such damage to the full extent compatible with the inexorable requirements of their defence against the violence and the pitfalls of the foe.

5.—Hence they note with satisfaction the declaration that, as regards its origin, the American communication was in no wise associated with that of the Central Powers, transmitted on 18th December by the United States Government; neither do they doubt the resolve of that Government to avoid even the appearance of giving any, albeit only moral, support to the responsible authors of the war.

6.—The Allied Governments hold themselves bound to make a stand in the friendliest yet in the clearest way against the establishment in the American Note of a likeness between the two belligerent groups; this likeness, founded upon the public statements of the Central Powers, conflicts directly with the evidence, both as regards the responsibilities for the past and the guarantees for the future. In mentioning this likeness President Wilson certainly did not mean to associate himself with it.

7.—If at this moment there be established historical fact, it is the aggressive will of Germany and Austria to ensure their mastery over Europe and their economic domination over the world. By her declaration of war, by the immediate violation of Belgium and Luxemburg, and by the way she has carried on the struggle, Germany has also proved her systematic contempt of every principle of humanity and of all respect for small States; in proportion as the conflict has developed, the attitude of the Central Powers and of their Allies has been a continual challenge to humanity and civilization. Need we recall the horrors that accompanied the invasion of Belgium and of Serbia, the atrocious rule laid upon the invaded countries, the massacre of hundreds of thousands of inoffensive Armenians, the barbarities committed against the inhabitants of Syria, the Zeppelin raids upon open towns, the destruction by submarines of passenger steamers and merchantmen, even under neutral flags, the cruel treatment inflicted upon

ABORTIVE EFFORTS FOR PEACE

prisoners of war, the judicial murders of Miss Cavell and of Captain Fryatt, the deportation and the reduction to slavery of civil populations? The accomplishment of such a series of crimes, perpetrated without any regard for the universal reprobation they aroused, amply explains to President Wilson the protest of the Allies.

8.—They consider that the Note they handed to the United States in reply to the German Note answers the question put by the American Government, and forms, according to the words of that Government, "an avowal of their respective views as to the terms on which the war might be concluded." Mr. Wilson wishes for more: he desires that the belligerent Powers should define, in the full light of day, their aims in prosecuting the war. The Allies find no difficulty in answering this request. Their war aims are well known: they have been repeatedly defined by the heads of their various Governments. These war aims will only be set forth in detail, with all the compensations and equitable indemnities for harm suffered, at the moment of negotiation. But the civilized world knows that they imply, necessarily and first of all, the restoration of Belgium, Serbia, and Montenegro, with all the compensations due to them; the evacuation of the invaded territories in France, in Russia, in Rumania, with just reparation; the reorganization of Europe, guaranteed by a stable *regime* and based at once on respect for nationalities and on the right to full security and the liberty of economic development possessed by all peoples, small and great, and at the same time upon territorial conventions and international settlements such as to guarantee land and sea frontiers against unjustified attack; the restitution of provinces formerly torn from the Allies by force or against the wish of their inhabitants; the liberation of the Italians, as also of the Slavs, Rumanians, and Czecho-Slovaks from foreign domination; the setting free of the populations subject to the bloody tyranny of the Turks; and the turning out of Europe of the Ottoman Empire as decidedly foreign to Western civilization.

9.—The intentions of His Majesty the Emperor of Russia in regard to Poland have been clearly indicated by the manifesto he has just addressed to his armies.

10.—There is no need to say that, if the Allies desire to shield Europe from the covetous brutality of Prussian militarism, the extermination and the political disappearance of the German peoples have never, as has been pretended, formed part of their designs. They desire above all to ensure peace on the principles of liberty and justice, and upon the inviolable fidelity to international engagements by which the Government of the United States have ever been inspired.

BELGIUM'S REPLY

11.—United in the pursuit of this lofty aim, the Allies are determined, severally and jointly, to act with all their power and to make all sacrifices to carry to a victorious end a conflict upon which, they are convinced, depend not only their own welfare and prosperity but the future of civilization itself.

President Wilson's peace note filled the Allies with astonishment by its apparent assumption that the two belligerent parties were equally responsible for the war, equally to blame for the manner in which it was being conducted. They knew that this war was not the outcome of misunderstanding, but a struggle to preserve civilization against the domination of brute force; it was incredible to them that this view should be treated as open to argument. But the president's attitude was misinterpreted. The supposed assumption was not present. The note was, in fact, a final effort to give Germany an opportunity of acting upon her professions. It was not the business of neutrals to judge between the belligerents; both parties declared that they had the same objects in view; if their declarations were true, it should be possible for the voice of the peacemaker to avail. From that attitude America ought not to depart until one of the belligerents should give conclusive proof to neutrals by anti-neutral action that its professions were false. What Germany had done hitherto was not absolutely conclusive; she had not unmistakably crossed the line.

A separate reply to President Wilson was sent by Belgium on January 15, 1917, in which she drew attention to the violation of her neutrality, the invasion of her territory, and to Germany's failure to acknowledge the prescription of the conventions of The Hague:

By contributions as heavy as they are arbitrary, they have dried up the resources of the country. They have wilfully ruined its industries, destroyed entire towns, killed or imprisoned a considerable number of inhabitants, and even now, while they are loudly telling the world of their desire to put an end to the horrors of the war, they are taking pains to increase the severity of the occupation by dragging thousands of Belgian workers into servitude. If any country has the right to claim it took up arms to defend its existence it is assuredly Belgium. Forced either to fight or to submit to shame, she evidently desires that an end be put to the unheard-of sufferings of her people, but she could only accept a peace which would assure to her, together with equitable reparations, security and guarantees for the future.

ABORTIVE EFFORTS FOR PEACE

On January 11, 1917, Germany addressed a note to neutrals—the United States, the Spanish Government, and the Swiss Government—defending herself against the charge of insincerity in her declaration of December 12. The note contended that Germany and her allies were obliged to take up arms to defend their freedom and their existence. In the assessment of war-guilt account must be taken of the encircling policy of Britain, the *revanche* policy of France, and Russia's aspiration after Constantinople, of provocation by Serbia, the Sarajevo murders, and the complete Russian mobilization. The document continued:

... the enemy powers have departed more and more from the realization of their plans, which, according to the statements of their responsible statesmen, are directed, among other things, towards the conquest of Alsace-Lorraine and several Prussian provinces, the humiliation and diminution of Austria-Hungary, the disintegration of Turkey, and the dismemberment of Bulgaria. In view of such war aims, the demand for reparation, restitution, and guarantees in the mouth of our enemies sounds strange.

Our enemies describe the peace offer of the four allied Powers as a war manoeuvre. Germany and her Allies most emphatically protest against such a falsification of their motives, which they openly stated. Their conviction was that a just peace acceptable to all belligerents was possible, that it could be brought about, and that further bloodshed could not be justified. Their readiness to make known their peace conditions without reservation at the opening of negotiations disproves any doubt of their sincerity.

Our enemies, in whose power it was to examine the real value of our offer, neither made any examination nor made counter-proposals. Instead of that, they declared that peace was impossible so long as the restoration of violated rights and liberties, the acknowledgment of the principle of nationalities, and the free existence of small States were not guaranteed. The sincerity which our enemies deny to the proposal of the four allied Powers cannot be allowed by the world to these demands if it recalls the fate of the Irish people, the destruction of the freedom and independence of the Boer Republics, the subjection of Northern Africa by England, France and Italy, the suppression of foreign nationalities in Russia, and, finally, the oppression of Greece, which is unexampled in history.

The German note went on to state that the Belgian Government had not observed her obligations, since even before the

THE EMPEROR CHARLES

war she had leaned towards England and France, and thereby violated the spirit of the treaties which guaranteed her independence and neutrality:

Germany and her Allies made an honest attempt to terminate the war and pave the way for an understanding among the belligerents. The Imperial Government declares that it solely depended on the decision of our enemies whether the road to peace should be taken or not. The enemy Governments have refused to take this road. On them falls the full responsibility for the continuation of bloodshed.

The transfer of the United States from the rôle of intermediary to that of protagonist in April, 1917, did not, however, kill the campaign for peace. Early in 1917, Charles, the emperor of Austria, set forth proposals; in August the Pope commissioned Cardinal Gasparri to issue an official declaration, and in November Lord Lansdowne's letter appeared in *The Daily Telegraph*.

On his accession to the throne in November, 1916, Charles of Austria issued a proclamation in which he said:

I desire to do all in my power to end, as soon as may be, the horrors and sacrifices of the war, and to restore to my peoples the vanished blessings of peace, so soon as the honour of my arms, the vital interests of my states and their faithful allies, and the malignity of my enemies will allow.

He approached the French government through Prince Sixte de Bourbon, cherishing first the hope of a general peace, and after March 23, 1917, a separate peace between Austria, France, and Great Britain. On March 24 the emperor wrote a letter to Prince Sixte, which was published by Georges Clemenceau on April 12, 1918, and is quoted in *Austria's Peace Offer*, edited by G. de Manteyer:

My dear Sixte,—The third anniversary of a war which has plunged the world in mourning is now drawing near. All the peoples of my Empire are united more firmly than ever in the determination to preserve the integrity of the monarchy, even at the cost of the greatest sacrifices. By virtue of their unity, of the generous collaboration of all the races of my Empire, we have been able to hold out, for nearly three years, against the most fierce attacks. No one can deny the success of my troops in the field, especially in the Balkan theatre.

France, too, has shown the greatest strength in resisting invasion, and a magnificent vitality. We must all admire

ABORTIVE EFFORTS FOR PEACE

without reservation the traditional valour of her gallant army and the willing spirit of sacrifice shown by the whole French people. And I am particularly pleased to note that, although for the time we are in opposite camps, my Empire is not divided from France by any real differences of outlook or of aspiration; while I am justified in hoping that my own keen sympathy for France, supported by the affection which she inspires throughout the monarchy, will prevent the recurrence at any future time of a state of war for which I myself must disclaim all responsibility. Therefore, and in order that I may express in words what I so strongly feel, I request that you will secretly and unofficially convey to M. Poincaré, the President of the French Republic, my assurance that I will use all my personal influence and every other means in my power to exact from my Allies a settlement of her just claims in Alsace-Lorraine.

As to Belgium, she must be restored in her entirety as a sovereign state, with the whole of her African possessions, and without prejudice to the compensations she may receive for the losses she has already suffered. Serbia, too, shall be restored as a sovereign state, and, as a mark of our goodwill towards her, we are prepared to allow her a just and natural approach to the Adriatic, as well as economic concessions on a liberal scale. In return, Austria-Hungary will insist, as a primordial and absolute condition, that the kingdom of Serbia abandon for the future all relations and suppress all groups or societies whose political object is the disintegration of the monarchy, and especially the society called "Narodna Obrana"; and that she take every means in her power loyally to prevent all forms of political agitation, whether within her borders or without, that may tend towards this object, giving us her assurance under a guarantee from the Entente Powers.

Recent events in Russia make it desirable that I should withhold my views with regard to her until such time as a reign of law and order is established there.

Now that I have shown you what I feel, I request that you in your turn, after consultation with France and England, will inform me of their views, so that we may prepare a common ground of mutual understanding on which official negotiations may be based, to the ultimate satisfaction of all parties. Trusting that we may soon be able to put an end to the sufferings of all the millions of men and all their families, who are now oppressed with sorrow and anxiety, I beg you to be assured of my most warm and brotherly affection.

The German chancellor (Bethmann-Hollweg) sought to avoid a rupture with Austria and the possibility of the conclusion of a separate peace by agreeing, on May 13, to a partial cession

THE POPE'S PROPOSALS

of Alsace-Lorraine to France, but he was opposed by the militarists and fell on July 13. An appeal for peace was presented by Prince Sixte in Paris and London in May, 1917; and another overture for peace was made at Fribourg on August 7, but the negotiations finally broke down over the issue of Trieste, which Austria was unwilling to cede to Italy, although she was prepared to agree to the transformation of Trieste into a free port.

On August 14, 1917, the Pope issued a peace proposal of which we quote the translation made by the state department at Washington. Addressing the rulers of the belligerent peoples, he said :

From the beginning of our pontificate, in the midst of the horrors of the awful war let loose on Europe, we have had of all things three in mind: To maintain perfect impartiality toward all the belligerents, as becomes him who is the common father and loves all his children with equal affection, continually to endeavour to do them all as much good as possible, without exception of person, without distinction of nationality or religion, as is dictated to us by the universal law of charity as well as by the supreme spiritual charge with which we have been entrusted by Christ; finally, as also required by our mission of peace, to omit nothing as far as it lay in our power, that could contribute to expedite the end of these calamities by endeavouring to bring the peoples and their rulers to more moderate resolutions, to the serene deliberation of peace, of a "just and lasting" peace. . . . No longer confining ourselves to general terms, as we were led to do by circumstances in the past, we will now come to more concrete and practical proposals and invite the governments of both belligerent peoples to arrive at an agreement on the following points, which seem to offer the base of a just and lasting peace, leaving it with them to make them more precise and complete.

First, the fundamental point must be that the material force of arms shall give way to the moral force of right, whence shall proceed a just agreement of all upon the simultaneous and reciprocal decrease of armaments, according to rules and guarantees to be established, in the necessary and sufficient measure for the maintenance of public order in every state; then, taking the place of arms, the institution of arbitration, with its high pacifying function, according to rules to be drawn in concert and under sanctions to be determined against any state which would decline either to refer international questions to arbitration or to accept its awards.

When supremacy of right is thus established, let every obstacle to ways of communication of the peoples be removed

ABORTIVE EFFORTS FOR PEACE

by ensuring, through rules to be also determined, the true freedom and community of the seas, which, on the one hand, would eliminate any causes of conflict, and, on the other hand, would open to all new sources of prosperity and progress.

As for the damages to be repaid and the cost of the war, we see no other way of solving the question than by setting up the general principle of entire and reciprocal conditions, which would be justified by the immense benefit to be derived from disarmament, all the more as we could not understand that such carnage could go on for mere economic reasons. If certain particular reasons stand against this in certain cases, let them be weighed in justice and equity.

But these specific agreements, with the immense advantages that flow from them, are not possible unless territory now occupied is reciprocally restored. Therefore, on the part of Germany, should be total evacuation of Belgium, with guarantees of its entire political, military, and economical independence toward any power whatever; evacuation also of the French territory; on the part of the other belligerents, a similar restitution of the German colonies.

As regards territorial questions—as, for instance, those that are disputed by Italy and Austria, by Germany and France—there is reason to hope that, in consideration of the immense advantages of durable peace with disarmament, the contending parties will examine them in a conciliatory spirit, taking into account, as far as is just and possible, as we have said formerly, the aspirations of the population, and, if occasion arises, adjusting private interests to the general good of the great human society.

The same spirit of equity and justice must guide the examination of the other territorial and political questions, notably those relative to Armenia, the Balkan States, and the territories forming part of the old kingdom of Poland, for which, in particular, its noble historical traditions and suffering, particularly undergone in the present war, must win, with justice, the sympathies of the nations.

These we believe are the main basis upon which must rest the future reorganization of the peoples. They are such as to make the recurrence of such conflicts impossible and open the way for the solution of the economic question, which is so important for the future and the material welfare of all the belligerent states. . . .

Given at the Vatican, August 1, 1917.

BENEDICTUS P. M. XV.

The proposal was received with more favour by the press of the Central Powers than by the Allied press. It was hailed

PRESIDENT WILSON'S REPLY

with satisfaction by the Catholic Centre Party, the leader of which, Herr Erzberger, had already put forward a similar plea for peace. The leaders of the Entente considered the document inadequate because it made no explicit condemnation of submarine warfare or of the invasion of Belgium. The Pope replied that his intention was to act as peacemaker, not as judge.

On August 27 President Wilson issued a reply to the Pope's proposal. The President's views evoked enthusiastic support from the Entente nations. In his statement he said:

His Holiness in substance proposes that we return to the status quo ante bellum, and that then there be a general condonation, disarmament, and a concert of nations based upon an acceptance of the principle of arbitration; that by a similar concert freedom of the seas be established; and that the territorial claims of France and Italy, the perplexing problems of the Balkan states, and the restitution of Poland be left to such conciliatory adjustments as may be possible in the new temper of such a peace, due regard being paid to the aspirations of the peoples whose political fortunes and affiliations will be involved.

It is manifest that no part of this programme can be successfully carried out unless the restitution of the status quo ante furnishes a firm and satisfactory basis for it. The object of this war is to deliver the free peoples of the world from the menace and the actual power of a vast military establishment controlled by an irresponsible government which, having secretly planned to dominate the world, proceeded to carry the plan out without regard either to the sacred obligations of treaty or the long-established practices and long-cherished principles of international action and honour; which chose its own time for the war; delivered its blow fiercely and suddenly; stopped at no barrier either of law or of mercy; swept a whole continent within the tide of blood—not the blood of soldiers only, but the blood of innocent women and children also and of the helpless poor; and now stands balked but not defeated, the enemy of four-fifths of the world. This power is not the German people. It is the ruthless master of the German people. It is no business of ours how that great people came under its control or submitted with temporary zest to the domination of its purpose; but it is our business to see to it that the history of the rest of the world is no longer left to its handling.

To deal with such a power by way of peace upon the plan proposed by his Holiness the Pope would, so far as we can see, involve a recuperation of its strength and a renewal of its policy; would make it necessary to create a permanent

ABORTIVE EFFORTS FOR PEACE

hostile combination of nations against the German people, who are its instruments; and would result in abandoning the new-born Russia to the intrigue, the manifold subtle interference, and the certain counter-revolution which would be attempted by all the malign influences to which the German Government has of late accustomed the world. Can peace be based upon a restitution of its power, or upon any word of honour it could pledge in a treaty of settlement and accommodation?

. . . The test of every plan of peace is this: Is it based upon the faith of all the peoples involved or merely upon the word of an ambitious and intriguing government on the one hand, and of a group of free peoples on the other? This is the test which goes to the root of the matter; and it is the test which must be applied. . . .

We cannot take the word of the present rulers of Germany as a guarantee of anything that is to endure, unless explicitly supported by such conclusive evidence of the will and purpose of the German people themselves as the other peoples of the world would be justified in accepting. Without such guarantees treaties of settlement, agreements for disarmament, covenants to set up arbitration in the place of force, territorial adjustments, reconstitutions of small nations, if made by the German Government, no man, no nation could now depend on. We must await some new evidence of the purposes of the great peoples of the Central Powers.

Reference has already been made to the existence of a peace party in Great Britain, and its ideas found expression in a letter written by Lord Lansdowne and published in the Daily Telegraph on November 29, 1917. Lord Lansdowne had, until the previous December, been a member of the Cabinet, and his long record of public service, coupled with his high character, gave unusual weight to his words. He had discussed the proposed letter with Mr. A. J. Balfour, then secretary of state for foreign affairs, but, as shown by correspondence which appeared in the Times in July, 1933, the responsibility for the letter was entirely his own, although a draft of it had been seen by Lord Hardinge, the permanent under-secretary at the Foreign Office.

Sir,—We are now in the fourth year of the most dreadful war the world has even known; a war in which, as Sir W. Robertson has lately informed us, "the killed alone can be counted by the million, while the total number of men engaged amounts to nearly 24 millions." Ministers continue to tell us that they scan the horizon in vain for the prospect of a lasting peace. And without a lasting peace we all feel that the task we have set ourselves will remain unaccomplished.

LORD LANSDOWNE'S LETTER

But those who look forward with horror to the prolongation of the war, who believe that its wanton prolongation would be a crime, differing only in degree from that of the criminals who provoked it, may be excused if they too scan the horizon anxiously in the hope of discovering there indications that the outlook may not after all be so hopeless as is supposed.

The obstacles are indeed formidable enough. We are constantly reminded of one of them. It is pointed out with force that, while we have not hesitated to put forward a general description of our war aims, the enemy have, though repeatedly challenged, refused to formulate theirs, and have limited themselves to vague and apparently insincere professions of readiness to negotiate with us. The force of the argument cannot be gainsaid, but it is directed mainly to show that we are still far from agreement as to the territorial questions which must come up for settlement in connection with the terms of peace. These are, however, by no means the only questions which will arise, and it is worth while to consider whether there are not others, also of first rate importance, with regard to which the prospects of agreement are less remote.

Let me examine one or two of these. What are we fighting for? To beat the Germans? Certainly. But that is not an end in itself. We want to inflict signal defeat upon these central powers, not out of mere vindictiveness, but in the hope of saving the world from a recurrence of the calamity which has befallen this generation. What, then, is it we want when the war is over? I know of no better formula than that more than once made use of, with universal approval, by Mr. Asquith in the speeches which he has from time to time delivered. He has repeatedly told his hearers that we are waging war in order to obtain reparation and security. Both are essential, but of the two security is perhaps the more indispensable. In the way of reparation much can no doubt be accomplished, but the utmost effort to make good all the ravages of this war must fall short of completeness, and will fail to undo the grievous wrong which has been done to humanity. It may, however, be possible to make some amends for the inevitable incompleteness of the reparation if the security afforded is, humanly speaking, complete. To end the war honourably would be a great achievement; to prevent the same curse falling upon our children would be a greater achievement still.

This is our avowed aim, and the magnitude of the issue cannot be exaggerated. Just as this war has been more dreadful than any war in history, so we may be sure would the next war be more dreadful than this. The prostitution of science for purposes of pure destruction is not likely to stop

ABORTIVE EFFORTS FOR PEACE

short. Most of us, however, believe that it should be possible to secure posterity against the repetition of such an outrage as that of 1914. If the powers will, under a solemn pact, bind themselves to submit future disputes to arbitration, if they will undertake to outlaw, politically and economically, any one of their number which refuses to enter into such a pact, or to use their joint military and naval forces for the purpose of coercing a power which breaks away from the rest, they will, indeed, have travelled far along the road which leads to security. We are, at any rate, right to put security in the front line of our peace demands and it is not unsatisfactory to note that in principle there seems to be complete unanimity upon this point.

In his speech at the banquet of the League to Enforce Peace, on May 28, 1916, President Wilson spoke strongly in favour of "A universal association of nations . . . to prevent any war from being begun either contrary to treaty covenants or without warning and full submission of the cause to the opinion of the world."

Later in the same year the German chancellor, at the sitting of the main committee of the Reichstag used the following language: "When, as after the termination of the war, the world will fully realize its horrible devastation of blood and treasure, then through all mankind will go the cry for peaceful agreements and understandings which will prevent, so far as is humanly possible, the return of such an immense catastrophe. This crime will be so strong and so justified that it must lead to a result. Germany will honourably co-operate in investigating every attempt to find a practical solution and collaborate towards its possible realization."

The papal note communicated to the Powers in August last places in the front rank: "The establishment of arbitration on lines to be concerted and with the sanction to be settled against any State that refuses either to submit international disputes to arbitration or to accept its awards."

This suggestion was immediately welcomed by the Austrian Government, which declared that it was conscious of the importance for the promotion of peace of the method proposed by His Holiness, viz., "to submit international disputes to compulsory arbitration," and that it was prepared to enter into negotiations regarding this proposal. Similar language was used by Count Czernin, the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, in his declaration on foreign policy made at Budapest in October, when he mentioned as one of the "fundamental bases" of peace that of "obligatory international arbitration." In his despatch covering the Allied Note of January 10, 1917, Mr. Balfour mentions as one of the three conditions essential to a durable peace the condition that:

LORD LANSDOWNE'S LETTER

"Behind international law and behind all treaty arrangements for preventing or limiting hostilities some form of international sanction might be devised which would give pause to the hardest aggressor."

Such sanction would probably take the form of coercion applied in one of two modes. The "aggressor" would be disciplined either by the pressure of naval and military strength, or by the denial of commercial access and facilities.

The proceedings of the Paris Conference show that we should not shrink from such a denial, if we were compelled to use the weapon for purposes of self-defence. But while a commercial "boycott" would be justifiable as a war measure, and while the threat of a "boycott" in case Germany should show herself utterly unreasonable, would be a legitimate threat, no reasonable man would, surely, desire to destroy the trade of the Central Powers, if they will, so to speak, enter into recognizances to keep the peace, and do not force us into a conflict by a hostile combination. Commercial war is less ghastly in its immediate results than the war of armed forces, but it would certainly be deplorable if after three or four years of sanguinary conflict in the field, a conflict which has destroyed a great part of the wealth of the world, and permanently crippled its resources, the powers were to embark upon commercial hostilities certain to retard the recovery of all the nations involved.

That we shall have to secure ourselves against the fiscal hostility of others, that we shall have to prevent the recurrence of the conditions under which, when the war broke out, we found ourselves short of essential commodities, because we had allowed certain industries, and certain sources of supply, to pass entirely under the control of our enemies, no one will doubt, subject however to this reservation, that it will surely be for our interest that the stream of trade should, so far as our own fiscal interests permit, be allowed to flow strong and uninterrupted in its natural channels.

There remains the question of territorial claims. The most authoritative statement of these is to be found in the Allies' Note of January 10, 1917. This statement must obviously be regarded as a broad outline of the desiderata of the Allies, but is anyone prepared to argue that the sketch is complete, or that it may not become necessary to re-examine it? Mr. Asquith, speaking at Liverpool in October last, used the following language: "No one pretends that it would be right or opportune for either side to formulate an ultimatum, detailed, exhaustive, precise, with clauses and sub-clauses, which is to be accepted verbatim et literatim, chapter and verse, as the indispensable preliminary and condition of peace."

"There are many things," he added, "in a world wide conflict such as this, which must of necessity be left over for dis-

ABORTIVE EFFORTS FOR PEACE

cussion and negotiation, for accommodation and adjustment, at a later stage."

It is surely most important that this wise counsel should be kept in mind. Some of our original desiderata have probably become unattainable. Others would probably now be given a less prominent place than when they were first put forward. Others again, notably the reparation due to Belgium, remain, and must always remain in the front rank, but when it comes to the wholesale rearrangement of the map of South-Eastern Europe we may well ask for a suspension of judgment and for the elucidation which a frank exchange of views between the Allied Powers can alone afford.

For all these questions concern our Allies as well as ourselves, and if we are to have an Allied Council for the purpose of adapting our strategy in the field to the ever shifting developments of the war it is fair to assume that, in the matter of peace terms also, the Allies will make it their business to examine, and if necessary to revise, the territorial requirements.

Let me end by explaining why I attach so much importance to these considerations. We are not going to lose this war, but its prolongation will spell ruin to the civilized world, and an infinite addition to the load of human suffering which already weighs upon it. Security will be invaluable to a world that has the vitality to profit by it, but what will be the value of the blessings of peace to nations so exhausted that they can scarcely stretch out a hand with which to grasp them? In my belief, if the war is to be brought to a close in time to avert a world wide catastrophe it will be brought to a close because on both sides the peoples of the countries involved realize that it has already lasted too long.

There can be no question that this feeling prevails extensively in Germany, Austria and Turkey. We know beyond doubt that the economic pressure in those countries far exceeds any to which we are subject here. Ministers inform us in their speeches of "constant efforts" on the part of the Central Powers "to initiate peace talk." (Sir E. Geddes at the Mansion House, Nov. 9.)

If the peace talk is not more articulate, and has not been so precise as to enable His Majesty's Government to treat it seriously, the explanation is probably to be found in the fact, first, that German despotism does not tolerate independent expressions of opinion, and second, that the German Government has contrived, probably with success, to misrepresent the aims of the Allies, which were supposed to include the destruction of Germany, the imposition upon her of a form of government decided by her enemies, her destruction as a great commercial community, and her exclusion from the free use of the seas.

MR. BONAR LAW'S REPLY

An immense stimulus would probably be given to the peace party in Germany if it were understood: (1) That we do not desire the annihilation of Germany as a Great Power; (2) That we do not seek to impose upon her people any form of government other than that of their own choice; (3) That, except as a legitimate war measure, we have no desire to deny to Germany her place among the great commercial communities of the world; (4) That we are prepared, when the war is over, to examine in concert with other powers the group of international problems, some of them of recent origin, which are connected with the question of "the freedom of the seas"; (5) That we are prepared to enter into an international pact under which ample opportunities would be afforded for the settlement of international disputes by peaceful means.

I am under the impression that authority could be found for most of these propositions in Ministerial speeches. Since the above lines were written, (1), (2) and (3) have been dealt with by our own Foreign Minister at the public meeting held in honour of M. Venizelos at the Mansion House. The question of "the freedom of the seas" was amongst those raised at the outset by our American Allies. The formula is an ambiguous one, capable of many inconsistent interpretations, and I doubt whether it will be seriously contended that there is no room for profitable discussion. That an attempt should be made to bring about the kind of pact suggested in (5) is, I believe, common ground to all the belligerents, and probably to all the neutral Powers.

If it be once established that there are no insurmountable difficulties in the way of agreement upon these points, the political horizon might perhaps be scanned with better hope by those who pray, but can at this moment hardly venture to expect, that the new year may bring us a lasting and honourable peace.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer in Mr. Lloyd George's Government, Mr. Bonar Law, voiced the general sentiment of his countrymen when he said, with reference to Lord Lansdowne's letter, in a speech before the National Unionist Association:

I disagree absolutely, not only with the arguments, but with the whole tone of his letter. I think it nothing less than a national misfortune that it should have been published, now of all times. It is not that we do not want peace. . . . What did we enter upon the war for? We entered upon it really—Lord Lansdowne is right about that—with this object above all others, to get peace now, but to have security for peace in time to come. How can you get that by a peace now?

CHAPTER 16

The Rise of Bolshevism

IN May, 1917, the conflict between the extremist and moderate parties in Russia became acute. It was a struggle for power between Lenin, the leader of the extremists, who had been allowed to return to Russia, and Kerensky, the young lawyer who led the moderates. The Soviets, under the sway of extremists and misled by German propaganda, showed distinct hostility to the allies, and the elaborate plans which the allied war council had prepared in November, 1916, for a great general offensive could not be executed.

Kerensky, the minister of war, made some half-hearted efforts to re-establish order in the army. But when he instituted penalties for desertion and dereliction of duty, he was denounced by Lenin and ill-supported by his own followers. None the less, in mid-June the Russian staff decided to attempt a great offensive in order to keep faith with the allies, and Kerensky left for the front to address the troops. The original intention had been to attack all along the front, but the troops in some of the army groups were too demoralised for anything to be expected from them. It was therefore determined to open the offensive in Galicia by a great movement of the south-western army group threatening Lemberg, and then to attack in the Russian centre opposite Vilna, while finally the Rumanian army was to strike in.

The condition of the Russian armies in Galicia was rather better than on other portions of the front. There were three concerned in the intending operations, which were to be carried out by General Gutor, under the supreme command of General Brusiloff—namely, the 11th under General Erdeli, north-west of Tarnopol, the 7th under General Belkovitch, south-west of Tarnopol; and the 8th under General Korniloff, before Stanislaw. The 2nd army was to cover the left flank of the 8th in the direction of Kolomea and Nadworna. Owing to delay in the transport of artillery and munitions, the three armies which were to deliver the main blow could not act simultaneously. On June 29 the artillery preparation opened on a front of about

GALICIAN OFFENSIVE RESUMED

thirty miles from Busk to Koniuchy. The country was intersected by numerous parallel streams, flowing generally in deep ravines, with wooded banks and strongly fortified forests. The troops opposed to General Gutor's attack were mainly Austro-Hungarians and Turks, but included five German divisions.

The German trenches were reduced to a series of shell-craters, and on July 1 the Russian infantrymen assaulted. Up to the last minute it was uncertain whether they would advance, and, in fact, 140,000 men refused to take part in the fighting. South of Zboroff the Russians fought their way into the village of Koniuchy, pushing before them Saxon, Rhenish, and Turkish troops. They took three lines of trenches and advanced well beyond the village, but then found themselves confronted by the strong German positions east of the Zlota Lipa. South of Koniuchy, at the junction of Brzezany, the Germans generally held their own.

On July 2, after a violent bombardment of the German positions near Zboroff, the 4th Finnish division and a Czechoslovakian brigade, recruited from Austrian prisoners, assaulted with spirit, to widen the gap made on the previous day and turn Brzezany. The German entrenchments were carried—three lines in succession—and 6,300 prisoners and twenty-one guns were captured. The same day further attacks were made at Brzezany itself, but the moral of the Russian troops proved unequal to the strain. The Guards refused to obey orders, and other units declined to remain longer than a day in the advanced line or to act on the offensive. M. Kerensky had made strenuous endeavours to induce the regiments to attack the enemy, and he addressed the recreants, but without much effect. Thus several days were lost, and the Germans were able to bring up reinforcements.

On July 6 the effort to turn Brzezany was resumed by attacking near Zloczow, a small place on the railway from Tarnopol to Lemberg. The assault took place in the early morning after a violent bombardment; three lines of trenches were stormed, but then the Germans hurried up reserves and flung the Russians back. About Koniuchy there was also furious fighting and the Russians made some small gains. On July 8 General Korniloff assaulted the German positions west and south-west of Stanislaw, and about noon fought his way through the outer German position, taking Jezupol, and pursuing the Germans for

THE RISE OF BOLSHEVISM

eight miles to the little River Lukwa. On the 9th the 8th army continued its onslaught, but met with an increasing degree of resistance as Halicz was approached.

The Austro-Germans were gradually forced back in a series of street fights through the villages, so that at nightfall the Russians had penetrated into the hostile position to a maximum depth of seven miles and had taken 1,000 prisoners. On the 10th they entered Halicz, capturing 2,000 prisoners and thirty guns, with immense quantities of munitions and stores, and they crossed the Dniester. On the 11th the Russians carried Kalusz after a stubborn engagement, but there the moral of the troops finally gave way. They pillaged the town, drank all the liquor they could obtain, and rioted madly. The German line had been pressed back and a dangerous angle in it created near Brzezany, while the Russians had turned the difficult country north of Halicz.

On July 18 a German demonstration was made on the line between Tarnopol and Busk, which runs through a rich corn-growing country. The intention was to divert reinforcements from Halicz and Kalusz, which were being attacked. Tarnopol was the point on which the railway system of Eastern Galicia centred, and from it the Russians drew their munitions and food. The Russians at first resisted well, but then the reserves discussed whether they should go forward, and finally decided to disobey orders. The men at the front, being badly supported, gave way. This left a gap in the Russian line. Next, the 6th Grenadier division deserted en masse, and fled or surrendered.

The greater part of the 11th Russian army was now in flight, racing for Tarnopol before a moderate German force. The German entry into Tarnopol was only resisted by Cossacks. On July 24 the Kaiser, the Austrian Emperor, and Field-Marshal Mackensen entered Tarnopol. Stanislau had to be abandoned on July 25, and Kolomea a day or two later. Most of the Russian material was withdrawn, except near Tarnopol, where the Germans captured a great deal of booty. Thousands of men gave themselves up. By the 30th, however, the rout had been stayed as the result of General Korniloff's vigorous measures; and had he been energetically supported, discipline might have been restored and Russia saved. On August 3 the Germans re-entered Czernovitz. All Galicia, except a narrow strip along the frontier near Brody, and all the Bukovina, had been re-

KERENSKY AS PREMIER

conquered after a campaign of a fortnight, in which 22,000 Russians had surrendered and 200 Russian guns had been taken, with but little fighting. Then General Brusiloff resigned and General Korniloff was appointed commander-in-chief.

The government at Petrograd, in the meanwhile, had been fighting for its life. Lenin's followers, the Bolsheviks as they were now called, had planned an attack on the city, and carried it out in the midst of a political crisis. On July 15 all the Conservative ministers had resigned, dissatisfied with Kerensky because he had too hastily granted self-government to the Ukraine—the vast corn-growing area in Southern Russia between Moscow and the Black Sea. On July 16 disturbances began. The Bolsheviks ranged the city in motor-cars with machine-guns. But the ships of the Baltic fleet, which were to have arrived to aid them, were delayed. On the 17th three or four thousand armed seamen and workmen arrived from Cronstadt in steamers and tugs, but they came too late to strike the intended blow, and found that the Cossacks had been reinforced with troops loyal to the Kerensky government.

On July 20, after tedious negotiations, Kerensky succeeded Prince Lvoff as prime minister with promises of support from all parties. He retained the office of minister of war and of the Navy. He dissolved the Finnish Diet, sent Cossacks to Helsingfors, where there had been serious rioting, and attempted to bridle the Rada, or Council, of the Ukraine, which was demanding virtual independence. He arrested General Gourko and a number of other officers on the pretext that they were engaged in a reactionary conspiracy, but General Gourko escaped. He sent the Tsar to Tobolsk, but there the hapless monarch's life was probably safer than it was near Petrograd, and the peasants showed singular respect to him when the train passed. Kerensky also supported the Soviet's demand for a socialist conference at Stockholm to make peace, and gave General Korniloff inadequate backing in his two main demands—for the restoration of the death penalty in the army at the rear as well as at the front, and for the abolition of the soldiers' committees.

Though after the collapse in Galicia eighty German and forty Austrian, Bulgarian, and Turkish divisions still remained on the eastern front, these troops were composed of older men and partially trained units. The Russian army had never been better supplied with munitions than it was at this moment.

THE RISE OF BOLSHEVISM

But it lacked discipline, and railway communications were seriously interfered with by the revolutionaries. There was still hope, however, that firm government and the restoration of discipline might follow the National Conference that opened at Moscow on August 25. It was greeted by a general strike of trade unions at Moscow. General Korniloff had a narrow escape on his journey to it, as the Bolsheviks attempted to wreck his train. At the conference he called for three fundamental reforms without which the war could not be prosecuted; restoration of discipline, restriction of the regimental committees, and increased pay for the officers.

The conference brought no result, and Korniloff left Moscow. The blow he had anticipated near Riga fell at once. The Germans had long been preparing a move there. Their light craft had reconnoitred the coast at the mouth of the Gulf of Riga, while their aircraft were almost daily over the islands. Late in August General von Below began to move along the coast towards Riga and the mouth of the Aa. A Siberian brigade treacherously opened the door for him. On September 1, after a violent bombardment, the Germans crossed the Dwina at Uxkull, eighteen miles above Riga. The Russians retired on September 3, blowing up the forts and bridge; and Riga, the second port in the Russian Empire, was in German hands. The Kaiser made a state entry and reviewed his victorious troops, congratulating Prince Leopold of Bavaria and the 8th German army on their success.

On September 9 a proclamation was published charging General Korniloff with betraying his country and the revolution, ordering his arrest, and imposing martial law on the Petrograd district. General Korniloff concluded that he had either been betrayed by Kerensky or that Kerensky had been overpowered by the Bolsheviks. He marched on Petrograd, invited the ministers to join him, and gave his word that their safety should be assured. General Kaledin, at the same time, moved against the extreme revolutionists in Southern Russia, though his arrest had been ordered by the Rostoff Soviet. A number of Cossacks left the front to join him.

If General Kaledin had intended to support General Korniloff he had no opportunity of giving help, though he seized certain of the southern railways and defied the local Soviets with impunity. The march of the Korniloff troops on Petrograd

A GERMAN FLEET APPEARS

swiftly collapsed ; and on September 13 General Krymoff, who commanded them, ordered his men to lay down their arms, and himself proceeded to Petrograd. After an interview with Kerensky, in which he accused the Prime Minister of betraying General Korniloff and Russia, he went to his home and shot himself. Petrograd was mournfully indifferent. General Korniloff was placed under arrest. The government now proclaimed Russia a republic, and on September 15 announced that supreme power had been placed in the hands of a council of five, one of whom was Kerensky. At the same time the Bolsheviks elected Trotsky president of the Petrograd Soviet.

Suddenly, on October 12, eight German Dreadnoughts, forty destroyers, and thirty mine-sweepers and small craft appeared off the Island of Oesel, at the mouth of the Gulf of Riga. The resistance offered was pitiful. An appeal by Kerensky to the Russian Baltic fleet met with no response. On the 13th the Germans attacked the Russian works on the Isle of Dago. A weak Russian detachment—the only ships that could be induced to fight—was caught in Moon Sound and the old battleship *Slava* was sunk, though most of her crew were saved. With her the destroyer leader, *Gromky*, was sent to the bottom. By October 14 the islands were in German hands.

Another conference, the council of the republic, met at Petrograd on October 20. The Bolsheviks dominated it. Kerensky's fall was now imminent. The moderates no longer trusted him because of his half-measures. The Cossacks and officers had not pardoned his treatment of General Korniloff. On November 6 he appealed to the council of the republic for support in putting down disturbances. More than half the members stayed away, and from those who attended he did not obtain the free hand which he desired. Next morning he left Petrograd, stealing off in a car lent by a member of the U.S.A. embassy.

All was now ready for the last scene. To the revolutionists of the congress of Russian Soviets in session at the Smolny Institute appeared Lenin, accompanied by Zinovieff. Trotsky presided over the Soviets, which elected as the officials of the assembly fourteen Bolsheviks and seven less violent revolutionists. Two demands were made for the peaceful surrender of the Winter Palace, which the extremists desired to capture intact. At 2 a.m. on the 8th the palace was surrendered through

THE RISE OF BOLSHEVISM

want of food and ammunition. Thus Lenin gained the upper hand. On November 9 his government was confirmed in office by the congress of Soviets.

At Moscow the Bolsheviks had triumphed as completely as at Petrograd. They attempted to dissolve the City Council, and they seized the Kremlin on November 10, killing thirty cadets who formed its garrison. A stronger force of moderates was brought up, and the Kremlin was retaken and held, together with the centre of the city, by 3,000 cadets and students in the moderate interest. The Bolsheviks did not hesitate to attack. Two 9 in. guns and two batteries of artillery bombarded the centre of the city from various vantage points. The moderates were gradually forced back into the Kremlin. On November 17 a truce was arranged, and the last moderate strongholds in Moscow were surrendered.

Kerensky had hoped to be able to suppress the rising with the aid of the Cossacks and other troops, but these made terms with the extremists and Kerensky was obliged to flee.

Lenin and his party were now supreme in the two Russian capitals and over a considerable area of Northern and Central Russia. Elsewhere their authority was precarious. In Finland, which was attempting to assert its independence, a moderate majority was returned in the Diet. Thereupon the extremists, on November 14, began a general strike, and, aided by the Russian extremists, fell upon the moderates. Houses were plundered, men of substance were robbed, cash in the banks was seized, bands of marauders ranged the country. The railways ceased working, and there was no food.

In the midst of all this misery Finland proclaimed its independence, and appealed to the allies to send it supplies. In the Ukraine a confused struggle began between the moderates and Bolsheviks. This civil war was complicated by the interference of the Bolshevik "Red Guards" on the one hand, and of the Cossacks on the other, and by the occasional interposition of the Black Sea fleet. In the spasmodic fighting many estates were devastated, and thousands of people were slaughtered. In south-eastern Russia General Kaledin convened a Cossack congress at Novtcherkask, and beset Rostoff. A moderate force under General Alexeieff marched troops into the Donetz valley and threatened Kharkoff. Many officers joined Alexeieff, but he was too weak to do more than hold the Bolsheviks in un-

LENIN'S DIFFICULTIES

certain check. In the Transcaspian territories civil war blazed out afresh especially around Tashkend, where the Bolsheviks were in considerable force.

Some of the Bolshevik ministers showed alarm in face of the growing demoralisation. Eleven of them resigned, but this did not seriously affect Lenin's power. His programme was as popular as ever in Petrograd—if not outside it. Yet his difficulties grew fast. He had now to fulfil his promise to secure peace, which was passionately desired by Bolsheviks, soldiers, workers, and peasants alike. On the night of November 20 the Bolsheviks issued peremptory orders to General Dukhonin, the Russian commander-in-chief, directing him immediately to offer an armistice to all the nations, hostile and allied. Dukhonin, a courageous and patriotic officer, asked for explanations. He wanted to know what was to happen to the Rumanians, and he inquired whether he was to negotiate with the Germans only or with the Turks as well. The only answer was a more imperious order from Lenin to act at once. Dukhonin declined to obey, for a very practical reason—that successful negotiations for a peace could only be carried out by the government.

Lenin promptly appointed Ensign Krylenko to replace Dukhonin as commander-in-chief. Krylenko, as Lenin's deputy, had been in charge of the ministry of war. He instructed the soldiers themselves, unit by unit, to open peace negotiations with the German units confronting them, and to arrest and guard any counter-revolutionary generals. The pressure for peace was increased by the growing want. Though £50,000,000, since the rising in November, had been allotted to the purchase of supplies, much of it had been embezzled, and the food sent by railway was constantly looted.

The Bolshevik diplomacy assumed an air of growing hostility to Great Britain. Trotsky, in a note issued on November 20, called on the Allies to make peace, with the threat that if they had not done so on November 23, Russia would hold herself free to act alone. He threatened to repudiate all foreign debts.

General Dukhonin held stubbornly aloof from any peace negotiations, but representatives of the 5th Russian army, in the face of protests from the allied military mission at the Russian headquarters, on November 28 crossed the front and

THE RISE OF BOLSHEVISM

conferred with the German staff. The chief Russian representative was Lieutenant Schneur, an officer of German descent.

The Moscow city council and the Cossacks protested against this method of making peace. It was of no avail. The Germans were only too well pleased to split up Russia, and they received the overtures favourably. On December 1 a cessation of hostilities was arranged on the northern and Galician fronts, to take effect from 10 p.m. of the following day, and on December 21 the Leninite peace delegates arrived. They were ten in number—six members of the Petrograd Soviet, a workman, a soldier, a seaman, and a clerk.

On December 5 the armistice conference at Brest-Litovsk began, in the presence of German, Austrian, Turkish, and Bulgarian representatives. The Germans agreed to an armistice till December 17. They met every request for terms with the remark that they preferred to go on fighting rather than fetter themselves. As a result the Rumanians also had to ask for an armistice, or their army would have been immediately overwhelmed. The Bolsheviks began to discover that Germany did not intend to give them the reasonable peace which they had so often promised. The populace and the peasants, however, cared only for one thing—the end of the war; and any blame for the conditions could always be laid upon the stubbornness of the allies. Trotsky and Lenin had no choice.

During the negotiations the elections in Russia for the constituent assembly had concluded. The Bolsheviks terrorised voters, and announced that any result other than a Bolshevik majority would be regarded as a "falsification of public opinion," and that fresh elections would take place wherever Bolshevik voters had any reason to complain of the result.

Decrees were issued in rapid succession. Religious marriages were swept away, divorce was facilitated; at funerals no religious services might be used; the Church treasures and estates were confiscated; law courts and legal officials were abolished; the populace was to decide everything at special tribunals by votes; landed property was no longer to exist; balances in the banks and in safes were seized; houses, buildings, land, and cattle became the property of the State; Russia was to be dissolved into a number of communities under a central authority.

The machinery for carrying out these decrees, however, did not exist. The officials in government departments remained

PEACE NEGOTIATIONS

on strike. When coercion was applied to them they did as little as they possibly could, though the Bolsheviks arrested everyone who questioned their decrees, and inflicted upon offenders savage punishments. In the midst of all this confusion and tyranny the supply of food steadily declined and the efficiency of the railways daily diminished.

While the Bolsheviks negotiated peace with the Germans they waged war on General Kaledin and his confederates, General Dutoff at Orenburg, and Generals Alexieff and Korniloff in the Donetz valley. General Kaledin attempted to seize the great railways; but his strength in men and material was insufficient for so important an enterprise. Moreover, the railwaymen's union refused to move his men by train; while the Ukraine government was too feeble to give him effective aid or was secretly hostile.

The largest estimate of General Kaledin's forces did not put them at more than sixteen Cossack regiments with twelve batteries, against which there were hordes of Bolshevik troops fighting to be rid of the war. The "Red Guards" were merciless. Everything in Russia seemed to conspire to help the Bolshevik cause. It was a sign of the extraordinary revolution through which the world was passing when Chinese troops had to be summoned to Harbin, in Manchuria, to maintain order there and when appeals were made to Japan for the landing of a military force at Vladivostok to put down riots.

Meanwhile the Bolsheviks maintained silence as to the course of their peace negotiations, but the Germans announced that on December 15 an armistice agreement was signed at Brest Litovsk which was to last twenty-eight days in any case, and to continue indefinitely if no notice of its termination was given. Later the Germans refused to accept a Russian proposal that "national groups which before the war were not politically independent shall be guaranteed the possibility of deciding by referendum the question of belonging to one State or another or enjoying their independence." Trotsky denounced what he described as "Germany's hypocritical peace proposal," and talked of resistance. But, as he well knew that the Russian army was in no state to offer it, this was mere wind. Simultaneously, faithful to the plan of playing off one State against another, the Germans recognised the Ukraine and began peace negotiations with a mission from its government.

CHAPTER 17

Caporetto

ON the Italian front nothing of importance occurred between November 2, 1916, and the middle of May, 1917. Snow and ice, low-hanging mist, and frequent storms imposed an involuntary armistice upon the armies arrayed along the mountain front of 470 miles between Switzerland and the Adriatic Sea; but behind the lines preparations for a renewal of fighting were being made with feverish haste.

During the summer the internal condition of the country was far from satisfactory. In some of the great centres, especially Turin, a certain amount of open sympathy was expressed with the new movement in Russia, and delegates from the soviet were received as brothers. In August there were serious riots, due ostensibly to a scarcity of bread, and Turin was placed within the war zone in order that martial law might be enforced in case of need. Even the army was not immune from this feeling, and it became necessary to move certain regiments from one part of the front to another. It was freely believed that the movement was financed with money supplied by Germany, and that agents of the enemy were active in fomenting it.

To return to the battle area, Italy was suffering from a lack of adequate communications. Such strategic railways as she possessed had been built with a view to war, not with Austria but with France. To overcome this difficulty military roads were made, and wireways—containers travelling on wires slung on supports from point to point across chasms and valleys—were used for communications where the lie of the land made the construction of roads impossible. During the long winter, happily, General Cadorna and his staff were released from immediate anxiety. Clearly, however, they could foresee that all the mass of manœuvre that Ludendorff could spare from the eastern front would eventually be hurled against them. So before the Russian revolution occurred, the Italian Government endeavoured



BACK FROM HILL 70. The illustration shows Canadian Highlanders headed by their pipers returning after the victory of August 15, 1917. The famous Hill 70 overlooking Loos, was a main objective in the battle of that name, but was not finally taken till two years later.



PONDEROUS INSTRUMENT OF DESTRUCTION. This is an epitome of the tactics that re-very end of 1917. A Royal Marine Artillery tractor is hauling the 15-ton barrel of a 7.5-in. long Swiftsure up to the forward area in July, in preparation for the 3rd battle of Ypres, which prov- the old tactical era.

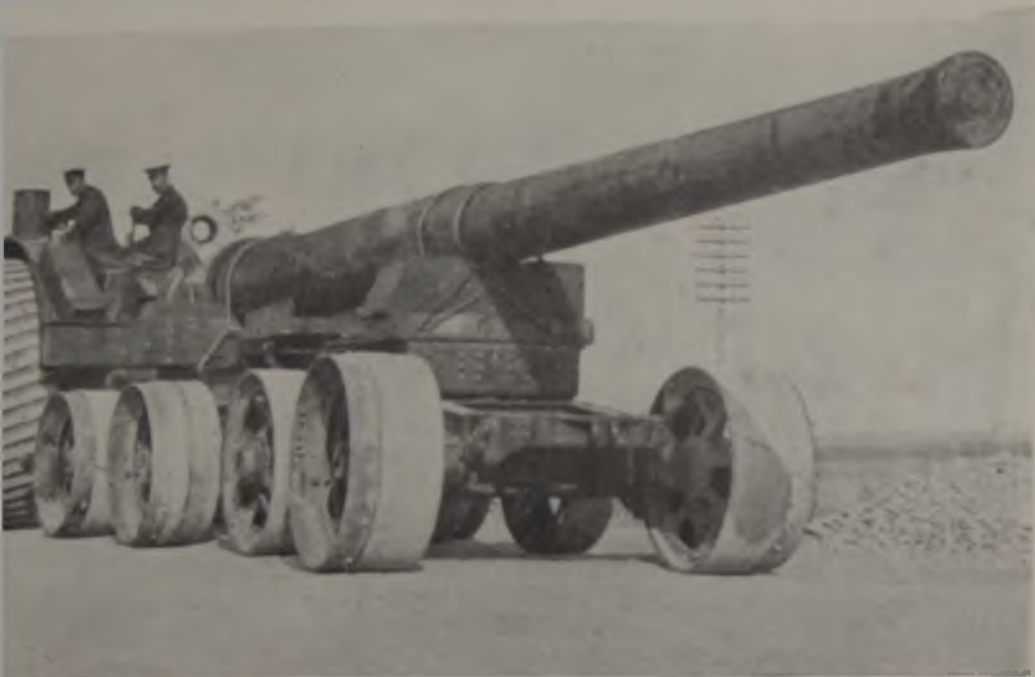
Volume IV

Volume IV



LONDON OMNIBUSES PLAY THEIR PART. The Great War showed that to make was difficult in face of the destructiveness of modern artillery. From 1915 until the position was one of s

Impe



Imperial War Museum

MENT OF DESTRUCTION. This is an epitome of the tactics that reigned supreme up to the end of the Great War. The Royal Marine Artillery tractor is hauling the 15-ton barrel of a 7.5-in. long-range gun from H.M.S. *Terrible* in July, in preparation for the 3rd battle of Ypres, which proved the last big battle of the old tactical era.



Imperial War Museum

BUSES PLAY THEIR PART. The Great War showed that to make an army mobile and to make the most of the destructiveness of modern artillery. From 1915 until the extensive use of tanks, the army was entrenched and the position was one of stalemate. Here



ALONG THE DEVASTATED CHEMIN DES DAMES. This illustration of the "The Ladies' Way" and surrounding district in the department of Aisne, France, gives a vivid idea of the effect of the terrific bombardment and fighting for its possession. On April 19, 1917, the French drove the Germans from the centre and by November they had complete possession of the Chemin des Dames.

AN ALLIED CONFERENCE

to convince the British and French Governments that the salvation of Italy had become the main problem of the Allies. There was first an allied conference on the matter on January 6, 1917, at which Mr. Lloyd George and M. Briand were present. Then, in March, 1917, Signor Boselli, the Italian premier, travelled to Paris and London to advocate the adoption of General Cadorna's scheme for anticipating the Austro-German offensive by means of an Italian-Franco-British offensive directed across the mountain line of the Isonzo towards Laibach. When the military results of the Russian revolution became obvious, the Italian staff and cabinet again renewed, with more urgency, their appeal for large and immediate help. In France General Foch became convinced of the reality of the Italian peril; in Great Britain Mr. Lloyd George also inclined to the views of the Italian commanders and statesmen.

For technical reasons the proposed Laibach campaign was adversely criticised by leading French and British military authorities. The great lengthening of railway communications along the inadequate tracks that crossed the Alpine system between France and Italy formed the immediate ground for the rejection of the scheme. Having been hostile to each other for more than a generation, and divided by military alliances and colonial ambitions, Italy and France had left their railway communications in somewhat the same condition as were the Russian and Rumanian railways. Moreover, the extreme wear on locomotives and rolling stock during the war had diminished all transport facilities in both countries, and the enormous success attained by the intensified submarine campaign against shipping in the spring of 1917 tragically increased the difficulties of moving French and British armies to the Isonzo line and keeping them well supplied with munitions, food, and drafts.

General Nivelle was then practically commander-in-chief of both the French and British armies on the western front. He was able to overrule Sir Douglas Haig's plan for a Flemish campaign, and, being confident of the success of his own scheme for completely piercing the German lines, he decided that he could best help Italy by speeding up his own preparations. He could not even wait until the snow melted in the Alps and so allow the Italian armies to co-operate in the great western offensive movement. He delivered his attack nearly a month before the date when mountain warfare could be resumed in Northern Italy.

CAPORETTO

The campaign in its larger aim, and the position of Italy became, in the view of Cadorna and his staff, almost desperate. They had to attack in order to help two of their principal allies—France and Russia—at an anxious time when they were themselves in need of assistance of every kind. Only by a few days did they forestall a great Austro-Hungarian offensive on the Isonzo front.

In the second week in May the Italian batteries below the Julian Alps and along the lower Isonzo opened a furious bombardment of the Austrian positions. The Italian gunners were assisted by British and French artillery and by British monitors in the northern Adriatic. These reinforcements, however, did not bring the armament at the disposal of General Cadorna to a mass commensurate with his available man-power.

On May 14 the infantry of the 2nd corps, under Major-General Badoglio, forced a number of passages over the Isonzo by Zagara and began a drive across the northern mountain rampart above Gorizia. The knife crest of the mighty mass of Cuk and the high saddle of Vodice, connecting Cuk mountain with the Santo height, were the principal objectives of the Italian 2nd army. Quickly the Florence and Avellino brigades worked over the lower slopes of the Alpine wall, blasting away the Austrian works with heavy trench-mortar bombs. South of Vodice saddle another brigade of the 6th corps carried the steep face of Monte Santo. But as the victorious column reached the summit it was enveloped and crushed by a fierce counter-attack. The enemy commander had in reserve several divisions from the Galician front, and with these he made a tremendous counter-offensive.

During the next eight days the Austrian commander, General Lukas, continued his violent counter-assaults against his lost mountain line above Gorizia, while General Capello and General Badoglio in turn launched fresh attacks between Cuk and San Gabriele mountains. The Italians made little farther progress but held their ground and increased their grip upon the Vodice saddle. There was no reason for them to attempt another leap forward. Not only did they require considerable time to bring their guns forward, but their entire operation had been in the nature of a partial feint. It was to the Italian 3rd army, under the Duke of Aosta, that the main attack had been entrusted, and the 2nd army, under General Capello, was only

AN AUSTRIAN GIBRALTAR

clearing the way for the principal action by diverting large enemy forces to the northern sectors.

On May 23 General Cadorna achieved the surprise he had been patiently engineering. For lack of artillery he could not make a simultaneous movement north and south of Gorizia, as British or French commanders with their superior armament would have done. He had to make a demonstration offensive northward, and then haul his batteries in another direction for the grand battle, before the enemy also shifted his guns. By a comparatively short bombardment the Italian commander wrecked some of the enemy's positions of importance upon the stony, waterless Carso tableland between Gorizia and the Adriatic shore. British monitors destroyed the railway communications with Trieste, smashing up a troop train, wrecking the track, breaking down a viaduct, and exploding a large ammunition magazine a few miles north-west of the Adriatic seaport. The land artillery, helped by a fine trench-mortar corps, blasted away part of the quarried rock works and the cemented defences from the height of San Marco by Gorizia to the estuary positions of San Giovanni by the seashore.

In the infantry attack that followed, the 3rd army of Italy broke clean through the enemy's main line of subterranean rock shelters, achieving as difficult a victory as that which Australian and British soldiers won more gradually above the Hindenburg tunnel in the west. In ordinary land conditions a complete break-through might have been effected, but on the waterless, rough wilderness of the Carso the task of bringing forward guns, ammunition, and water checked the movement of the victorious infantry. Yet by May 25 the Italians carried the vital Flondar line, broke all the series of fortifications between the Brestovizza valley and the sea, and reached the Gibraltar of the Trieste positions—the Hermada mountain.

This rose 1,000 feet above the sea, with its five hundred guns screened by a large wood that clung to the slopes. The Italian soldiers worked through the trees to the Medeazza Terrace, about half way up the western incline. Then, by the edge of the sea, they crossed the curious subterranean stream of the Timavo, and approached from San Giovanni, the naval fortress of Duino. They were within gunshot of Trieste.

Cadorna, however, regarded it as unwise to make an immediate assault upon the honeycombed rock of the Hermada, which had

CAPORETTO

cross-firing connections with the Brestovizza position northward and the Duino fortification southward. The success of the Italian infantrymen had taken their own staff by surprise, and when they settled down to organize their new line they were beyond the protection of their main artillery. A furious and sustained effort was required in the rear of the victors, in order to afford them immediate support against the inevitable grand counter-attack that General Boroëvic was visibly preparing. It is possible that if Cadorna had been provided by Great Britain, France, and the United States with more guns and more shell he would have won a great success.

His principal aim in the May offensive had been to prepare the way for the Russian campaign in Galicia. He succeeded in destroying most of the hostile forces released from the Russian front, and so wearing down the main Austro-Hungarian army as to compel the dictator of the German Empire to detach more men and guns from the eastern theatre of war. Naturally, he expected that his success would provoke a most violent reaction, and that all possibly available hostile forces would be extended in fierce action against his men until General Brusiloff was ready to strike.

In the night of June 3 the grand Austrian counter-offensive was launched from the hills south of Gorizia to the mud flats by the Adriatic Sea. Careful as the duke of Aosta had been in saving some of his stock of shell, he had not sufficient material left for effective counter-battery work against the thousands of hostile guns. On the northern wing, by the Fanti Hrib hill positions, all the shelters of the Italian infantry were destroyed and the ground overrun by Hungarian and Tyrolese troops. But the splendid Tiber brigade recaptured the heights in the afternoon of June 4.

In the centre, about the Brestovizza valley, the battle swayed for three days and nights in incessant fighting in the open field. The tableland was veiled in the smoke of exploding shells, through which the opposing lines and columns drove against each other. Each side brought up fresh brigades and divisions, sometimes in motor-vehicles, sometimes in marching order, and all had to get through the wide and heavy barraging fire before coming into action. There were practically no defences. The old positions were blasted away, and the power of high-explosive shell, bursting on the bare rock and breaking it into a hundred

A LOCAL DISASTER

splinters, was incomparably appalling. Between Castagnevizza and the Hermada the Italians emerged victorious. They lost ground, recovered it, lost it again, and again recovered it, between Versic village and Hill 219. When they seemed to have lost Hill 219 finally, in the morning of June 6, and both sides were so hammered by artillery that neither seemed able to advance farther, General Diaz sent the Italian Grenadiers forward as a forlorn hope. The Grenadiers had been fighting since May 23. They had recently stormed Hill 219, between Jamiano and Selo, and, after beating back several counter-assaults, had just withdrawn, apparently spent, from the battlefield. Yet when they were brought out again to relieve the troops who should have relieved them, they stormed back to the hill with all their old fire, held it firmly for two days against all enemy efforts, and when relieved returned to their rest billets scarcely more than a thousand strong. Of the regiment five men in six had fallen. But Hill 219 was theirs.

There was, however, a local disaster south of the height where the Grenadiers distinguished themselves. On the slopes of the Hermada a fresh Italian brigade was entrenched for defence as well as could be done in the circumstances. The position was far from excellent, as there had been no time to blast and drill the rock into good underground shelters. The enemy's bombardment was heavy, and the flying fragments of stone and steel were numerous and deadly. The brigade, indeed, had not to endure more than its victorious comrades, yet at the first drive of the Austro-Hungarian infantry some 2,000 of the men surrendered, and the other 4,000 gave way almost as weakly. In spite of the failure by the Hermada, the series of battles ended in favour of the Italians. They held the Cuk-Vodice Ridge, and were entrenched on the lower slopes of Monte Santo; they had broken into the enemy's system on the Carso to a depth of about a mile and a half on a front of some six miles; and although they had been driven from the lower slopes of the Hermada, they yet continued formidably to menace this great bastion of Trieste. Fully 14,000 of their men remained in the hands of the enemy. The Austrian prisoners numbered more than 25,000, and as the long battle had been very severe and the artillery fire exceedingly destructive, the proportion between prisoners and total casualties was larger than usual.

CAPORETTO

While attack and counter-attack were clashing on the Carso in the second week of June, the Italian 6th army in the eastern fringe of the Trentino took up the work of assisting the intended Russian campaign in Galicia, by breaking on June 10 into the Austrian lines near Asiago. Nearly the whole of Monte Ortigara was carried during a violent storm, and two days then passed before the enemy recovered sufficiently to make a vain counter-assault.

For the rest of the month the Italian commander-in-chief demonstrated against the enemy by means of whirlwind artillery attacks. Then, on July 1, the forces of the Central Empires, weakened by the Italian, British, and French offensives, were attacked in Galicia by General Brusiloff, who was in greatly superior strength in both men and guns. In the middle of July the Italian 3rd army again exerted severe pressure upon the Austro-Hungarians on the Carso plateau, by assaulting the high land overlooking the Brestovizza valley, which was the main artery of the plateau defences of Trieste. The quarried line was shattered and captured; but before General Cadorna could complete his share of the combined Russo-Italian operations against Austria-Hungary, the hitherto victorious Russian forces repeated on a vast scale the conduct of the Italian brigade on Hermada. They mutinied and fled in disorder.

Cadorna became seriously alarmed. He asked for powers of wider range over the troubled villages, towns, and cities in his rear, and resumed the Isonzo offensive, without the aid of British and French armies, in the hope of disorganizing the hostile preparations for a grand attack, and of reviving the spirit of his men. On August 19 he showed that the successes he had won on the Carso in May could be repeated with larger results among the Alpine approaches to Laibach.

Again he surprised the enemy. The Italian 2nd army, under General Capello, managed to throw eighteen bridges across the Isonzo. The river was running strongly between narrow banks, immediately above which towered the steep heights ramparting the Bainsizza plateau. This was a great forested tableland stretching to the wide Chiapovano valley, which was the chief line of enemy communications. The defending army, under General Lukas, was nervously expectant, as the guns of Italy and her allies had been thundering for 24 hours on a wide front of forty miles from the Adriatic shore to the Julian Alps.

STEADY HUNGARIANS

The crossing of the Upper Isonzo had already been brilliantly practised as a demonstration at Bodrez and Lago, on the upper course of the river, during the battles above Gorizia in May. The Italians first shattered the enemy's machine-gun redoubts with heavy trench-mortars, sent patrols across the river to form bridge-heads, and made bridges under cover of continuous and increasingly heavy artillery fire. At the same time the Italian 3rd army on the Carso advanced in a violent demonstration against the lower positions of the Hermada fortress system and against the uplands protecting the enemy's mass of howitzers in the Brestovizza valley. In this southern battlefield the struggle became as intense as in the main theatre of attack. The enemy's line between Korite and Selo was stormed, and the steep heights overhanging the Brestovizza valley were gradually reduced by fierce and numerous "dolina" actions. "Dolina" was the local word for the crater-like depressions of soft red earth in the bare rock of the Carso. The Italian staff was, of course, well acquainted with every natural dolina, ranging in diameter from twenty to two hundred yards. But when the cross roads at Selo were taken, the attacking troops discovered there were many new artificial doline, all carefully camouflaged from aerial observation, and packed with men, machine-guns, trench-mortars, and scattered pieces of field-artillery.

Furious and close fighting went on day and night for more than a hundred and fifty hours. The slopes of the Brestovizza valley became one of the most horrible scenes of slaughter in the war. Dead Italian Grenadiers and dead Hungarian militiamen stretched under the scorching sun, with their faces blackening and swelling. The Grenadiers had to crawl up the waterless waste of stone and, against a heavy fire, bomb their way into masses of concreted rock, and there arduously reshape the defences under incessant shell fire delivered at exactly marked range by great cross-firing masses of hostile heavy guns.

On both sides the losses were heavy, for the Hungarians were the steadiest fighters in the Dual Monarchy. But the Italians proved themselves the better men. In a terrible week of continuous battle they overran the double-trench system, where there were a machine-gun and a crew of four men every six yards of line. Farther south, the Flondar positions, that had been won and lost in May, were recaptured, together with the three bastion heights, 146-Metre Hill, 145-Metre Hill, and

CAPORETTO

110-Metre Hill, that formed the terraced outworks of the large high-wooded rock of the Hermada. The Austrians retained the high eastern positions of the Hermada mountain crest, overlooking the sea, and the other dominating clump of Stari Lokva above Brestovizza. On the northern edge of the Carso, by the Vipacco River, there was another long mountain rampart projecting south of Gorizia. Here the Italians carried Fauti Dosso, bending the enemy back towards the highest clump of mountains.

The advance on the Carso was not, however, pressed with main strength. The more northerly principal Italian offensive proceeded with such remarkable success that Cadorna required his 3rd army only to hold the enemy firmly down on the southern wing, and prevent the hostile reserves there from marching northward to the Bainsizza plateau. On the large, rolling, wooded upland between Tolmino and Gorizia the enemy's lines followed the twisting ravine of the Isonzo, and formed a high, moated salient at the village of Plava. In places the plateau came down to the riverside, at a slope scarcely more than 340 feet above sea level. But the great tableland quickly rose behind Plava to the height of 2,700 feet, and ended with the Volnik summit, which was 3,100 feet high. In the southern corner of the plateau was Monte Santo, which the Austrians had lost and regained in the May battles, and then more strongly fortified as the outwork to the height of San Gabriele, from which they directly dominated the wrecked city of Gorizia.

Capello desired to complete his May offensive by the capture of Monte Santo. He held most of the Cuk-Vodice Ridge, fronting the fortified hill, but he knew that he would only sacrifice the lives of his men if he attempted a direct frontal attack upon the enemy's rampart above Gorizia. This was why he had practised, in the previous battle, the crossing of the upper course of the Isonzo near the riverside town of Canale. His design was to make his main thrust some ten miles above the hill he wished to take, and bring his victorious troops across the Bainsizza plateau in a sweeping, turning movement. His plan was an intricate and difficult one; but the Alpine troops of the 2nd army carried it out in a perfect manner. The Austrians had transformed the plateau into a vast entrenched work, defended by zone after zone of tree-screened lines, with masses of guns hidden in the hollows of the high, undulating country. The Alpine troops crossed the river in darkness before dawn on

AN ITALIAN VICTORY

August 19, and worked behind the range of mountains east of Canale and Plava. When the hill village of Vrb was suddenly stormed, the Austrian flank was turned, and a swift retirement was imposed on the enemy. Losing men in thousands and guns in hundreds, he conducted a hasty but fighting retreat towards the Volnik mountain and the Chiapovano valley.

Rearguard after rearguard made desperate stands, with the backing of machine-guns and light artillery; but the Italian troops, invigorated by victory, worked around the flanks of each force that tried to delay them and, rolling up all the main Austrian line, carried Monte Santo by an outflanking attack. The ground thus rapidly won extended on a front of about 12½ miles in width, to a depth varying from three and three-quarters to four and a half miles. In some places the Chiapovano was reached and left behind, the break being larger and more promising than that which the Germans afterwards effected in the Italian lines farther northward. By a new system of nocturnal frontal attack the Italian successes were accomplished. All the enemy's lines crossing the Bainsizza plateau were turned, and the Italian troops broke into clear country, where no barbed wire entanglements or concrete forts checked their manœuvring movements. Theirs was undoubtedly a great feat, and had they possessed more shell and more artillery they would probably have done to the Austro-Hungarians what was afterwards done to them.

Their victory was the most rapid and sweeping success hitherto won in parallel battle on the western and south-western front of war. Neither the French nor the British commander had ever driven so deep as four and a half miles into the enemy's zones of fortification. What was then needed, in order to shatter completely the Austrian line and compel and decisive and disorderly retreat, was the immediate presence of a strong army of manœuvre able to continue the grand drive of the Italian 2nd army when the latter were becoming exhausted by a week of incessant marching and fighting in rugged, wooded, and mountain-topped country.

Compared with the very slow and very costly progress made by the forces of Sir Hubert Gough against the Passchendaele Ridge in the same month and under similar conditions of misty and rainy weather, the rapid and sweeping assault of the forces of Capello contained the larger promise of a decision. The Italian

CAPORETTO

people might therefore fairly claim that two months before a small body of six thousand of their troops, in peculiar circumstances, showed fatal signs of weakness, their general forces displayed such fine superior qualities as might have won a grand victory, if the organization of a single military and economic front had effectively prevailed from the North Sea to the Adriatic.

As things stood, however, Cadorna was unable to crown all his efficient work by a supreme thrust over the high eastern edge of the Bainsizza plateau. The men of the 2nd army continued to fight forward for nine days and nights. On August 27 they broke through the last line of Austrian rearguards and came upon the new main front of resistance which the enemy commander had improvised out of the rough system near his original heavy-gun positions. His rearguards had done their duty in gaining time for him to dig in and bring up very large reserves.

Then it was that the failure of Russia imposed so heavy a task upon Italy that she required French and British assistance in order to effect a final break-through before the enemy could recall any more troops and guns from the Galician front. The local Italian reserves were thrown upon the tableland for the attack upon mountain crests guarding the great valley-line of Austrian communications. The action opened on August 28, but after a fierce hand-to-hand struggle with hand-bombs and bayonets, the forces of assault were severely checked. As a matter of fact, they appear to have been less numerous than the great army which the Austrian commander had rapidly collected. Moreover, their artillery, which had to be hauled across the Isonzo and brought around the captured western heights and ridges of the Bainsizza plateau, was markedly inferior in power to the reinforced hostile ordnance.

Immediately after the check to the Italian advance the Austrians delivered their grand counter-attack. It had taken them eleven days to reorganize and strengthen their infantry and guns and repair their heavy losses of more than a hundred thousand men, including some 26,000 prisoners. Their new forces, nevertheless, were unable to recover the lost ground, as the Italians not only stood firm but slightly extended their line in some places. The new Italian line was a sound one. South of the great tableland the enemy's key position on the hill of San Gabriele held out stubbornly after the loss of Monte Santo. By means

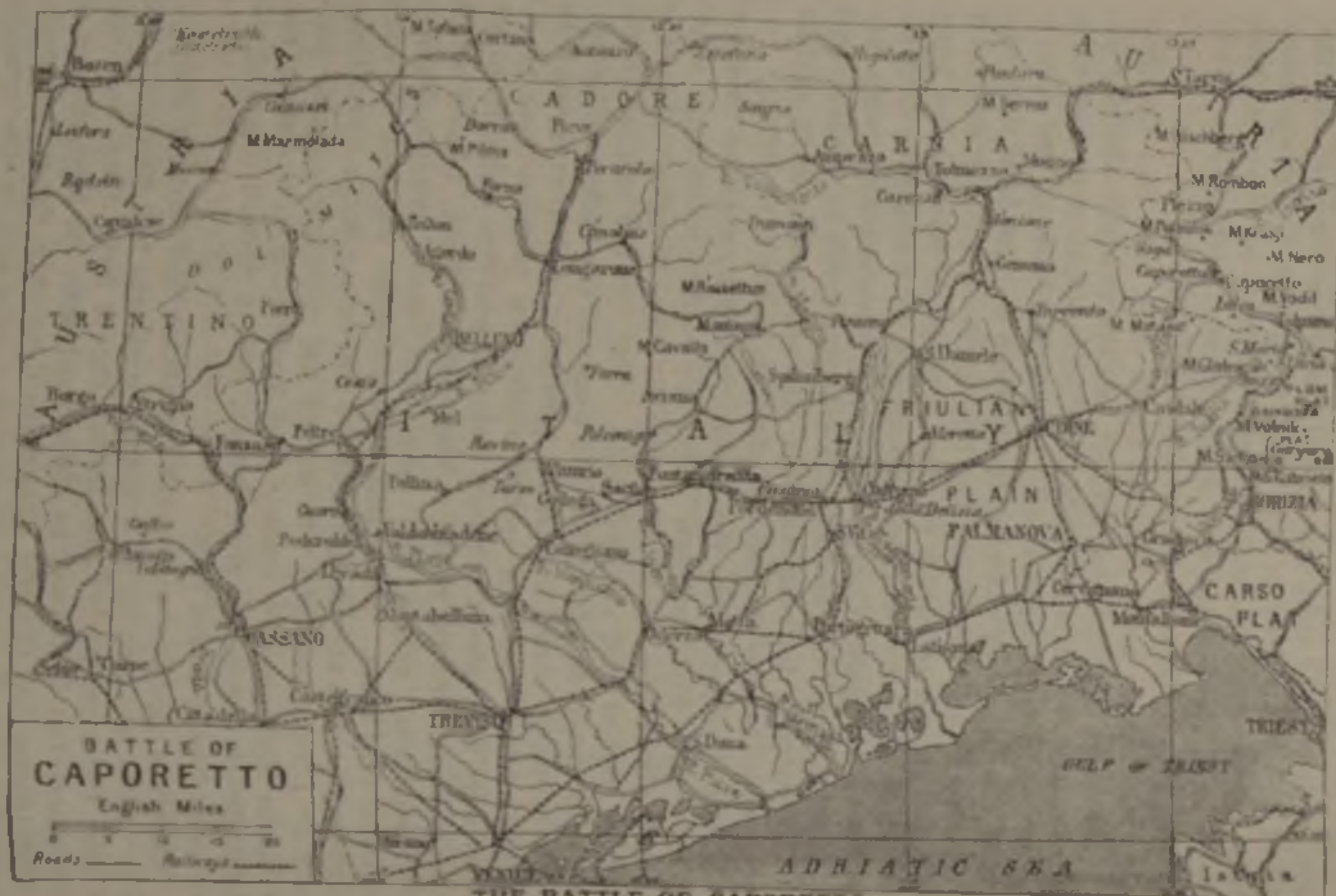
AN EXPOSED FLANK

of steady and heroic assaults the Italian troops reached the lower slopes of the height that dominated Gorizia northward, but the mass of hostile artillery in this sector maintained so devastating a barrage fire that the machine-gun garrison on the crest was able to repel the valiant but scanty groups of bombers which managed to get through the curtains of shell.

General Capello knew that he could only take San Gabriele by a northern flanking movement similar to that whereby he had captured its outwork of Monte Santo—that is to say, that only by again breaking General Lukas's new front on the eastern edge of the Bainsizza plateau, could room be won for a sideways drive upon San Gabriele and the line south of it. Had this been done, the Italian 3rd army on the Carso would have at last been able to resume its offensive movement in favourable circumstances. So, again Cadorna strongly demonstrated with his 3rd army against the Brestovizza position south of Gorizia, and on September 4 he launched his 2nd army once more against the new line on the plateau and the hills north of the city.

Almost simultaneously the enemy replied by a grand counter-attack with his southern wing by this; recovering some ground about the Hermada, only to lose it again when the Italians rallied and charged back. But, in the critical centre of the mountain line of battle, the troops of the Italian 2nd army, while winning some important positions, failed to break the enemy's main line and rectify their own perilous new front. They were in a salient between Tolmino and San Gabriele mountain. Northward they had a long exposed flank, behind which the mountains, ridges, and river line made communications arduous and slow. Even this exposed flank was not the most serious aspect in the situation of the 2nd army; for in its northern rear at Tolmino—which was one of the most impregnable positions in Europe—the enemy had been able to maintain two bridgeheads across the river Isonzo, one at Santa Lucia and the other at Santa Maria hills.

Capello's position was good for attack but bad for defence. His forces had driven at a great speed into the enemy's lines. Could the strength of the initial thrust have been not only sustained, but increased, to correspond with the large masses of fresh troops that General Lukas was deploying, the wedge would have broadened and lengthened out into one of the grandly decisive victories of the war. But as there was no powerful and



THE BATTLE OF CAPORETTO.
Map of the mountainous country over which this engagement, ending in the complete defeat of the Italians, was fought in October, 1917. British and French troops were then sent to Italy.

THE OPPOSING FORCES

free mass of manoeuvre at hand, the Italian general, by reason of his weak artillery power, could not advance farther and did not care to withdraw.

As soon as the Austrians had saved their own line from breaking, they regarded Italy as their prey. According to their own account, they arranged a grand offensive for September, 1917, immediately after their retreat across the Bainsizza plateau had left the Italian 2nd army in an awkward position, with a long exposed flank.

General Otto von Below, one of the most successful of German commanders, directed the attack. He knew exactly the number and quality of guns and the number of shells that General Cadorna possessed, and he saw to it that his own batteries and ammunition dumps were enormously superior to those of his opponent. He intended to use far more guns than the Austrians had employed in mountain battles, and to submit the Italian soldiers to a gas-shell bombardment exceeding any they had ever experienced. Only when he reckoned he had worn down the nerves of the Italian troops did he arrange to launch against them his comparatively small force.

In the meantime General Cadorna, with his headquarters at Udine, with General Capello, the duke of Aosta, General Diaz, and General Badoglio, made all possible preparations for a determined stand against some 750,000 Austrians, Hungarians, and Germans arrayed between the Predil pass and the Hermada. General von Below had six German divisions and eight Austro-Hungarian divisions, with some special shock forces, under his command. General Boroevic had his southern army brought up to twenty-three divisions, while the Austrian forces on the Carnic Alps line were composed of only three divisions under General Krobatin.

In the Trentino was the Austro-Hungarian 11th army, eight divisions, under General Scheuchenstuel. It will thus be seen that in actual battalion strength the forces employed for the invasion of Italy were not at all overwhelming. The enemy commander-in-chief was unable to arrange to strike in force from the Trentino on to the Italian rear, as he could not find men enough to make two grand concentrations of striking power. Even in the Julian Alps, from which his staggeringly successful stroke was delivered, the number of divisions was much less than that of the old and new accumulations around Gorizia

CAPORETTO

In artillery, however, the enemy was in considerably superior strength. The heavy guns he massed on his 19 miles of attack, between Plezzo, or Flitsch, and Tolmino, or Tolmein, completely dominated the 2,000 light and heavy guns possessed by the Italian 2nd army. The bombardment opened in the fourth week of October with terrific violence and deadliness. As the weather was damp and the air stagnant and misty, the German and Austrian gunners used mainly gas-shells, the fumes of which clung with horrible persistency about the Italian trenches. Such was the strength of hostile gun fire that General Cadorna began to fear that he would probably lose most of the ground he had won on the Bainsizza. The Italian general staff awaited the result of the Austro-German offensive with considerable apprehension. Italian soldiers had not met any large number of German troops in battle before and the morale of the troops had been badly shaken by revolutionary agitators. A few regiments were so seriously disaffected as to make them worse than useless as soldiers.

All this was known to von Below, who made his arrangements accordingly. He had arranged his six German divisions into three great spear-heads of storming forces. One struck in the north at the narrows of Saga; the second struck at the gorge of the Isonzo opposite Caporetto; the third did not strike at all. It marched northward along the banks of the river upland from the bridge-heads of Santa Lucia and Santa Maria, and turned all the Italian positions south and north of Caporetto. Throughout the war Tolmino and the stream-girdled mountain behind it had remained a centre of invincible resistance. Just by the neighbouring village of Santa Lucia the Isonzo was joined by the Idria river and the Baca river. Down the valley of the latter stream there ran a good railway, connecting with two great railway centres, Klagenfurt and Laibach. Tolmino also had some splendid communications with Krainburg and other concentration camps, so that men and munitions could be rapidly poured into it by three or four channels. This is why the enemy commanding officer at Tolmino was able not only to hold the Isonzo valley, but strongly to maintain bridge-heads across the river.

When Gorizia fell, and in its fall blocked up a similar southern knot of railway and main road concentration channels, Tolmino remained the only gateway of invasion the enemy

MONTE NERO

possessed on the eastern Italian front. The Italian 2nd army tried to turn the Tolmino positions by a most gallant thrust from the Caporetto sector to the high dominating crest of Kra. or Monte Nero. From Monte Nero the Austrian positions at the central meeting-place of the river valleys were partly out-flanked; but the operation was not regularly developed over the Alpine masses between Monte Nero and the Tolmino mountain. In peaceful holidays it used to take tourists eight hours to climb from Monte Nero to Tolmino, but probably it would have taken the Italian army eight months to work southward to the castled mountain above the Isonzo, where Dante had written part of his "Divine Comedy." So this operation had been postponed until Gorizia could be firmly secured by the capture of San Gabriele mountain. The Austrians pretended they did not grasp the importance of their bridge-head and converging communications at Tolmino. For six months they kept so remarkably quiet that the Italians, holding the Plec Trench above the bridge-head hills, were lulled into a false security.

When, in the mist and darkness of the tragic October 24, 20,000 Prussian soldiers walked over Plec Trench, they had practically no fighting whatever to do. For miles they walked up the river towards Caporetto, under the grey shadowy mass of Monte Nero, looming above the opposite side of the river. When dawn came up and the autumn haze cleared away, the hard-pressed but unyielding Italian garrison on Monte Nero saw to their horror that two enemy divisions were marching across their line of retreat.

Even the situation at Cambrai, when the Germans surprised the British forces holding the southern base of the Cambrai salient, was by no means so tragic as that obtaining around Caporetto when the Prussians got behind the rear of the northern section of the Italian 2nd army at daybreak on October 24. There was no single brigade in reserve to act as the five thousand British Guardsmen did against two German divisions in the critical moment of the Cambrai break.

For upon the Italian soldiers lay the shadow of the economic miseries of their country, and the intrigues of the three great organized forces of pro-Germanism. Many men there were who did not lose heart, and fought on with desperation. But as their flanks were uncovered by the panic flight of comrades, their gallant attempts to retrieve the great disaster were

CAPORETTO

fruitless. On Monte Nero the Italian Alpine troops held out for days. Completely surrounded and regarded as dead or captured by their own high command, they were at last seen by an Italian airman still fighting around the mountain-top at a time when the 2nd army had vanished and the 3rd army was trying to stand on the Tagliamento line.

The Prussian commander had only to sweep in force down the road from Caporetto to Cividale and Udine, and thence close southward upon the flank and rear in order to complete the destruction of the Italian army; but he could not take full advantage of the situation.

In ordinary circumstances General Cadorna would have had a very strong second line in the Caporetto sector. Along the original Austro-Italian frontier, on the western side of the Isonzo, there rose a line of formidable fortified mountains, including the Stol Ridge, the Mia, the Matajur, and the Kolovrat heights. The principal crests towered five thousand feet above the river valley which the enemy occupied. He had only light artillery with his advanced troops, while the Italians had their heaviest pieces on and around their mountainous support line. Yet such was the confusion in the defending forces that a German lieutenant, with a few hundred Silesians, carried the most important height by the gateway to the Friulian plain, while an Austrian rifle division stormed the steep mountain ridge of the Stol. By seven o'clock in the morning of Thursday, October 25, the army of Below was descending the highway along the Natisone valley to the great plain that began at Cividale.

A day's march northward all was confusion in the Italian lines by Plezzo. The narrows of Zaga, which the Italians had been holding valiantly, had been carried by the enemy, after he had made his astonishing walk through the Plec position. Between the two points of their widely separated thrusting forces, the six German divisions rolled up the greater part of the Italian 2nd army, and, linking with the Austrian divisions along the uncovered Carnic Alps, they marched quickly down into the plain and endeavoured to get behind the Italian 3rd army, the fragment of the 2nd army, and the 4th army.

What then occurred cannot be described except from the German point of view. The German brigades sent forward scouts on motor-cycles, followed by cavalry and machine-gunners and motor-vehicles, behind which the victorious infantry

UDINE REACHED

marched with remarkable pace and endurance. The lowland was threaded by many water-courses, trickling in dry summer through wide beds of dry gravel, which became broad, fierce torrents whenever a tempest washed down from the Alps. Happily for Italy, a torrential rain fell for thirty-six hours. The series of dry watercourses and trickling streams became wide rivers, while marshes formed in the overflow hollows between the network of water-lines near the frontier. General von Below was seriously delayed by the effects of the great downpour. He could not spread out his forces over the country, but had to march them in columns down the railway track and main road running from Cividale to Udine towards the Tagliamento bridge near the village of Codroipo. In all there were only three crossings of the Tagliamento when it was in full flood, and these three lines of communication had to be carried over many other swollen streams between the Isonzo and the Tagliamento.

The Italians destroyed bridges and culverts as they fought their way backward, and left the invaders in a region of marshes and torrents. On Saturday, October 27, the anniversary of the fall of Metz, Cividale fell flaming into the hands of the enemy. On Monday, October 29, Below reached Udine, an important railway junction, some seven and a half miles beyond Cividale, which had been General Cadorna's headquarters. The possession of Udine gave Below good lateral connections with Boroëvic's unwieldy, large southern army, and enabled him forthwith to arrange the grand manœuvre of Codroipo Bridge.

From Udine to Codroipo the distance was not more than 17 miles along the railway track and parallel highway. From the Italian line on the Carso to Codroipo Bridge the distance was about 30 miles. The centre and southern wing of the Italian 3rd army had also to cover about 30 miles in order to gain the lower bridge across the Tagliamento at Latisana, near the Adriatic shore. The intention of the Prussian commander-in-chief was to strike across the river at Codroipo, and there separate the remnants of the Italian 2nd army and the northern wing of the Italian 3rd army from the main mass struggling along near the sea.

Then he proposed to sweep down the branch railway behind the river and the bridge-head of Latisana in an enveloping operation as triumphant as Moltke accomplished at Sedan. A

CAPORETTO

strange and dreadful silence prevailed to the end of October, while in the interval the masses of some 750,000 men of Teutonic, Magyar, and subject Slav forces were converging in a drive upon the rear, and flank, and across the reversed front, of the jammed and encumbered multitudes of soldiers and civilians whom the Duke of Aosta and General Diaz were trying to withdraw from overwhelming disaster. German reports merely said that good progress was being made. Italian reports stated that the withdrawal of troops continued. The tension was as fearful as that which the world underwent in the summer of 1914, between the fall of Charleroi and Mons and the victory of the Marne. Narrowly did the duke of Aosta escape.

The scenes during the retreat were terrible. The population of the invaded hamlets and towns blocked the roads and made dangerous rushes for the bridges when the panic cry was raised that Austrian cavalry had been sighted. Railways were at first blocked by long lines of stationary trains, helpless for want of coal. British and Italian soldiers tramped along without food until they came to Latisana. In other places fugitives looted as they ran, and made supplies difficult for the forces that were fighting a string of rearguard actions between Udine and Codroipo to prevent a premature irruption by the enemy.

The Germans did all that men could do in the excitement of the great success to bring off the enveloping movement. In the morning of October 31 they were in correct position for the accomplishment of the most rapid decision in the long history of the war. The Prussian Light Infantry, with Bavarian and Württemberg infantry, deployed by the bridge-head position of Codroipo, and stretching northward for two and a half miles to the village of Dignano were a Brandenburg division and a Silesian division. These all worked down and behind the Italian rearguards, while corps of Austro-Hungarians, directed by Boroëvic, pressed forward along the coast in a frontal attack against the Latisana crossings. At this time there was a gap between the Italian 3rd army and the fragment of the Italian 2nd army. Into the gap there came some Bulgarian officers, who had been selected originally for espionage work along the Isonzo, because they had learnt the art of war in the Turin Academy, and in the Italian uniforms provided them could speak to Italian soldiers.

GALLANT LANCERS

The Italian 3rd army had extended across the Udine road, after fighting rearguard actions at Lavariano, Pozzuolo, and Bertolo, all far to the north of the seaward line of retreat. But the Bulgar spies, on October 31, found the gap in the improvised line of defence, and led some disguised forces of Prussians and South Germans to the eastern bank of the river. From this position a strong surprise rear attack was made upon the large Italian rearguard forces around Codroipo village. The tragedy that ensued on the right wing of the Duke of Aosta's army was similar to that which occurred to the centre of General Capello's army by Caporetto. Below managed to bring two of his divisions through the gap in the lines of defence, so that another large Italian force of about 100,000 men was surrounded and either killed or captured. At the same time the surviving units of the Italian 2nd army, which had retained sufficient strength to form up by the Tagliamento north of Codroipo, were also again attacked from behind, and swept into the net of the victorious Germans. Over 60,000 Italians laid down their arms on the Tagliamento line, bringing the number of prisoners captured by the enemy to 180,000 men. 1,500 guns were taken.

In the night of October 31 the bridge-head of Latisana was abandoned by the heroic 1st and 2nd cavalry divisions and by the magnificent lancers of Genoa and Novara, who sacrificed themselves in saving the infantry and the guns. As the Germans and Austrians advanced towards the river, with motor machine-gun batteries and light field-guns mounted on motor-vehicles, one troop of the lancers of Genoa dismounted and brought their machine-guns into action, while the rest of the men on horse-back sheltered behind the houses of the little village until the order was given to charge. They carried the hostile position and took some prisoners.

Then, as fresh forces came down from Udine, they made another charge. When the regiment was reduced to a single squadron, the survivors cut their way back to the river and crossed it. Seven times the Novara lancers charged into lines of enemy riflemen and machine-gunners until they compelled a leading hostile division to deploy for action, after its spear-head of advanced skirmishing forces had been driven in. By the time the enemy commander was prepared for an important battle the Italian 3rd army had escaped, and was entrenched

CAPORETTO

on the western side of the large, swollen mountain river. All through the war there had been much discussion as to the value of cavalry under the new conditions of warfare. It was generally considered that they had become obsolete; but it was the horsemen of Italy that saved the main Italian army, even as the British cavalry during the retreat from Mons saved the British expeditionary force.

After the Duke of Aosta and General Diaz brought their men across the wide, roaring flood of Alpine rain-water—where there were at times more than 10,000 men crowding along the narrow steel track of the railway bridge above the frothing spate of the tempestuous river—it still seemed doubtful whether the 3rd army would be able to make a stand, and many of the soldiers were so dispirited that their officers did not know whether there was any fight left in them. It was partly in order to stimulate the depressed infantry that the Italian cavalry had sacrificed itself in charging down the attacking forces. Fugitives of the 2nd army were still in panic flight, far in the rear of the Tagliamento line, spreading news of their defeat with all the wild exaggeration of men who had lost courage and were trying to excuse themselves.

Anxious observers wondered if the fatigued, hungry, and cheerless men behind the Latisana and Codroipo wrecked bridges would ever again stand to battle in the heroic spirit they had displayed upon the Carso. Had the rain continued, the Tagliamento line could have been held for some weeks, as the condition of the ground would seriously have delayed the enemy. Although he had now captured some 2,500 Italian guns of all sizes, with an enormous amount of ammunition, the labour of bringing the pieces into position, when all the ground between the three main roads was like a fen, would have taken so much time as to enable General Cadorna to establish himself on the western bank of the river.

The weather, however, turned against the Italians, after helping to save them from supreme disaster. Rain ceased in the Alps, and the steep beds of shingle rapidly discharged into the sea the flood of water that had come down like tidal bores. The Tagliamento fell as suddenly as it rose, and on Sunday, November 4, the small northern Austrian army on the Carnic Alps, under General Krobatin, began to force a passage by Pinzano, by the northern edge of the Venetian plain, on a line

AN AMAZING ACHIEVEMENT

nearly 60 miles due west from Tolmino. A spear-head German division of Silesians and Schleswig-Holstein Grenadiers burst over the river and by the evening had advanced fourteen miles beyond it.

The effect of this manoeuvre was to drive a wedge behind the Italian 4th army that was retiring from the Carnic Alps and the Dolomite peaks of Cadore. Under General Robilant, the Italian 4th army of hardy mountaineers was swinging back towards the far-distant neck of the net that Below was closing behind it by the middle course of the Piave.

The Italian 2nd army had practically disappeared. There were left the 3rd army, retiring across the Livenza river towards the Piave river, on a front of about 38 miles; then, at a distance of some 25 miles westward, the Italian 1st army, under General Pecori, was holding the eastern heights on the Brenta river against the forces which the Austrian commander in the Trentino was rapidly accumulating for another grand offensive. Towards the gap between the Duke of Aosta on the Livenza river and General Pecori on the Brenta river, General Robilant, with the Italian 4th army, valiantly struggled to reach the Piave river line and fill the neck of the net there before three hostile armies could encircle his forces.

On November 6 General von Below ceased his direct attacks on the Italian 3rd army, and leaving this work to General Boroëvic's more numerous forces, swerved northward towards the valley roads of the Lower Venetian Alps leading to Longarone and Belluno. His intention was to strike upon the flank and rear of the Italian 4th army, part of which was some 93 miles distant from the point at which it could make contact with the Italian 3rd and 1st armies. General Robilant had Krobatin thrusting at him from the north, Below breaking in upon him from the south, and Scheuchenstuel driving at him from the east and trying to connect with Below. Had the connexion been made, the fate of the Italian 4th army would have been worse than that of the vanished 2nd army. Only by an amazing achievement on the part of his men did General Robilant escape.

His task was far more arduous than that of the duke of Aosta, and the country through which he had to work was of infinite difficulty. It was broken by four mighty mountain systems—the Carnic Alps, Venetian Alps, Ampezzo Alps, and

CAPORETTO

the Dolomites, towards which ran only one railway, constructed along the valley of the Upper Piave. A few wandering side-roads branched from this valley and followed the winding tributary streams to the great glaciers and snow-fields of the high Alps. General Robilant's troops were among the hardest men of the world. Some of them made forced marches over the mountains, which were already snow-covered, and when they emerged from the blinding snowstorms they came into rain-shrouded valleys where the rising water made the ground a bog. At first the men could not understand why they had to abandon the extraordinary positions they had won--the peaks to which they had lifted their heavy artillery, the rock galleries in which they had lived above the clouds for nearly two and a half years, dominating the enemy. Strategy was not their forte, and they could not appreciate the need for the instant and vehement race down to the narrowing gap far away in their rear.

First they had to leave a large rearguard on the Carnic Alps, by the Fella valley, to hold back Krobatin's forces. Then behind this first rearguard General Robilant was able to organize a more important temporary line of defence on the upper Tagliamento, from Tolmezzo to Gemona. Here he stood to battle against the Austrian forces from October 29 to November 7. His flank at Gemona was only about twelve miles north of Udine, so that if it had been broken the enemy would have had more space in which to manœuvre around the remains of the Italian 2nd army and the two intact Italian forces on the mountains and by the sea. In the end, the Alpine rearguard between Tolmezzo and Gemona was enveloped, the enemy claiming the capture of a further 17,000 Italians with 80 guns. In the meantime some of Below's German forces made an unexpected swerve away from the main southern battlefield towards the valleys of the Venetian Alps.

On November 6 they were fighting by the town of Sacile for the valley road to Belluno. Sacile, with the hills of Vittorio, was situated midway between the Tagliamento and the Piave rivers, and upon the railway connecting Udine with Venice. It was a most important position of defence, both for the rear of the Italian 4th army retiring from the Alps down the single railway that had fed the Dolomite front and the Carnic front, and for the northern wing of the Italian 3rd army that was

BELLUNO CAPTURED

retreating to the Piave line. The Italian troops made a most gallant stand at Sacile and the Vittorio hills ; but, while they were successfully defending the entrance to the main Alpine valley, Below swung a Württemberg and Austrian force up the more northerly valley of Barcis. His men followed the course of the Cellina tributary of the Livenza river, climbed over the intervening mass of mountain, and descended upon the town of Longarone, lying in the upper Piave valley a day's march above Belluno. They drove right into the centre of the railway communications of the Italian 4th army, and captured another 10,000 men and a large quantity of field guns, ammunition and war stores. All Italian forces in the upper Piave valley appear to have been cut off. By November 11 Belluno was captured, and an Italian brigade in the Cordevale valley, west of Belluno, also found its path of retreat blocked. This brought the number of Italian prisoners to a quarter of a million, while the lost guns amounted nearly to 3,000.

In spite of these practically inevitable disasters the lengthy retirement from a most difficult mountain front of more than one hundred and twenty miles was affected with remarkable skill and energy by the Italian 4th army. The weary men fell back fighting from Feltre and Fonzaso and, still pressed by Below's German divisions, occupied the twelve-mile angle of mountains that lay between the middle course of the river Piave and the river Brenta.

Below did not use his own men to make another attempt to break through the Italian 3rd army, which had retreated across the lower Piave after fighting a series of rearguard actions by the Livenza stream. He left the strongest Italian force to General Boroëvic's large Austro-Hungarian masses. These, however, were unable to accomplish anything of importance. In the meantime Below, in person, continually tried to repeat his successful Tagliamento stroke, and drive a wedge between the dispirited Italian armies. By this time the Italian 2nd army was completely gone. Most of the men who were not killed or captured were spread in disordered flight over a considerable part of northern Italy. The 3rd army had to extend westward to fill part of the gap, while the 4th army, in the mountains above Asolo, extended southward to the Piave at Pederobba, and there linked with the force that was directly protecting Venice.

CAPORETTO

Below drove incessantly at the positions to which General Robilant was desperately clinging. The enemy had no heavy artillery with him, and his troops were as fatigued as the men they attacked. They had climbed over Alp after Alp, carrying with them machine-guns and ammunition, in attempts to enfilade the retreating Alpine troops of Italy. They had been in turn counter-attacked in many obscure and unrecorded fights, where opposing companies had fought to the death for some strategic purpose they did not clearly understand.

Like madmen the Germans had toiled in their endeavour to cut off the Italian 4th army. When they failed to effect this grand manœuvre, their spirit was not so high as it had been. Sheer physical exhaustion began to tell upon them, and their difficulties were soon increased by the abrupt onset of bad weather. Thus Below could not immediately accomplish by main force the third breaking movement he intended. The process of retirement had greatly increased the strength of the surviving Italian armies by shortening the line of defence. The troops had drawn back into the narrow gap, between the mountains of the Trentino and the lagoons above Venice. The lagoon sector was easy to hold with comparatively small forces, and the length of the main new river-line of the Piave was not much more than 45 miles. Consequently, the Italian 3rd and 4th armies were able to reassemble in considerable depth, and until the enemy got his long-range heavy artillery into position, there was no danger of an assault in overwhelming strength.

It was about November 8 that General Diaz began to make a stand along the Piave, with the assistance of some of the forces under General Robilant. The military balance had been skilfully restored by the Italian commanders. It was the mental balance only that was the dubious factor in the situation on the Piave, upon which the fate of Italy depended.

Upon the frame of mind of the Italian soldier it was clear that the fortune of war would turn. At the beginning of the second week in November, 1917, nobody had any sure knowledge of this matter. The men did not feel quite sure of themselves after the trial through which they had passed; their regimental officers were feverishly anxious, while the staff officers and the commanding generals awaited the great psychological ordeal with intense solicitude.

CHAPTER 18

Conquest of German East Africa

THE great offensive movement which General Smuts set on foot on Christmas Day, 1916, against the remaining German forces in East Africa was brought to a premature halt by the torrential rains. The rainy season is normally to be expected about February, but in 1917 it set in round the middle of January. As early as the 2nd of that month the rains had begun, and, although intermittent, had seriously affected the activities of the troops and dislocated the synchronisation of those movements upon which depended the success of the plan to envelop the German forces.

In a previous chapter the story of the attack made at the end of 1916 by generals Northey and van Deventer on the German forces under the command of Major-General Wahle has already been told. By January 1, 1917, Wahle had just managed to evade encirclement and was retreating southwards along the plateau to Mahenge. At this time he was almost isolated from his superior, von Lettow-Vorbeck, who, with the main body of the German forces, was opposing the British advance across the Rufiji river. Communications between the two German commanders were difficult and very indirect, the development of Smuts' offensive having driven a long wedge between them.

Torrential rains descended on January 2, 1917, and for a while compelled van Deventer to confine himself to patrol work. In the meantime Northey had not been idle. On December 26 his forces had closed in on all sides of Mfrika and occupied it, having discovered that it had already been evacuated by Wahle, who had retired along the road to Mahenge, after placing a rearguard six miles east of Mfrika. On January 3, Colonel Murray's column captured the southern end of this rearguard's position, and the Germans withdrew to another position eastward. On the 6th the force under Colonel Byron, which had advanced north from Songea, dispersed a body of the enemy at Gumbiro. On January 9, Northey's advanced troops were in touch with the Germans six miles east of Sylvester Falls, and

CONQUEST OF GERMAN EAST AFRICA

a week later Murray's column secured the bridge over the Ruhudje at Malawis, near Ifinga, which lay to the south-east of Lupembe. Byron gained a greater success on January 24 at Likuyu, some sixty miles north-east of Songea, when he forced the surrender of a German southern detachment.

The abnormally heavy and early rains, which, as has already been said, compelled the suspension of operations soon after the middle of January along the eastern area, did not affect the western region quite as seriously; but during their continuance, the impossibility of moving up adequate supplies to an advancing army prevented any operations other than patrol work in the west and north of the Mahenge plateau.

But the cessation of major hostilities did little to relieve the anxiety of Major-General Wahle, the German commander. Under his command Wahle had at least 6,000 men, of whom 1,000 were Europeans. Besides these there were the usual number of carriers and other natives, and the whole number was putting a severe strain upon his commissariat. The Mahenge plateau was largely wild and infertile, and the narrow field of foraging left him by his opponents eventually compelled him to reduce his forces in order to feed the remainder more effectively. To this end, he directed Kraut and Wintgens to take their detachments south across the Rovuma river into Portuguese East Africa and endeavour to discover supplies.

This was the beginning of the famous Wintgens-Naumann raid which was to amaze the British commanders in East Africa. After a daring march, Kraut and Wintgens succeeded in getting their detachments right through the lines of General Northey and pushed on south-west towards the Portuguese border. Before they reached the Rovuma river they separated, Kraut continuing towards Portuguese territory, Wintgens turning north-west. Kraut crossed the river safely and penetrated deep into the country beyond. He carried out a series of raids and, after collecting considerable booty, many supplies, and valuable information as to the geography and nature of the country, eventually rejoined von Lettow-Vorbeck.

After leaving Kraut, Wintgens marched towards Lake Rukwa, snapping up convoys, cutting communications, and generally raiding the British lines of supply. He had begun his adventurous raid early in March, and by May had succeeded in reaching the neighbourhood of Tabora. At Lake Rukwa he had

A REMARKABLE RAID

been caught by one of the columns despatched by Northey to round him up, but, after a sharp engagement, had managed to make good his escape. The difficulties of rounding up a highly mobile column unimpeded by carriers or baggage, in the interior of such a vast area as German East Africa, were enormous. But so serious did Wintgens' raids become that the British authorities were compelled to organize a special column for the purpose of effecting his capture. The 10th South African Horse was raised and equipped for the task. Wintgens, however, aided by a detailed knowledge of the country and unburdened by carriers, was able to elude his pursuers. But when he reached the neighbourhood of Tabora he was too ill to continue, and wisely decided to surrender himself to the Belgians, which he did on May 23. His capture in no way alleviated the trouble of the Allies, for the command of his flying column was taken over by Lieutenant Naumann.

Naumann struck north again from Tabora, and, deriving all his supplies from the country over which he passed, managed to reach almost to the border of British East Africa with no more losses than those which inevitably resulted from the few slight skirmishes he was compelled to fight, fatigue of his men, and sickness. He was almost surrounded by his pursuers near the border, but escaping by the narrowest margin he doubled south in the direction of the Central Railway. The constant strain of such a raid was, however, beginning to tell, and he was unable to outdistance his pursuers with his old ease. The result was that he began to lose more and more men, and was compelled to fight more and more actions in order to escape. Almost at the railway, he doubled once more on his tracks and, turning north again, struck off towards Victoria Nyanza; but the hopeless struggle was nearly over, and finally, at the beginning of October—seven months after he had parted from Kraut—Naumann was surrounded and compelled to surrender.

Thus ended a most remarkable raid. Of the 600 men who had composed Wintgens' original command, only 146 surrendered; but their success in defying capture for so many months was a warning of the difficulties that were to beset the Allies in their endeavour to round up von Lettow-Vorbeck.

Like the campaigns of Northey and Deventer against Wahle, General Smuts' main offensive against the major forces of the Germans under von Lettow-Vorbeck on the Rufiji river, was only

CONQUEST OF GERMAN EAST AFRICA

partially successful. Towards the end of December, 1916, Smuts had left Mrogoro, and established his general headquarters at Dutumi, on the Mgeta front, where he had under his immediate command the 1st East African brigade, later described as the 1st Brigade, led by General Sheppard. The 2nd South African Infantry brigade, under General Beves, lay on the road between Ruvu and Tulo, and it was ordered to be at Dakawa on the 25th. The Nigerian brigade, under General Cunliffe, was assembling at Tulo, whence it was to proceed to Dutumi. The 1st division, under General Hoskins, was in position about Kabati and in the Kilwa district, south of the Rufiji, and its headquarters moved to Mitole on Christmas Day.

Timed to begin on December 26, the opening movements on the Mgeta front had to be postponed, on account of the rains, to the 31st, when the weather improved; but this delay was not without a certain advantage, as it permitted the Nigerian brigade, which was somewhat behind-hand, to complete its equipment and come up. General Smuts said that two main considerations governed the dispositions of his troops. One was the seizure of a crossing over the Rufiji, and the other was the capture, if possible, of the Germans immediately opposing himself. Attaching the higher importance to the former, the chief problem that he had to solve was the seizure of the crossing over the river without allowing von Lettow-Vorbeck to become aware of his intention, for he was most anxious that the Germans should not evade a heavy blow by an early retirement from his front. Once he was across the river, his plan was to move to the south-east and join up with Hoskins and the 1st division, which was to have marched north-west from the Matumbi mountains. These combined movements, if successfully carried out, would cut all connexion between the German forces on the Rufiji and those on the Mahenge plateau.

To secure the crossing over the Rufiji, General Smuts detached the 2nd South African brigade of Beves to make a wide detour and capture and hold a bridgehead on the river at Kwa Mkalinzo, twenty miles south-west of Kibambawe, and near the junction of the stream with the Ruaha. On January 3, a day ahead of the time-schedule, the advanced troops of Beves, after a thirty miles' continuous march, crossed the Rufiji a few miles south of Kwa Mkalinzo and entrenched a bridgehead. Smuts was loud in his praise, declaring that the march of the brigade

THE GERMANS ALMOST TRAPPED

was a noteworthy achievement even in a campaign which afforded repeated instances of splendid endurance by every unit of the forces in the most exhausting circumstances. To keep von Lettow-Vorbeck in his positions while Beves was making this detour, Smuts delivered a holding attack from his forward lines on the Dutumi sector, and at the same time had two columns working their way round the German flanks.

At daybreak on January 1, 1917, Cunliffe's Nigerians, supported by the army artillery under Brigadier-General Crewe, began the assault in the centre about Dutumi, but did not press home the attack, as their action was contingent on news from the flanks. The left or east flanking column consisted of the 2nd Kashmiris and a battalion of Nigerians, under Lieut-Colonel R. A. Lyall; the right, or west, flanking column was Sheppard's brigade. It was hoped that the two columns would complete the envelopment of the force that was engaged by Cunliffe. Lyall's force started from Kiruru, on the Mgeta, while Sheppard's advanced from Kisaki. Lyall came up with and attacked the Germans in the afternoon, but the Germans realized in time that the road of their retreat was blocked on this side and began to withdraw from before Cunliffe.

A heavy attack was made on the Nigerian part of Lyall's column on the evening of that day but it died down within an hour, the Germans seeking a path for retreat by the other flank. A column of the 130th Baluchis, under Lieut.-Colonel Dyke, detached from Sheppard's brigade, had advanced on the afternoon of December 31 and early next morning was astride the road by which the left wing of the Germans was retreating before the rest of the brigade. Trying to force their way through, the Germans made four determined charges on the Baluchis. The fighting, in which the bayonet was used several times at close quarters, was of a severe character, and the casualties on both sides were comparatively heavy. The Baluchis stood their ground, and captured the camp at Wiransi, but the line they had to cover was too extended, and as Smuts put it: "In the course of the morning of the 2nd it became clear that the whole enemy force on the Mgeta front had retired to the south of our forces." Once again von Lettow-Vorbeck had succeeded in withdrawing his forces from the trap.

Disappointed as the British commander was with this result, he at once determined to try another similar movement. The

CONQUEST OF GERMAN EAST AFRICA

Germans had withdrawn to a strong position on the Chogowali river, near Beho-beho, and Smuts disposed his troops to surround it. They came into action on January 3, and next day Sheppard's brigade caught up with and fought a severe engagement with the Germans who were retreating from Beho-beho; but once more they succeeded in slipping past the British. The brunt of this sharp struggle was borne by the Legion of Frontiersmen, and their casualties included Captain F. C. Selous.

From Beho-beho the Germans retreated to Kibambawe, where there was a bridge across the Rufiji. The bridge had been damaged by the floods, and had been constantly bombed by British aeroplanes. When the 1st Brigade, which had been rejoined by the Baluchis and the Kashmiris, arrived at Kibambawe, on January 5, it found that the Germans had repaired the bridge, crossed to the right bank, and had afterwards removed the whole roadway of the bridge. General Sheppard, however, pushed some of his troops over the river on the 6th and 7th. Clearly he was not in sufficient strength to proceed further with offensive operations, and it is difficult to see what he hoped to gain. The inevitable result was that his men, particularly the Punjabis, suffered severe losses from the accurate gun-fire of the Germans to which they could make no effective reply.

On the 8th Smuts arrived at Kwa Mkalinzo, and had a conference with Beves, who still held the bridgehead. But his men were exhausted, and Smuts thought it advisable to withdraw them from Kwa Mkalinzo, and concentrate on the right bank of the river where they originally had crossed it. Some ten days later Cunliffe's Nigerians were despatched to Kwa Mkalinzo, and moved forward to Luhembero, which was occupied on the 18th. At the same time Sheppard and Beves cleared the south side of the river at Kibambawe, and then Cunliffe followed the retreating Germans in a south-easterly direction. German forces, as a result of Smuts' advance, withdrew from Kisangire and Mkamba, and crossed the Rufiji at Utete.

While Smuts had been pushing von Lettow-Vorbeck back over the Rufiji, the movement of part of the 1st division towards the delta of that river had begun. Marching north from Kabati, the troops reached Mohoro, on the south of the delta, on January 16. General Smuts' plan had contemplated a great encircling movement south of the Rufiji, but at this time the

SMUTS GOES TO LONDON

gap between the most westerly force of the 1st division at and north of Ngarambi, and Cunliffe at Luhembero, was far too wide to admit of its realisation, at least by Smuts himself. For on January 20 he handed over the command to General Hoskins, and sailed for Dar-es-Salaam, accompanied by General van Deventer. He had been asked by General Botha to go to London to represent the South African Union at the sittings of the War Cabinet, and he had consented to do so.

On January 15 the War Office issued the subjoined statement, which was at once an effective appreciation of Smuts' work and an excellent summary of the position.

The military situation in East Africa is fortunately such as to make the change of command and some reorganization comparatively simple, and, indeed, the steps that are now contemplated, in consequence of the sudden demand for General Smuts' services elsewhere, are those which would have been taken in any case very shortly. In February, 1916, when General Smuts assumed command, the whole of German East Africa and some portion of British territory was in enemy possession. At the present time, eleven months later, nothing of German East Africa remains to the enemy, except a comparatively small and unimportant area in the south and south-east, where his retiring forces are collecting. The enemy does not possess a single railway, town, or seaport. His forces, in consequence of casualties and desertion, are much reduced in strength and moral; his loss in artillery has been considerable; his food supply is dwindling, and he is compelled to remain where he has established magazines. Scanty and shrinking transport resources restrict his power of movement.

During the last ten days operations on the Mgeta front have caused the enemy to retire across the Rufiji, over which we now hold an important crossing, and can move as occasion requires. On the other fronts the enemy has given way during the same period, evidently in agreement with a plan for a general withdrawal to fresh lines. In these circumstances it has been possible to accede to the request of the Union Government, and arrange for the release of General Smuts from the East African command.

That the conquest in all its completeness of German East Africa took a much longer time than the above statement would seem to indicate was probably due in large measure to the fact that five days after General Hoskins had succeeded Smuts, as has been said, heavy rains set in, and continued, for an unprece-

CONQUEST OF GERMAN EAST AFRICA

dented number of weeks, with a violence unparalleled for many years. Operations on any considerable scale became so difficult as to be practically impossible until the rainy season was past. In a despatch, dated May 30, and published on December 25, 1917, General Hoskins stated that in the Mgeta and Rufiji valley roads, which had been constructed with much skill and labour, and over which in January motor transport ran continuously, were traversed with hardship a month later by porters wading for miles in water above their waists. In dry weather the line of communication between Dodoma, on the Central Railway, and Iringa crossed the Great Ruaha by an easy ford. During that abnormally wet period supplies had to be transported not only over a flooded river, but also over a swamp on each side of it six feet deep and as many miles wide. The valley of the Rufiji and its affluents became a vast lake.

It was not possible that in such untoward circumstances General Hoskins could undertake offensive operations on a large scale. Before the rains fell, Utete was occupied by the 2nd East African brigade on January 21, and by the beginning of February the north bank of the Rufiji was practically cleared of German troops. During the latter month there was little change in that area. Lieut.-commander Garbett, of the Navy, made an accurate survey of the delta, and so enabled supplies to be sent regularly by the river to Utete. Hoskins devoted his energies to the work of reorganization. By this time most of the officers and men of the 3rd division had gone back to South Africa, and it had been decided to return the 2nd division there also. This left the command too weak, as it stood, to assume the offensive at the end of the rainy season.

But steps were taken to increase the King's African Rifles, to reinforce the troops from West Africa, and to bring the Indian regiments up to full strength. The former divisional arrangement of the expeditionary force had become unsuitable, and Hoskins reconstituted his army into columns proportionate to the operations in view, once the ground was sufficiently dry. He saw further to a large increase in the medical service, procured quantities of light motor lorries from England, South Africa, and India, began building a railway from Dodoma south towards Iringa, and pushed forward a tramway from Kilwa.

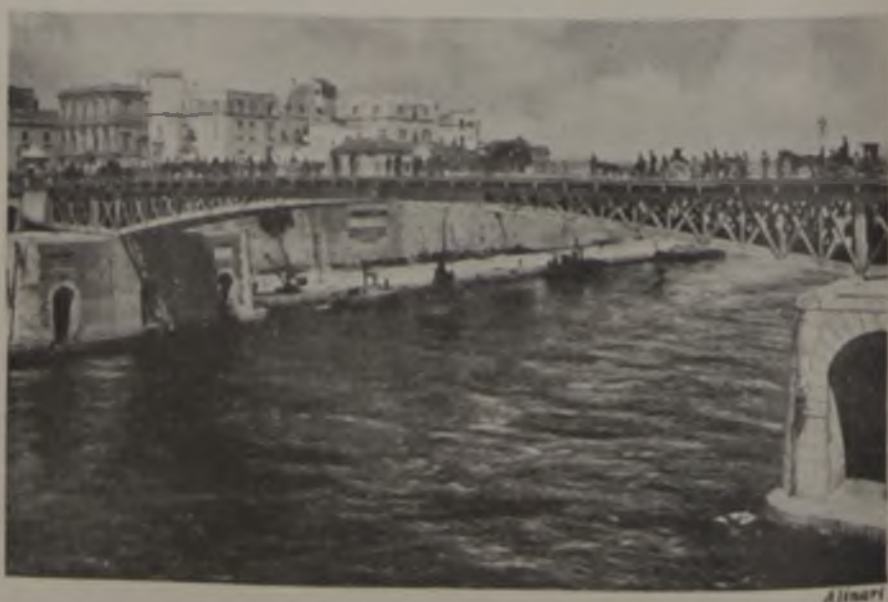
His great problem was the recruitment of carriers. The response of the native population to the call for carriers had



ITALIAN RETREAT FROM CAPORETTO. In October, 1917, the Germans and Austrians inflicted a terrible defeat on the Italians in the battle of Caporetto. The illustration shows the Italian 3rd Army retreating along one of the roads near the Lower Isonzo.



The city and harbour of Trieste. Formerly a seaport of Austria, it passed to Italy after the war. The harbour was raided by an Italian naval force on the night of December 9-10 (see plate 61).



The iron swing bridge across the canal at Taranto, Italy, which admits the largest war-vessels. The seaport was an important naval base in the war.

SCENES OF ITALY'S NAVAL ACTIVITY

DEVENTER IN COMMAND

been remarkable, but the loss from disease and sickness was at all times heavy, and it was not lessened by the difficulties that were experienced in providing for them the food to which they were accustomed. Natives whose staple diet was fruit and beans, etc., suffered severely when placed upon a diet of cereals. Sufficient care was not always exercised to ensure that the porters received suitable rations. As the result of all these factors the carrier corps of the British forces was seriously depleted by the spring of 1917, and the conditions of labour and the severe losses were producing a marked effect upon the sources of recruitment.

General Hoskins' problem was twofold. He had to increase his numbers very considerably from a shrunken and reluctant source of supply, and he had to take strong measures for the better protection of the health of the carriers. The latter task was materially lightened by the formation of the African Native Medical corps, which did such excellent work throughout the continuance of the campaign that by the middle of 1918 only seven per cent. of the carriers were in hospital. The former task was solved more summarily. So serious a view did the British authorities take of the position that a Compulsory Service act was put into operation during 1917. Largely by this means General Hoskins was able to bring his complement of carriers up to required strength by the time the end of the rains once again permitted operations. But Hoskins himself was not to see the results of the hard and valuable work of reorganization that he had carried out. On May 17 the War Office announced that General van Deventer had been appointed to the East African command in succession to General Hoskins, who was transferred to the command of a division in Palestine.

When Deventer took over the campaign his forces consisted of Imperial, South African, and Rhodesian white troops to the extent of about forty per cent., and of Indian soldiers about twenty-five per cent., the remainder, or not quite thirty-five per cent., being native east or west Africans, officered like the Indians by whites. The points of concentration were Kilwa and Lindi on the coast, the central Rufiji district, and Iringa and Songea in the west. Kilwa and Lindi were his new sea bases.

His task appeared to be comparatively simple if the exact wording of the War Office memorandum on the retirement of General Smuts be accepted as evidence. Von Lettow-Vorbeck's position was clearly difficult in the extreme, if not hopeless. By

CONQUEST OF GERMAN EAST AFRICA

the end of February his forces had been driven from the north bank of the Rufiji, and after the loss of Utete he had withdrawn farther and farther south until by the middle of May his main force was concentrated on the right bank of the Matunda. Battle, disease, war weariness, and desertion had made ravages amongst his troops, and he was seriously handicapped by the limited field at his disposal. Stores were running low, and the old problem of ammunition supply was threatening to become acute, most of his larger guns being useless by reason of the complete lack of suitable shells.

In addition to the forces under his personal command on the Matunda river, there were various other bodies in the south and west. The chief of these was the force in the Mahenge plateau formerly under Major-General Wahle. Lettow-Vorbeck had transferred Wahle to the Lindi area of operations in succession to Captain Loof, and Captain Tafel had taken over the command of the Mahenge body. Besides this force, and the Lindi force there were small detachments scattered on the west of the region round Mahenge, along the Rovuma river, and in small bands towards Kilwa on the coast. These various bodies were separated by long stretches of difficult country and often by allied forces occupying intervening positions. Von Lettow-Vorbeck was theoretically surrounded. The Portuguese barred his escape to the south, Northey's columns were slowly pressing the defenders of the Mahenge plateau farther east, the columns from Deventer's old command at Iringa drove them south, von Lettow-Vorbeck's own force was being pushed steadily down to the Rovuma, and lastly, the way of escape by sea was barred by the British navy.

In practice his position was not quite so hopeless. Ever since he had been driven from the Muguru mountains he had been contemplating breaking into Portuguese territory, and being reasonably convinced that he could cross the Rovuma any time he wished, he could concentrate without anxiety on the defence of the only part of German East Africa still unconquered.

The country across which the final stages of the campaign were about to be fought, was some of the most difficult in the whole colony. Particularly suited to defence, it offered the chance for a small central force to "contain" a force of opponents, many times its own size, and von Lettow-Vorbeck was confident that the war could be prolonged for several months.

GENERAL DEVENTER'S PLAN

The pruning of his army which he had carried out during the rains had materially added to his effectiveness. Ruthlessly dismissing all war-weary and sick men, he found himself at the end of May in command of a small but compact body of seasoned veterans thoroughly accustomed to the particular defensive tactics he favoured.

Deventer himself was directing the operations in this area. His plan of operations consisted in a converging advance from three sides, south from Utete, east from Iringa and Songea, and west from some point on the coast. In this connexion he had the alternative of using Kilwa or Lindi as his main base. Lindi appears to have offered the greater chances of success, for an energetic advance from there along the valley of the Lukuledi river would have taken the Germans in the rear, and if a junction could be made with Northey advancing from the west, would have cut off the retreat of the Germans into Portuguese territory.

Deventer rejected Lindi for two reasons. In the first place he preferred the direct as opposed to the subtle method of attack; in his own words his task was to "find the enemy and hit him hard." Near Lindi were few Germans; but near Kilwa were many. In the second place, the harbour at Lindi was poor compared with the one at Kilwa, and in a campaign, the success of which would be largely determined by the suitability of bases, Kilwa had much to commend it.

A small force was nevertheless landed at Lindi and made good the estuary of the river after driving off the weak German detachments defending it. But Deventer's main pressure was directed down the valley of the Matunda from Kilwa. By the end of the month the Germans had been pushed back from seven to nine miles from the position they had held south of the Ngaura river, and had withdrawn to a new one astride the tracks leading towards Lindi, Liwale and Masasi. Before the end of May, not only was this operation begun, but an encircling movement against Captain Tafel on the Mahenge plateau was also started. This was being undertaken by Belgian and British forces operating from the Iringa district in conjunction with General Northey's column from Songea.

Van Deventer made slow but steady progress. Consisting of broken country covered for the most part with dense bush, the hinterland of Kilwa was particularly ill-suited to military opera-

CONQUEST OF GERMAN EAST AFRICA

tions. There were practically no roads, and such poor tracks as existed were impossible for transport. Broad paths had to be cut through the scrub and made available for the advance of troops. The advance could not therefore begin in earnest until the end of June. On July 12, van Deventer's right column drove the Germans from Utegere, and progressed six miles to Mainokwe. It then moved eastwards towards Chakama, in co-operation with his centre and left columns, and after some fighting reached Roango on the 15th. Here road cutting caused delay, and two days later it was discovered that von Lettow-Vorbeck had evacuated Chakama, one portion of his troops retreating south west towards Likavaga, and another, which was the more numerous, falling back on Narongombe, lying about 73 miles south west of Kilwa.

On July 19, Deventer attacked the principal German positions at Kilwa. Commanded by Captain von Liebermann, the Germans fought extremely well. The result of the day's fighting was indecisive, but Liebermann decided to retire. Von Lettow-Vorbeck severely criticised this decision, maintaining that the force of the British attack was spent and that Liebermann missed a golden opportunity for a counter-stroke. There is some justification for such a view in that Beves, who commanded the Kilwa column, was not in a position to continue his advance towards Mbemkuru, whither Liebermann had retired, until the middle of September.

Deventer had slightly modified his original intention, the success of the landing at Lindi under General O'Grady persuading him to organize an advance from that port in conjunction with the Kilwa movement. O'Grady was therefore ordered to move forward, and he set out from Lindi on August 2. Proceeding along the road leading south-west towards Nyangao and Masasi, forty and seventy-five miles respectively from Lindi, he drove the Germans out of their advanced positions on a stream called the Mihambwe, at a point about ten miles distant from the town, and a place known as Schaedel's farm was occupied. On the following day the main German positions on the Mihambwe were attacked frontally and on the flanks. British askaris gained some ground in the frontal assault, but the flanking attack on the German right was a failure, as the troops encountered strongly posted defences which were concealed in the thick bush, and were unable to make headway.

DESPERATE FIGHTING

The British entrenched what ground had been won, and the Germans withdrew farther along the Lindi-Masasi road.

Before the Kilwa movement was resumed, General Hannington, who had been seriously ill, had taken over his old command, and General Beves had been transferred to Lindi. Reinforcements consisting of new troops from India and the Nigerian brigade had arrived, and after strenuous efforts the problem of transport across the almost waterless desert had been effectively dealt with. The plan was to advance south west, while the force from Lindi struck north west. If these movements were successful von Lettow-Vorbeck would be surrounded.

General Hannington moved forward on September 19, and after a sharp engagement drove the Germans from the positions covering the water holes at Mihambwe. Pressure by his troops at this point resulted in the evacuation by the Germans of Mihambwe, after bitter resistance, and their retreat to Mpingo, a distance of seven or eight miles. Simultaneously other British columns moved on to attack a larger force strongly established at Ndessa, about fifteen miles south west of Mihambwe. On the 21st a threat of envelopment forced the Germans out of Ndessa, and on the 23rd the whole body, pursued by the British, was retreating towards the Mbemkuru when it found its line of retreat barred near Maverenye by Nigerian infantry. But in the engagement which ensued the Germans managed to break through and continue their retreat to the river.

On the 25th, the British secured the important crossings over the Mbemkuru at Nakiku, and a strong column marched towards Nahungu, the principal German supply depot, and met with little opposition. Meanwhile mounted troops, making a wide move on the west flank, had effectually destroyed other food depots between the river and the Kilwa-Liwale road, and had advanced close to Nangano, an important supply centre at the place where the main Liwale-Masasi road crossed the Mbemkuru. Farther south the Lindi column, on September 24, engaged the Germans under General Wable in strong positions near Mtua, and after severe fighting, which lasted for two days, ejected them, causing a retreat to Mtama, about five miles north-east of Nyangao. As October opened, heavy fighting was going on midway between Mtwā and Mtama, and higher up on the road to Nangano, about eight miles south of Nahungu, a bitter struggle was beginning.

CONQUEST OF GERMAN EAST AFRICA

While these various movements were being conducted by the British forces under Deventer in the Kilwa and Lindi areas, with the result that the Germans were being pushed southward in the direction of the Portuguese frontier, the combined efforts of the Belgians and the British in the Mahenge area had also brought the end measurably nearer. From their base on the Central Railway the Belgians, owing to transport difficulties and the necessity for organizing a centre of supply, did not make an appearance in force in this region till August. In the meantime the British forces from Iringa, Lupembe, and Songea had driven the Germans towards Mahenge. South east of Iringa the Germans had been compelled to retreat from their strong lines on the Ruipa river, and the British column marched on towards Ifakara's. Farther south of Lupembe, one part of Northey's command was moving on Mpepo's and Mahenge, 100 miles away; while another part, in the Songea district, had driven the enemy north of the Songea-Liwale road in the direction of Mahenge. East of Mahenge the Germans had retired from Kitope, and were making for Madaba.

During August a Belgian column under Commandant Hubert, which had come from Dodoma, on the railway, co-operated with the British in the Iringa district, and another Belgian force, commanded by Major Bataille, which had started out from Kilosa, ejected the Germans from their posts north of the Ruaha river, and drove them to its southern bank. By August 31, the convergent advance of the Belgian and British troops had succeeded in clearing the Germans out of the country between the Ruaha and the Ulanga—also called the Kilombero—rivers, and all the German detachments in that area were now south of the Ulanga. On the other hand, a German force, which had for some time been closely invested at Mpepo's, 65 miles southwest of Mahenge, contrived by forming small parties to get out during the night of August 27 and escape.

On August 29 the Anglo-Belgian troops from Iringa joined up with the Belgians from Kilosa. The latter had effected the crossing of the Ulanga at a point ten miles east of Ifakara's, and within thirty-three miles of Mahenge, and it was at Ifakara's that the allied forces met. The main operations against Mahenge now were left in the hands of the Belgians.

By the second week of September the pressure on the Germans in the Mahenge area had become very pronounced. The Belgians

THE BELGIANS ADVANCE

crossed the Ulanga, and moved on Mahenge from the north. They had successfully negotiated the marshy tracts beside the river, in spite of keen opposition, and now were about thirty miles from their objective. In the south west the Lupembe column, continuing its pursuit of the force from Mpepo's, had occupied Malinje, eighteen miles north-east of the former place. The Germans, however, did not retreat towards Mahenge, but in the direction of Liwale, as doubtless they had heard of the advance of the Belgians towards the plateau. About the same time there was heavy fighting at Mponda's, rather more than fifty miles south of Mahenge. Several of Northey's forces attacked for days, and the enemy counter-attacked with great stubbornness. On September 6 British aircraft co-operated with the infantry, setting fire to the German rampart of trees, and engaging the defenders with machine-gun fire from a height of 700 feet, and by the 9th the British had broken through.

Captain Tafel, who was now promoted to colonel, opposed to the advance of the Belgians from the Ulanga a skilful and obdurate resistance. Taking advantage of naturally good defensive positions in the Kalimoto hills, he succeeded in holding them up for about seven days, and when compelled to give way retired to strongly prepared lines north and west of Mahenge, where he again stood his ground. According to a Belgian computation, he still had about 2,000 men. On October 7 the Belgians attacked him on a wide front on the hills situated to the north east and north west of the town, and captured his first line of trenches, after severe fighting in which both sides suffered considerable losses. They then assailed his second and last line of defence, and though he struggled desperately to stop their advance, succeeded in penetrating it in one or two places.

Tafel then decided to order a general retreat. His forces, severely punished in the heavy fighting of the last two months, had been further depleted by desertion. Mahenge was no longer defensible, and the only road of escape still open to him was south eastwards towards von Lettow-Vorbeck. Even this avenue was doubtful. British forces everywhere threatened his line of march, and he was compelled to retreat due south into the mountains. The way to Mahenge was open, and on the morning of October 9 the Belgians under Major Müller marched into the town. A number of German Europeans and askaris were taken prisoner, and several British and Belgian captives were released.

CONQUEST OF GERMAN EAST AFRICA

In the main theatre—the Kilwa-Lindi areas, including their hinterlands—strong British columns were pressing forward in October by each of the three principal tracks connecting the lower valleys of the Mbemkuru and Lukuledi rivers. One from Nakiku was marching by way of Mputva on Nyangao, a second from Nahungu had the same objective but through Rwangwa, while a third from Mlemba, forty odd miles south east of Liwale, advanced on Lukuledi, which lay west of Nyangao. In the valley of the Lukuledi the Germans still occupied their prepared positions about Mtama, covering the roads leading to this place. On October 11 the column from Mlemba by a rapid march took and occupied Ruponda, an important meeting-place of tracks on the Mwera plateau, and flanking the line of retreat taken by von Lettow-Vorbeck's main body, whose rearguard was being attacked by the column from Nahungu. From Ruponda it established itself at Lukuledi mission on the 17th, after a march by a waterless track of twenty-four miles and a sharp encounter with the enemy, who withdrew eastwards during the night. But von Lettow-Vorbeck, with his chief forces, succeeded in getting across the Mwera plateau and in reaching Mahiwa, four miles from Nyangao. Deventer now began a determined and vigorous assault on the positions at Mtama and Nyangao.

In conjunction with an enveloping movement from the north by the Nigerians, who had marched across the difficult Mwera plateau from the Mbemkuru river, a general attack was launched on the German lines at Mtama, which had been strongly fortified, and were held with courage and resolution. General Wahle had been driven back by Beves to Mahiwa, and was so hard pressed that von Lettow-Vorbeck himself had moved to his support with four companies. The German forces were concentrated on a front two to three miles wide. Beves attacked vigorously on the 15th, and by next day the Germans had retired from Nyangao.

The new position taken up by the Germans occupied a ridge on the south side of the river and some two miles from Nyango. Very strong in itself and courageously defended by the Germans, it resisted the most persistent attacks made by the British. The losses during the 17th were serious, and von Lettow-Vorbeck, seizing his chance with admirable skill, launched a series of fierce counter-attacks on Beves' men during the night of the 17th and throughout the 18th. Clever turning

THE MAHENGE AREA

movements and the fire of the German attack forced the British backwards, and by the evening of the 18th they had retired to their old positions on the river.

General Beves ordered the attack to be renewed on October 19. Deventer, however, cancelled the order in the morning, and during the day, General Cunliffe took over the command of the Lindi forces. Over 2,700 casualties had been incurred out of a force numbering under 5,000, the Nigerian brigade alone losing 528 men.

The Kilwa forces of the British were still threatening, and hearing that a column was approaching Lukuledi, von Lettow-Vorbeck wisely decided to break off the pursuit of the defeated Lindi forces and retire to the position south of the river that he had taken up on October 16. He had gained 18 days' grace, for General Cunliffe was not ready to advance again until November 6. But there was little else to show for the German victory, and so hopeless did the position appear to Dr. Schneec that on October 24 he urged von Lettow-Vorbeck to surrender, but in vain. But the threat of the column approaching Lukuledi was not to be overlooked, and he was compelled to abandon his position south of Nyangao and hasten to its relief. He concentrated his forces at Chiwata.

In the Mahenge area of operations conditions were even worse for the German cause. After his retreat from Mahenge, Colonel Tafel, as has been said, was compelled to strike into the mountains to the south. Two of General Northey's columns were unpleasantly near to his flank, but by a rapid march in which he lost many of his troops from fatigue and desertion, Tafel just managed to get clear, and thereafter outdistanced his opponents. Northey's columns were hundreds of miles from their base, and already their transport facilities had reached breaking point. Any further advance was only possible with enormous effort and at a painfully slow speed. For a month Tafel managed to maintain his position south of Mahenge; but by this time communication with his superior had practically ceased, and beyond knowing vaguely that von Lettow-Vorbeck was in the Lindi area, Tafel was ignorant of the whole position. The pressure of British forces was increasing and his position was rapidly becoming untenable. He decided to abandon defensive tactics, to break away from Mgangira round which he had concentrated, and to strike south east to join von Lettow-

CONQUEST OF GERMAN EAST AFRICA

Vorbeck. By this time, however, Belgian forces had reached Hiwale, and all hope of a junction of the two German commanders was therefore doomed to disappointment.

By the beginning of November, the lengthening lines of supply which connected the Belgians on the Mahenge plateau with their base at Kilosa, had threatened to snap. The Belgians had, however, achieved their purpose and nothing was to be gained by continuing the southward pursuit of Tafel, who could safely be left to the forces at Kilwa and those of General Northey. The Belgians had accordingly withdrawn from the fighting and most of the force had returned to the Congo. A small body under Commandant Heurien, had earlier proceeded by way of Dar-es-Salaam, to Kilwa, and advancing rapidly westwards, had occupied Hiwale on October 20. They thus became the advanced guard of the Kilwa forces and completed Tafel's envelopment.

But, although they had shut off his escape to the south east, the Belgians did not succeed in preventing Tafel from moving due south. Leaving Mgangira on November 14, he had retreated rapidly in the direction in which he hoped to find von Lettow-Vorbeck. Harried by British and Belgian troops, he was confronted by two small detachments of Northey's force on November 15 at Mandebe, some forty miles south west of Hiwale. The British troops threw themselves in his path, and although they were unable to stop him, they inflicted severe losses upon his demoralised troops and captured a large number of prisoners. By this time, Deventer's forces had reached Hiwale and took over the pursuit from the Belgians, who returned to the Congo.

Tafel continued southward and finally reached the Rovuma river. At that time he was quite near to von Lettow-Vorbeck, who was only a few miles to the east and just about to cross into Portuguese territory, but Tafel could get no news of his commander, and bitterly disappointed, he turned north again. His troops lacked food and ammunition and were deserting in hundreds. A day or two later he ran into a small Indian patrol, and his troops, seized by a panic, fled south again. Unless he crossed the Rovuma, Tafel was lost. But he lacked the determination of von Lettow-Vorbeck, and it is in any event doubtful if his troops would have followed him. For two more days Tafel evaded capture. But on November 27, 37 Germans, 178 Askaris and over 1,000 followers surrendered to the pursuing forces, and on the next day at a point south west of Nevala, Tafel and the

NEARING THE END

remainder of his command, numbering 111 Germans, over 1,200 Askaris, and 2,200 other natives, gave themselves up. This surrender marked the end of all resistance on German soil. No German soldier was left in arms in the colony, for von Lettow-Vorbeck had already crossed the Rovuma river. The conquest of German East Africa was completed.

The story of von Lettow-Vorbeck's escape into Portuguese territory and his subsequent exploits, provides one of the romances of the war. After the defeat of Beves' column at Mahiwa on October 18 and the ensuing withdrawal of the enemy to Lukuledi in order to oppose the advance of the British column which was threatening that place, a lull occurred in the major operations. General Cunliffe, who had taken over Beves' command, was unable to resume his forward march until November 6. The operations in the Lukuledi valley were partly contingent upon the ability of Cunliffe's column to co-operate, and although Deventer pushed forward along the valley, his progress was slow until Cunliffe began to move. But so rapid did the progress of both columns then become, that for a day or two it appeared that von Lettow-Vorbeck was trapped. His position was certainly desperate. His carriers and his troops were exhausted, his only remaining base, Chiwata, where were all his stores, was hourly becoming more untenable, his ammunition was scarce, and he was burdened by a great number of sick and wounded. If he remained at Chiwata he would certainly be surrounded, but to abandon, it was equivalent to cutting himself off from his base.

But it was necessary to act quickly. Leaving only a small rearguard of his best troops to put up as long a delaying action as possible, he evacuated Chiwata on November 12 with all the stores he could carry, and moved eastward with what speed he could. His route lay along the edge of the Lukondi plateau and right across the front of the Lindi column. But he had to take the risk. What he hoped to achieve and what he did achieve was to escape from his position between the Kilwa and the Lindi columns of his opponents. By moving eastward he got in front of both of them. The result of this daring manœuvre was seen the same day. The Kilwa and Lindi forces united on November 12, but von Lettow-Vorbeck had slipped away. He had exchanged the serious risk of being enveloped for the less serious risk of being pursued.

CONQUEST OF GERMAN EAST AFRICA

General O'Grady occupied Chiwata on the 14th. A large number of prisoners were taken, together with many stores, and there was so much evidence of the demoralised state of von Lettow-Vorbeck's command that van Deventer abandoned his policy of attempted envelopment and pressed hard in pursuit of his enemy. For four days the British columns marched on the heels of the retreating Germans. Von Lettow-Vorbeck's line of retreat was marked by exhausted porters, sick askari, and discarded rifles, accoutrement, guns and stores. Time and again he was compelled to throw a rearguard into action against his pursuers ; time and again he suffered heavy losses in casualties and prisoners. By November 17 he had reached his last camp, Nambindinga. He had lost nearly all his stores, most of his troops were worn out, all of them were half-starving and his ammunition was nearly spent.

He therefore decided upon a fateful step. Abandoning all ideas of orthodox defence of selected positions, he resolved to give up fixed bases, drastically to reduce his wearied and starving forces, leave all his wounded and sick behind him and with a small body of tried veterans break away from his pursuers to a district where food was to be found, and thereafter maintain himself as a guerrilla leader living upon the country.

It is in the nature of a strange coincidence that as von Lettow-Vorbeck had been relieved by blockade runners on two previous occasions of crisis, so a third time he came within three days of receiving succour. Had he postponed for a few days his decision to abandon resistance, it is more than probable that he would have received supplies of priceless value.

During 1917, a German Zeppelin, L 59, had been so active and effective along the eastern European front, that it had earned for itself the name of the " Balkan Terror." In November the German authorities decided to put the recklessness of its commander von Buttar to other uses, and loading his ship with medical and other stores, they directed him to fly to the relief of von Lettow-Vorbeck. Leaving Yambol, in Bulgaria, on the 21st, von Buttar crossed the Mediterranean and, keeping along the edge of the Libyan desert, reached Khartoum two days later. He was seen by the Egyptian authorities and caused great consternation, as they were persuaded that his objective was the bombing of the great dam at Assuan. But on November 23, he was notified by wireless that East Africa was occupied, as

THE TASK COMPLETED

indeed was the case. Turning northward again, he covered the return journey in safety and reached Yambol on November 25, after a non-stop flight of over 4,500 miles.

The attempt had failed; but had von Lettow-Vorbeck delayed his departure another day it is more than likely he would never have got away. So closely was he pursued that on November 18, the same day as he left Nambindinga, the British occupied the place. Fully confident that the struggle was over, they were surprised to find that only 900-1,000 Germans, of whom about 250 were Europeans, and most of whom were sick, fell into their hands. A number of guns and some heavy stores were also taken, but von Lettow-Vorbeck and the main body of his troops had slipped away southward "by an unsuspected path."

The British columns which had hastily formed in his rear, and after some delay had discovered his line of march, were hard on his heels. By the 21st they had reached Niwala only to find von Lettow-Vorbeck had just left it. Strenuous attempts were made to overtake him, but he had abandoned all his guns and most of his stores, and marching light, managed to keep ahead of his pursuers. On the night of November 25-26 he reached the Lujenda confluence and successfully crossed the Rovuma, into Portuguese territory, two days before Tafel and the survivors of the Mahenge defenders surrendered to the British.

General van Deventer's operations, in conjunction with those of the Belgians, had been crowned with success. In addition to depriving the Germans of their last and greatest overseas possession, he had inflicted upon them heavy losses. Between August 1 and November 30, said a War Office communiqué, there had been captured 1,140 Germans and other Europeans, 4,149 native soldiers, eleven guns, and fifty-six machine guns. And of these, 1,212 Europeans, 3,191 askaris, three guns, and thirty five machine guns were taken in November. The War cabinet sent Deventer a warm telegram of congratulation, mentioning among other things that in four months he had conquered nearly 50,000 square miles of hostile territory.

CHAPTER 19

The Passchendaele Fighting

THE spell of fine weather was broken on the evening of October 3 by a heavy gale and rain from the south-west." This brief sentence from Sir Douglas Haig's despatch records yet one further instance during the third battle of Ypres when the weather appeared to turn, maliciously, in favour of the enemy, on the eve of a battle. The engagement which took place during the first week of October is known as the battle of Broodseinde. Zero hour on October 4 was at 6.0 a.m., when the British offensive was renewed against the line of the ridge east of Zonnebeke. The attack was made chiefly over a distance of about seven miles from a point on the Menin road to the Ypres-Staden railway, but a limited operation on a mile front was also undertaken south of the Menin road against strong points which were of defensive value.

After the long series of local counter-attacks had failed General von Armin received three fresh divisions from Ludendorff's general reserve, among them being the 4th Guards division. With these supporting divisions he planned a counter-offensive on the grand scale. The date which he had chosen to launch this was the same morning of October 4. The waywardness of the weather could not have affected him in the same way as it did the British forces engaged, for he still held the advantage of higher and drier ground. He was the victim of a misjudgment so narrow that it must have been forgiven to any intelligence service. He miscalculated the hour of the British attack by ten minutes—and during those ten minutes the fortunes of the day were turned against him. His troops drawn up for the assault received the full weight of the British barrage. In the fierce artillery duel which followed the opening of the attack the advantage was always with the British troops.

The Australians and New Zealanders were stretched out in the centre of the battle-line, from Gravenstafel spur and Abraham Heights to Broodseinde and Molenaarlesthoek. North of them, from the Langemarck sector and the Poelcappelle

BROODSEINDE CROSSWAYS

sector to London Ridge, were Scottish and English regiments. South, from Polygon Wood to Tower Hamlets, was an English division—Midlanders, Surreys, West Countrymen, Lincolns, and Londoners—with one Scots battalion. The central thrust of the Anzac troops was victorious. It penetrated the enemy's lines to a depth of a mile and a quarter. In no man's land the Australian right wing, after withstanding the enemy's attacking barrage for half an hour, met the Prussian Guard, and struck the leading brigade of another German division just as it was about to storm forward. The collision occurred between two walls of gun fire. The German barrage was pounding on the Australian rear; the Australian barrage was more heavily thundering upon the German support and reserve positions.

The shells from the contending artilleries fell over the neutral zone, where the Australians worked upward against and through wave after wave of German infantry. Their entire objective was quickly reached, after a struggle by the Broodseinde crossways, and Australians and British stood side by side on the main German position in Flanders, looking down on the country stretching towards Bruges. Having stormed Mole-naarelsthoek and Broodseinde the Australians established themselves east of the crest line.

On the Australian southern wing there was some resistance at Retaliation Farm and Daisy Wood, but in a general way the Broodseinde plateau was won by so perfect an attack that there were no remarkable incidents connected with it. Complete confusion existed in the German lines. In the climb from Zonnebeke village few serious obstacles were encountered. The winding, shell-pitted road, the concreted cellars of ruined houses, the fortified cemetery and mill, and the newly-wired line on the tableland were overrun with comparative ease. In less than two hours the Australians were thrusting past the Broodseinde cross-roads, round which, three years before, there had been bitter fighting in 1914.

On the heights attacked by the New Zealanders, north of the Roulers railway, the enemy regiments were not caught in the open field. Not only were they purely on the defensive, but they were not aware that the German divisions on their left were about to attempt to recover Zonnebeke and Polygon Wood. All they knew was that the great German barrage was coming at dawn. So that the greater British barrage fell upon them with

THE PASSCHENDAELE FIGHTING

terrifying effect. The New Zealanders worked forward rapidly and skilfully. The swamp of the Hannebeek stretched between them and the heights they were set to take. Continuous British gun fire had lifted the brook out of its bed and turned it into innumerable rivulets through the mud. On the level ground men stuck up to their knees; in the shell-holes they went up to their belts. While they were struggling over nearly half a mile of bog in the river valley their barrage went ahead of them and was almost lost. As the hostile block-houses were strongly manned, the loss of the barrage would have meant practical disaster. But the men with great energy caught up their barrage and under its protection won a rapid victory.

Yet the resistance they met was very strong. The enemy commander had packed this part of the line with troops, either with a view to developing his expected victory round Polygon Wood, or to breaking a counter-thrust against his assaulting divisions. Otto Farm, close to the jumping-off place of the attack, was full of hostile machine guns, as the flashes through the loopholes quickly showed. The New Zealanders carried the redoubt, and went on to the stronger concrete work of Van Meulen, midway between Abraham Heights and Gravenstafel. For half an hour this stronghold held out.

There was a lively fight at Berlin Farm, above Gravenstafel, until the New Zealanders brought up Stokes guns and, flinging more than thirty rounds in less than two minutes at the fortress, captured this strong point. Above Gravenstafel there was a number of pill-boxes, from which a party of German gunners under an officer kept up a vigorous fire. These were finally surrounded and captured. On the left of the New Zealanders' line one of their battalions could see Germans on the Gravenstafel spur. Although they had to lose their barrage, they covered the concrete works on the hillside, and under sharp fire worked round the field forts and took numerous prisoners.

On the left of the Anzac force, between London Ridge and the Stroombeek and the Lekkerboterbeek and Poelcappelle road, South Midland troops (48th division) and other English forces went forward into the swamps commanded by the central part of the Passchendaele Ridge and the rises below Houthulst Forest. Against them was a German division, which was demoralised by the British guns. The only serious delay which the 48th division and their comrades encountered was at Wellington

THE 29th DIVISION

Farm, on the eastern side of the Stroombeek swamp. Yet even this stronghold was surrounded and bombed into submission within 20 minutes. The Midland men were swept by a very heavy German barrage as they were forming for the attack. Happily their preliminary casualties were slight, and it was after their victory that their powers of endurance were more severely tested. They were curtained off from their dressing-stations, and shelled steadily and heavily all night as they crouched in beating rain and cold wind in the open field.

On the north of the 48th division the enemy was stronger and more successful in his defence. He made a stand along the course of the Lekkerboterbeek and upon rising ground between that stream and Poelcappelle. Supported by tanks, English troops (11th and 4th divisions) advanced on both sides of the Poelcappelle road, captured the junction of highways running from Langemark and St. Julien, and, storming into the village, occupied the ruins of the church and the western half of the wrecked buildings, thus capturing the whole of their objectives for the day. Still farther northward, round the railway line running from Pilkem to Bruges, the Irish Fusiliers made a gallant thrust against a series of formidable enemy positions.

On the extreme north of the line troops of the 29th division engaged in a hotly contested action for the possession of a piece of rising ground known as 19 metre hill. This they captured and, after a temporary repulse in the afternoon, succeeded in retaining. On the north and in the centre the advance was complete. It brought the British troops within two thousand five hundred yards of Passchendaele village and the remaining section of ridge sheltering Roulers. The belfry of Bruges could be seen clearly from the new British line, and, although the enemy had some cover remaining around the high ground at Moorslede, his general position between Ypres and Roulers was seriously weakened. He remained, however, strong among the low rises of ground to the south in front of Menin. The range of low hills running from Messines to Passchendaele and Staden formed a system shaped like an S. Against the lower bend the enemy had ample ground for massing some of the guns of his 6th army, as well as part of the 4th army.

Although General von Armin had lost some of the highest points he yet retained swell after swell of ground eastward.

THE PASSCHENDAELE FIGHTING

Behind these rises was a fan of screened approaches, along which his troops could reach the firing-line. In particular, he had the valley of the Krommebeek, between Zandvoorde and Kruiseik hills, the Reutelbeek valley, between the Kruiseik rise and the Terhand heights, and the Heulebeek valley, between the Becelaere and Keiberg slopes and the clumps of Moorslede. British observers on the higher main ridge could not see down into these winding brook-threaded hollows, where the German infantry were safe from practically everything except howitzer fire directed by aeroplane observation.

The gate to Menin was only half open, and Sir Herbert Plumer, instead of again pushing directly against it, tried to wedge it asunder by a turning movement on the northern side. Immediately below the Australian centre battalions of the 7th division advanced from the northern face of Polygon Wood towards the Noordendhoek height on the Passchendaele Ridge. South of this force were troops of the 21st division, who were set to clear the land east of Polygon Wood and seize the village of Reutel. Farther south, troops from the 5th division fought forward over Gheluvelt hill into Polderhoek Château. To protect their flank other English troops moved forward south of the Menin road, from the neighbourhood of Tower Hamlets Ridge towards a short objective among the strong hostile works between Gheluvelt and Zandvoorde. All the British troops forming the southern wing were severely tried by bombardments and barrages. East of Polygon Wood were three battalions of storm troops of the German 45th division, assembled for advance in three waves, with an assault battalion to assist them.

Behind these shock forces were the 4th Foot Guards, who were waiting to take over the captured line. There was also another regiment in reserve ready to make a second assault if the first failed. All these forces were in close formation, and completely veiled in mist and darkness. But the British barrages smashed up all waves and columns in a few minutes. As each German line crumpled under the blaze of shells the swifter British troops were upon them. For there was no answering counter-barrage from the German guns to interfere with the steady surge of the British infantry. The men of the 7th division worked forward over the crest alongside the Australians. They reached the dominating point of Noordendhoek, on the road between Broodseinde and Becelaere. Owing to the destructive effect of

THE REUTEL SECTOR

the British barrages upon the enemy's forces, the attacking troops met with little opposition among the hills just below the crest village. There was some machine gun fire from two redoubts upon the cross-roads, but these strong points were reduced without much difficulty.

In the Reutel sector, immediately below the scene of the Noordendhoek victory, the 21st division had a shorter objective, but a more arduous task. They had to advance against the enfilading gunfire from the enemy's southern parks of artillery. The enemy also possessed in the lower Reutelbeek valley a sheltered passage of reinforcement, extending for a mile westward of Reutel village. When the five waves of enemy attacking forces were caught unexpectedly by the British barrages, their machine gunners in the defensive works were equally taken at a disadvantage. No German had been thinking of defence. Many of the crews in the concrete works had come out to assist, with covering machine gun fire, in the proposed rushes by the shock troops. Most of them were broken, and those that remained were unable to check the advance against them.

The whole of Reutel village was taken, and one of the tanks, crawling onward with attendant infantry, passed the cemetery towards Becelaere. Had all gone well on the extreme flank by the Menin road, Reutel could have been easily held, and the Becelaere Hill positions seriously menaced. But the forces who were working through the upper Reutelbeek valley were impeded by the muddy state of the ground. The 5th division had to work forward from Veldhoek and Cameron house, towards Polderhoek château and the northern flank of Gheluvelt hill. In their first fine attack they carried the ground beyond the rise on which the manor house stood, and kept up with the troops advancing on Reutel.

The German machine gunners emerged from the ruins of the château on the hill above the valley of the Reutelbeek, and began to sweep with fire all the low ground northwards as far as Reutel village. About the same time the enemy guns between Zandvoorde and Comines covered all the southern British lines, new and old, with a blanket of shells, while strong counter-attacking columns of infantry worked up the river valley and pressed upon the line between Reutel and Gheluvelt hill. The attacking troops had to draw back towards Polderhoek château. There they discovered the German garrisons in their rear.

THE PASSCHENDAELE FIGHTING

To add to the confusion, a British force in the covert failed to receive the order to retire to the new midway line, and had to be rescued. Once more the British wing went forward, fighting through the enemy positions that had been neglected between the Polygonbeek and the Reutelbeek, and overcoming the garrison of the Polderhoek manor house. There then remained a slight dent in the new British front between Reutel and Gheluvelt hill, and fresh German forces obtained room to make a flanking as well as a frontal attack upon the Englishmen in Reutel village. In spite however, of continuous attempts to break into the bent British flank, the line between Reutel and Polderhoek held firm against all the enemy's savage thrusts. Seven counter-attacks were beaten off by exceedingly heavy fighting, and though late in the day an eighth assaulting force succeeded in wresting the eastern part of Reutel village and the Polderhoek spur from the 5th division, the enemy failed to win back to the main part of the ground he had lost. South of the Menin road other English troops, about Tower Hamlets, successfully made a short advance, so as to keep in line with the forces on the other side of the Menin gate. In the general operations more than five thousand German prisoners were captured.

Documents captured during the course of the battle of October 4 showed that General von Ludendorff and his lieutenants were aware of the fact that their latest novel method of defence was a failure. They had first tried the Hindenburg tunnel system. The tunnel system was condemned by Ludendorff, who gave an order that all tunnels should be partly blown up. The heavy concrete block-house system was then developed. When, in turn, the concrete forts were mastered Ludendorff was obliged to return to the old practice of holding his foremost positions in considerable strength.

At this stage the British line had been established along the main ridge for 9,000 yards from the starting point near Mount Sorrel and there had been established, along the Menin road, a strong ridge line with a good defensive flank on the Gravenstafel spur. In these circumstances, Sir Douglas Haig began to doubt whether it was worth while to undertake the conquest of the remaining Passchendaele sector of the ridge before winter set in, for the state of the sodden and shell-ploughed ground was such as to make any further movement through the Ypres swamp seem almost impracticable. The British commander had to

HAIG'S PLANS

weigh the strength the enemy was receiving from the eastern theatre, and see that his own new lines were not merely jumping-off places for a fresh attack, but well-planned, defensive systems against a possible offensive by the enemy. Economy in territorial gains was becoming as important as economy in man-power.

On the other hand, Sir Douglas Haig was desirous of doing all that he possibly could to wear down the enemy's reserves, so that the reinforcements obtained by the German command from the Russian front would do little more than serve to replace some of the losses. In this regard, the documents captured from the enemy, showing that he was changing his tactics and putting more men into the firing line, had a considerable influence on the plans of the British commander. As he was still generally stronger in artillery than the enemy he saw that, by continuing the Ypres offensive for some weeks longer, he could so ravage the more densely filled hostile lines as to sap the enemy of much of his new strength, as this was being gradually transferred from Russia.

Furthermore, General Pétain had arranged an important French operation on the Aisne to take place in the third week of October. It was thus necessary for the British armies to continue to press the German armies severely, so as to keep the German line along the Aisne in its existing weak state. Sir Douglas Haig had found that the Germans were weakening along his southern front in their effort to maintain the defence to the north. The lines around Cambrai, in particular, were held with inferior forces, and the British commander was preparing to thrust over the Hindenburg line towards Cambrai, as the closing act in the Ypres campaign. He therefore could not relax his attacks upon the Passchendaele Ridge without giving the enemy time to redistribute his over-concentrated forces and strengthen himself on the Aisne plateau and around Cambrai and elsewhere. So this battle in the swamps was renewed, in heavy autumnal rain.

Sir Douglas Haig's decision to continue the battle at this juncture has been criticised by those most concerned upon the field, on the ground that it involved a useless loss of life to attain negligible objectives. It is only fair to note that after the war when, as Earl Haig, he published a volume of his complete despatches he added at this point a footnote which embodies the main arguments of Major-General Sir John

THE PASSCHENDAELE FIGHTING

Davidson, M.P., who, in a speech in the House of Commons on August 6, 1919, defended the commander-in-chief's action in resuming the Ypres offensive so late in the year. Sir John Davidson thus summarises the reasons which seemed to make a continuation of the offensive imperative:

(1) Since the breakdown of their July offensive the Russian armies had ceased to be a fighting force. (2) The fighting capacity of the French armies was at this time very seriously diminished by grave internal troubles. (3) The solidarity of the Allied front in the west was jeopardised by the great reverse suffered in the October of 1917 by the Italian armies. (4) America was not yet in a position to give any assistance on land. (5) The Russian collapse had set free large hostile forces which were rapidly being transferred to the western front. (6) The only Allied army capable of conducting serious offensive operations at this time was the British. (7) If the British offensive ceased, the enemy would regain the initiative and be free to attack wherever he thought the Allied line weakest. The condition of our Allies at this period was such that it was impossible to accept this risk while any alternative remained. (8) It followed that the British must continue to attack, until the coming of winter put an end for the time being to the danger of a German counter-stroke. (9) The German submarine campaign was at its height. Our own Admiralty were anxious about our communications across the Channel so long as Ostend and Zeebrugge remained in the enemy's hands.

In the face of this body of argument, even more relevant at the time, Sir Douglas Haig determined to deliver the next combined French and British attack on October 9. This renewed offensive is known officially as the "Battle of Poelcappelle." Sir Douglas Haig himself stated that he based his decision to continue the struggle for the ridge partly on the anticipation that at this time of the year, the weather would not be unusually wet. With an inevitability which marked every stage of the third battle of Ypres, rain continued to fall.

It would appear that the German commander was over-confident of the strength of his position in the morning of October 8, when the rain ceased for two hours, and left the watery swamp still obscured by a thick, damp mist. Once more German divisions were caught in the disorder of relief, and punished so severely that ground to the depth of twelve hundred yards was conquered without any serious check. The front of attack

A VANISHED VILLAGE

stretched from St. Janshoek, by Houthulst Forest, to Nieuwemolen, by Broodseinde Hill. In addition to this main assault a subsidiary operation was conducted around Reutel village. A French corps, formed out of the divisions under General Anthoine, advanced along the Corverbeek stream, on the southwestern outskirts of Houthulst Forest, to Zevekoten, Mangelaare, and Veldhoek hamlets. The British Guards fought alongside the French troops, and, crossing the Broenbeek water with them, captured Koekuit village and a large number of enemy strongholds on the southern edge of the forest.

On the right of the Guards, the 29th and 4th divisions worked along the Ypres-Staden railway and won a new line beyond the road running from Poelcappelle to Dixmude. Other English regiments (11th division) fought forward into Poelcappelle village and through the ruins as far as the brewery. Australian troops, and East Lancashire, Yorkshire, and South Midland territorials, attacked in the direction of Passchendaele village and the main ridge, reaching the crest and taking Nieuwemolen and Keerselaarhoek. In the southern action, Reutel was regained by the Warwickshire and H.A.C. battalions (7th division).

The French attack was carried out over very bad ground, but the swamp between the Corverbeek and the Broenbeek was occupied to a depth of a mile and a quarter on a front of a mile and a half. For three days before the infantry movement the French artillery swept each hostile strong point with heavy shells. Then at 5.30 a.m. on October 9 the French soldiers plunged into the marsh and, shielded by an extremely slow barrage, moved forward for two hours towards the vanished village of Mangelaare. Three years of modern warfare had reduced this one time prosperous village to a heap of rubble. Though Mangelaare had vanished it was more formidable than it had been when it existed. Its cellars had been extended and overlaid with concrete, making it a very strong fortress, submerged amid water, and mud that might have held up the advance. By the Mangelaare line the men who got through the mud rested, gathering strength from men rejoining their lost platoons and from supports who pushed forward for cleaning-up work. Only a short stop was made, and the Frenchmen then swept through Mangelaare with rapidity and, after another struggle, reached their final line on the fringe of Houthulst Forest by 10 a.m.

THE PASSCHENDAELE FIGHTING

Their average pace was about four hundred yards an hour. It was a creditable speed in the circumstances. The British guards had at times to fight desperately in order to keep up with the vehement Frenchmen. Dotting the marsh were many ruined block-houses and some uninjured strongholds from which the victors collected three hundred prisoners. Lannes Farm, Catinat Farm, London Square, Gambetta Square, and the organized cellars of Mangelaare were some of the intact fortresses around and through which the French had to work, under the fire of enemy machine-gunners and sharpshooters. No hostile block-house seriously checked the programme of the advance. The French attack had fallen on two enemy divisions engaged in a relief. Under the terrific bombardment and the unexpected infantry assault the enemy forces fell into complete disorder, and the French captured two guns as well as many machine guns.

The British guards had the same kind of ground to traverse as the French corps. In front of them was the little brook, Broenbeek, which had extended from little more than a ditch into an icy mud-flow, some fifty yards broad. Beyond this was a waste of pools and ooze, through which ran chaotic fragments of the Ypres-Dixmude road. The Broenbeek marsh was cleared by a Stokes gun bombardment, enabling the Irish Guards to advance some three hundred yards without a single casualty. The Germans were caught in the process of relief, and the Guards were able to take prisoners. Some of the Germans, however, rallied round Strode House. This was a large redoubt, entirely surrounded by wire entanglements, most of which was uncut. Men of the fresh 227th German division held this work, and by bursts of machine gun fire and musketry showed they were ready to offer a strong resistance. This was overcome and the stronghold captured by the Guards, who then pushed through Koekuit, in line with the French, and completed their advance at Paidherbe square. They took 400 prisoners.

On the right of the Guards was the 29th division, who went along the Staden and Bruges railway to the cross roads of Cinq Chemins, in line with the British Guards and the French corps. The enemy's resistance was stronger along the railway embankment, and some battalions lost many of their officers through having to attack a deep line of German works without the assistance of a close barrage. For while the men were slowly getting through the mud, the British gunners had to keep to the time-

POELCAPELLE VILLAGE

table, and sent their line of shell too far ahead of the infantry. Like the Guards in similar circumstances, the 29th division had quickly to rush block-house after block-house by means of strong bombing-parties in order to keep up the pace set by the French.

The enemy commander delivered his first counter-attack with remarkable rapidity at 8.30 a.m. At this time the French had not reached the fringe of the Houthoult Forest, neither had the Guards, who also were subjected to a counter-thrust. Moreover, the help of the British artillery could not be obtained, yet the spear-head of the British advanced troops completely broke up the enemy's storm troops with musketry and machine-gun fire. When at 10 a.m. another German force swarmed out of the forest, the attacking battalions had settled down, and their staff in the rear knew the exact line they had won. The result was that the second German counter-attack was wiped out by British field guns before the infantry could engage it.

Meanwhile the forces on the right, in the neighbourhood of Poelcappelle, found themselves unable to make all the progress necessary to cover the right flank of the advance. The enemy began furiously to bombard the salient created by the Cinq Chemins, and in order to save the troops from being assailed on two sides, they were commanded to retire for about a thousand yards towards the Poelcappelle-Staden road.

Round Poelcappelle village and the brewery on the West-roosebeek road there began a line of German works that stretched south-eastwards to Passchendaele crest and the spurs of the main ridge above Broodseinde. This proved a line of defensive victories for the enemy. For, although he lost the village of Poelcappelle, he stood firm above the swamps of the Watervliet-beek, the Lekkerboterbeek, Paddebeek, Stroombeek, and the Ravebeek, and broke the thrusting power of the English divisions that vainly endeavoured to reach the central high ground. The successful stand of the Germans was due to the adventitious strength of their positions. Bad weather and bad ground weakened the attacking forces and disastrously delayed their movements. They had lost their barrages and had become exhausted by the time they arrived within attacking distance of the enemy's main defences.

The Englishmen in the centre made strenuous endeavours to close round Passchendaele. They battled into the Staden-Zonnebeke system, between Adler Farm and the Ravebeek, and

THE PASSCHENDAELE FIGHTING

while some of them thrust upon the great hillside fortress of Bellevue, directly in front of Passchendaele, their comrades broke the enemy's line by Wolf Farm and Wallemolen, and endeavoured to work southward by Peter Pan House and thence outflank the Bellevue fortifications.

It is difficult to describe what happened, because the commanding officers did not know at the time what was occurring immediately beyond their view. The mud, the snipers, and the machine gunners hindered lateral as well as rear communications, and the German machine gun barrage from the ridge, with the rolling barrages from German artillery round Roulers further destroyed the connections between all headquarters and the straggling firing line. Battalion and brigade staffs were despairingly inadequate in number to maintain touch with and between the attacking groups. The messengers took hours to make journeys which on dry land over firm roads would have been accomplished in a few seconds by motor-cycle riders. Many of the runners fell on the way, so that it was only by rare good fortune that occasional directions reached the infantry officers.

The German commanders were in scarcely better case. They did not know what groups of their men still resisted in the conflict amid the corpses, block-houses, and slime below the ridge around Passchendaele village. Often their machine gunners, on upland positions, sprayed with bullets friend and foe alike, and the German shell also fell in an indiscriminate way.

One party of Territorials was, by error, reported to have entered Passchendaele village, but when night fell some of them were certainly scattered about the high approaches to the main knolls of the ridge. No doubt, had supports arrived in good order, the position could have been taken by developing the flanking movement towards Bellevue spur and helping the men on the right wing, who were checked about Crest Hill. But the supporting troops were in turn delayed by the state of the ground and by the very difficult work of rounding up the German sharpshooters and machine gunners who were harassing both the communications and the medical work of the English forces.

When, in the night, the process of cleaning up and organizing and connecting the immediate rear of the English attacking divisions was accomplished, it became unfortunately necessary to order a retirement of some five hundred yards from the Passchendaele positions. This was disheartening and arduous work.

AN AUSTRALIAN ATTACK

The scattered groups had to be found before they could be called back, and during the withdrawal the enemy continued to sweep the ground with streams of bullets and fierce bursts of shell fire. He did not launch any counter-attack. So, without any infantry interruption, the attacking line was drawn back to a point about one thousand yards from the crater positions from which the Territorials had set out. The abandonment of the other five hundred yards' depth of advance was a serious matter, in that it released the enemy forces on the spurs of the ridge from direct and heavy pressure, and enabled the German commander to reorganize and strengthen his already formidable works along the hillsides. It gave his machine gunners a broader zone of fire during the operations that followed, and greatly increased the distance that other attacking forces had to cover before they could clinch with the main army of the defence.

Adler Farm, Wolf Farm, and Wallemolen Cemetery were among the strong points taken, together with Kronprinz Farm, Peter Pan House, and part of the concrete works behind it. Some of these strongholds, however, were lost during the retirement. Farther south, Keerselaarhoek was captured, and also the cross-road hamlet of Nieuwemolen, north of Broodseinde and six miles from Roulers.

From Broodseinde the Australians made the most difficult attack they had undertaken since their final advances in the Somme campaign. They plunged eastward into the deluged declines and inclines towards Keiberg, and also fought northward towards the crest position at Passchendaele. Between the Broodseinde fifty-eight metre plateau and Keiberg there were three ridges of forty metres, thirty-five metres, and thirty metres, with thirty-three metre, forty metre, forty-five metre, and fifty metre heights between Broodseinde and the Roulers railway approaches to Passchendaele. The men were exhausted by their previous efforts, and by the five days and nights of rain and chilling wind they had endured after their Broodseinde victory, while beating back enemy counter-attacks.

At the opening of the advance a small wood had to be taken in which was a strong group of German machine gunners. These swept all the direct approaches, and the Australians had to work slowly round the flanks of the copse and leave the enemy gunners still firing in their rear until supports arrived and cleared the batch of broken trees of Germans. The Australians then worked

THE PASSCHENDAELE FIGHTING

down the slope to the second ridge. Like the Lancashires on their left wing, they had passed over, in the mist and straggling confusion of movements in the mud, nests of hostile sharpshooters and machine gunners. These emerged in their rear and hindered communications and supporting troops. The advanced force on the third ridge had to fall back, attacked in front and on both flanks and sniped from the rear. Regaining their supports, they managed to make a consolidation line extending from five to six hundred yards between the Broodseinde Ridge and the Keiberg Hill. On the left of the Australian line the Germans had machine guns sweeping down the cutting of the Roulers railway through the top of the ridge. In this sector the Lancashire men were more than half an hour late in reaching their starting-point of co-operation with their overseas comrades.

South of the main attacking forces the Warwicks, with London men and South-West Country troops, went through Reutel village in the morning of October 9, and reached the Wervicq road at a point halfway between Noordendhoek and Zwaanhoek. The Londoners stormed forward from the western edge of Reutel, bombed the German machine gunners from the cellars, swept into the cemetery, and, after silencing two guns, finally consolidated on their objective.

Near the Wervicq road there was fierce fighting in Judge Copse and Judge Cottage, while the enemy gunners maintained a steady barrage down the hillsides against the attacking battalions. On the southern flank the British objective was fixed at a point below Becelaere Hill. Any farther movement forward would only have exposed the attacking troops to larger counter-offensives from the Reutelbeek valley. The enemy retained his hold upon Polderhoek knoll, quite a mile on the rear flank of the conquerors of Reutel cemetery. The British line about the Reutelbeek had, therefore, to be designed mainly as a rampart of defence, behind which all the main movements through the Ypres morasses were conducted. It was not safe to attempt any important movement about the Reutelbeek, and though Polderhoek Château continued to change hands, this little oscillation did not tell upon the balance of forces at Gheluvelt.

The British commander did not want to advance any farther along the Menin road, and the German commander did not care to lose any more men in trying to recover the dominant positions overlooking his centre. Each side continually swept

THE ATTACK CONTINUED

the opposing lines with shell, while their infantry extended in two wedges alongside the brook swamp. Polderhoek formed the point of the German wedge, while Reutel cemetery was the point of the British wedge, with Tower Hamlets spur also jutting into the enemy's southern territory.

After the battle of Poelcappelle, on October 9, the unsettled weather continued, and the condition of the ground grew still worse. Sir Douglas Haig, nevertheless, decided to press onward in spite of all the hardships of his men. In mist and twilight, at dawn on October 12, the Anzac forces again attacked on a front of six miles, between Houthulst Forest and the Staden-Bruges railway. On this occasion the enemy was aware of the coming movement. He began barraging the ground at midnight, and in the darkness pushed his supports forward on the western slopes of the ridge, and brought up reserve divisions into the hollows behind the entrenched heights. In the north, by Houthulst Forest, the indefatigable Guards and some English County regiments advanced on both sides of the Staden-Bruges railway. In spite of all difficulties they attained the positions above Poelcappelle which they had been set to win. There was no need for the French force to struggle farther through the mud, as the line they had won three days before was sufficient protection to the short advance made by the Guards and County battalions. The French gunners, however, assisted in barraging the ground in front of the British force.

Below the railway there was fierce fighting just beyond Poelcappelle, where the Germans were forced back. About five o'clock in the evening, after ground had been gained and lost by the yard and then recovered, a strong German counter-attacking force came down the road from Westroosebeek and drove in the British advanced posts. Between the Lekkerboterbeek and Watervlietbeek and Ravebeek, where the Goudberg and Bellevue spurs rose above the swamps, the attack made by Anzac forces was also a failure.

The New Zealand division made the central attack, with the Rifles at the cemetery and Wolf Copse and the Canterbury and Otago troops in the marsh below Bellevue spur. In wave after wave these men went forward, trying to get within bombing distance of the linked concrete works arranged about the slippery slopes, with belts of uncut wire entanglement protecting the approaches. As the British bombardment was unexpectedly

THE PASSCHENDAELE FIGHTING

feeble, the German gunners survived in practically undiminished strength. They poured out such a fire between Lekkerboterbeek and the Ravebeek as made the situation of the attacking troops impossible. As the New Zealanders and their comrades were brought almost to a standstill, their losses in officers were very heavy. It was found that no troops could get through the quagmires to the ridge on the left of Passchendaele village, from which two block-houses were pouring destructive fire. For this reason, and for the general reason of the weather and the state of the ground, the operations were suspended, after about a thousand prisoners had been taken.

The check to the New Zealanders on Bellevue spur told on the fortunes of the Australians on Crest Farm spur. These two promontories in the sea of mud were divided by the Ravebeek in regard to attack, but were linked in regard to defence into one deadly system by high-placed cross-firing machine gun positions. The more difficult Bellevue fortifications had first to be taken in order that the Crest Farm height could be held by troops attacking across the Roulers railway from Broodseinde.

From their drier ridge the Australians advanced more quickly than did their comrades in the lowlands after they had traversed a bog by the railway and bayoneted the enemy machine gunners who tried to hold them up. Under a fierce barrage they entered Augustus Wood and, struggling towards the southern edge of the Ravebeek, came under the Bellevue cross-fire. Above the valley they drove forward for a mile, with close conflicts to the top of the spur by the outskirts of Passchendaele village. It was a fruitless advance, for so long as the enemy held Bellevue spur the Australian flank was too much exposed, and with the rain veiling the gathering of hostile reinforcements a withdrawal was made to the ridge east of Nieuwemolen and the ground by the railway. There can be no doubt that but for the bad weather the Germans would have been driven from Passchendaele village and from the high ground stretching north-westwards towards Poelcappelle.

On October 16, the enemy retired for a distance of a thousand yards between Broodseinde and Keiberg. During the inconclusive battle the Australians drove the enemy down the western slopes of the Heulebeek, where his troops were left in the mud and swept by enfilading fire from the heights south of Broodseinde. As

AN ARTILLERY DUEL

an enforced retreat across the swampy valley would have ended in disaster, the Germans retired to Keiberg Hill. Some Australian patrols followed them up, and killed or captured some of the rearguard; but the abandoned ground was not occupied.

After the check on October 12, Sir Douglas Haig prepared only to make short advances whenever weather permitted, so as to keep the enemy concentrated about the Passchendaele Ridge while larger designs were being quietly carried out. The weather began slowly to improve, occasional showers being counteracted by drying winds. The swamps were so waterlogged by the torrential rains of the previous week that there was no possible chance of their really hardening, but the surface on the high ground would have allowed movement there, had not the ground been continually soaked by columns of water splashing, under intense shell fire, from the network of crater pools and miniature lakes.

From October 14 to October 21 General von Armin fought an artillery duel with Sir Herbert Plumer. In dense parks he crowded guns of every calibre by the northern ridge and the hillocks behind it. Large squadrons of his machines tried to win the command of the air by massed power, and frequently managed to engage with smaller British formations. By personal skill, however, the outnumbered British pilots succeeded in keeping the sky, though they could not prevent enemy aerial observers from crossing the lines and locating the batteries.

All through the week of fine weather the Germans were expecting another grand attack. Every minute of the night they sent up flares, and at dawn heavy barrages were laid upon ground where it was fancied British troops might have been assembling in the darkness. But it was when the weather once more broke that the offensive was resumed. On October 22, after a rainy night, French, English, and Scottish battalions went out in such a thick mist that the men could not see more than a yard before them. Instead of being able to work forward with little delay, they were impeded by knee-deep mud.

The Frenchmen had the lighter task. They advanced a little above Mangelaare and, pivoting on their left, swung their right forward in line with the longer British advance. Going up to their waists in water in places, the Frenchmen bent for a while in their centre, under enemy machine gun fire, carried the fortified points of Jean Bart house and Panama house, took

THE PASSCHENDAELE FIGHTING

two German guns, and reached some of the outlying spinnies of Houthulst Forest without serious check. British troops engaged in the action included men of 18th, 34th and 35th divisions.

By the southern fringes of the forest the Germans were in great strength. They met the attack with a cross-fire from batteries of howitzers above Houthulst and behind Passchendaele; they swept the approaches with long-range machine gun barrages; they tried to break up the waves of assault by means of snipers distributed in covered craters and machine gunners in concealed redoubts. Some of the attacking battalions gained ground to the depth of a thousand yards, others having won a little more than half that distance, were confronted by impassable bogs.

South of the Staden railway the battle was not so fiercely contested. This was remarkable in that the Poelcappelle road was the gateway to the Passchendaele positions. For weeks it clearly had been the design of the British commander to widen his wedge about Poelcappelle, in order to get more room to swing down upon the spurs that bastioned the Passchendaele crests. General von Armin had done his best to prevent this wide flanking movement, but the street of concrete and tunnelled defences extending northward and eastward of Poelcappelle had been especially studied since October 12 by British observing officers. Upon the linked fortresses they had directed such a continual tempest of armour-piercing shell that the German garrison had withdrawn, leaving only outposts. There was no desperate fighting such as had marked the previous actions round Poelcappelle. The enemy machine gun barrage was the source of most casualties.

Ill luck in regard to weather conditions continued to befall the attacking army. As soon as the way of approach was won, from the Lekkerboterbeek line, for a flanking attack on the Passchendaele heights the sky cleared and the sun came out. Again the British commander speeded up his preparations, while a strong gale swept the flats of Flanders, and, under the hard autumn sunshine, stiffened the crust of the battlefield and lightened the work of the gunners and roadmakers. But in the night of October 25, when a renewed attack was made, a deluge of rain washed into the swamps and put a fresh, thick layer of mud upon the slopes of the ridge.

All the operations were designed to assist the Canadians while they closed around Passchendaele village. They followed the



Lenin, the leader of the Bolshevik revolution in Russia in November, 1917. He established himself as President of the Council of the People's Commissars.



L. D. Trotsky, chief lieutenant of Lenin in 1917 and later.



A. F. Kerensky, became premier of Russia, July, 1917.



Signing the armistice at Brest-Litovsk, December, 1917, between Germany and Russia. On the right are Russians, on the left delegates of the Central Powers. 1. Kameneff. 2. Joffe. 3. Mme. A. A. Biecenke. 4. Kontr.-Admiral Altvater. 5. Captain Lipsky. 6. Karachan. 7. Lieut.-Col. Fokke. 8. Zekl Pusha. 9. Von Merey. 10. Prince Leopold of Bavaria. 11. General Hoffmann. 12. Col. Gantschew. 13. Captain Horn. 14. Captain Roy. 15. Major Brinkmann. 16. Major von Kameko. 17. Captain von Rosenberg. 18. Major von Mirbach. 19. Dolivo-Dobrowolsky.

RUSSIAN LEADERS AND THE BREST-LITOVSK ARMISTICE



THE CAPITAL OF SOVIET RUSSIA. View of Moscow showing the Kremlin from the south-west. The outstanding feature is the Great Palace, behind which rises the bell tower of Ivan Veliki. Moscow came into great prominence following Lenin's seizure of power in 1917, and the seat of government was later transferred to it from Petrograd.

DESPERATE ASSAULTS

same lines of assault along which the Yorkshires and Lancashire Territorials, New Zealanders and Australians had most gallantly but vainly advanced. Like them, they had to conquer the mud before they could attack the enemy. Communications had been improved since the Lancashires took eleven hours to get into position, yet there was still an enormous amount of labour to be performed during the nocturnal deluge that devastated all staff arrangements. Each duck-board track was so slippery that men with pack and rifle fell at every few steps. Beyond the duck-board ways there was nearly a mile of mud between the left Canadian brigade and their assembly line. In darkness, pouring rain, and enemy shell fire the men made their way towards Wolf Farm and Peter Pan House, and then lay out in the mud, hoping that they had not been seen. But they had been seen, as they came up in omnibuses in the rear, just before the moon went down: and the tempest broke.

The enemy's guns ravaged the ground. The left Canadian brigade rose in the dawn, about a quarter of a mile from Bellevue spur. Beneath it ran the Ravebeek, which was an impracticable marsh, far too deep for men to get through it. As the Ravebeek moat had to be avoided as a death-trap, the left Canadian brigade could only try a flanking attack over the northern mud flats below Wallemolen. They had some six hundred yards to traverse, and they took an hour to do it. They were little better off than if they had been enclosed by machine guns, artillery, and riflemen in the Ravebeek marsh. They had to face two cross-firing machine gun barrages from the Goudberg, Meetchele, and Bellevue heights, with field gun and howitzer shells from artillery sited on and behind the main ridge. Some special field guns were brought down to Bellevue spur, and among the block-houses there they fired at almost a point-blank range.

The bad weather, however, gave two advantages to the attackers. The mist screened them to some extent, and the mud cushioned the bursting shells, diminishing their concussion effect. The foremost waves reached the great system on Bellevue spur, and fought through the tangle of works towards the high main position, but under intense fire they were compelled to fall back.

The Naval (63rd) division, attacking on the left towards Goudberg, was also checked by the Paddebeek swamp and the wire about it, and for a time was unable to maintain contact with the Canadians; but a rally on the part of the Canadians advanced

THE PASSCHENDAELE FIGHTING

the line still farther and enabled them to close round the outer forts and carry the central range of works. They sent down many prisoners, and then broke all counter-attacks, and, under a heavy hostile bombardment, fought still farther forward in the evening to the cross-roads, against another formidable row of concrete and steel-rail redoubts.

On the southern side of the Ravebeek the right Canadian brigade achieved success rather more easily. Having somewhat better ground of approach to the Passchendaele main height, they cleared the Ravebeek edge, advanced towards Duck Wood, and with their flank protected at Decline Wood, arrived within nine hundred yards of Passchendaele village. Between them and their ultimate goal rose the height of Crest Farm. This they neglected for the time in order to give what support they could to the Bellevue attack. The Naval division, after heavy losses, broke into the zone of the outer forts, and took other strong points in the morasses by the Lekkerboterbeek and its tributary the Paddebeek. Impossible as any definite success then was, their action had a vital bearing upon the operations of the Canadians.

In the more northerly advances the London territorials and other English troops also had much dogged holding work in the rather featureless waste between the forest and river swamps. It was a blind country, with camouflaged concrete buildings, old gunpits, and farm ruins, most of which were unmarked on ordinary maps. The chief obstacles, besides the inundations, were the pits and barracks by the Staden railway, once used by enemy gunners for long-range fire on Poperinghe. The long double row of huts had been heavily concreted and transformed into a chain of redoubts, sweeping with their machine-guns all the marshes between the Broembeek and the Watervlietbeek. Heavy fighting had already occurred about this four hundred yards' stretch of forts, and the garrison again made a fierce resistance. This was followed by three counter-attacks from Houthulst Forest, from Vijfwegen, and from the dominating ground between Stadenberg and Westroosebeek. From the north, from the north-east, and from the east German batteries incessantly swept it, making it the weakest part of the line.

Fortunately, some of the enemy's pressure against this vital Staden-line salient was relieved by a Franco-Belgian advance on October 26 against the Germans west of Houthulst Forest.

ON THE YSER

General Anthoine's troops first made a short advance over the Corverbeek to Draaibank and Owl Farm, swimming the flood and establishing a bridge-head. Then in the night the sappers and soldiers carried out a surprising engineering feat. Standing up to the shoulders in water, they threw pontoon bridges across the main stream, over which a strong force of infantry passed from the west into the Luyghem peninsula, while another attacking line advanced from the south over the Corverbeek marsh. About the same time the hamlet of Kippe, a mile up the Dixmude road, was also carried by close fighting. Then a third force of assault drove upon the enemy's rear from Drei Graachten down the road to Luyghem.

By the Yser the Belgians had a flotilla of flat-bottomed boats in hiding. As the French were wading and swimming towards their goal the Belgians poled across the flood towards the Blanchaart Lake marshes, where the Germans were clinging to the remnant of their broken line. Luyghem was first entered from the south by the French, who met the Belgians by the mill on the northern side. By this long and deep advance between Bixchoote and Dixmude the French and Belgians extended above the western side of Houthulst Forest to the neighbourhood of Blanchaart Lake, and with their guns brought all the woodland swamp under enfilade bombardment.

A subsidiary attack to the south on Polderhock Château was disappointing. English troops advanced over the river bogs and through the marshy park, swept over Hill 55 and through Gheluvelt. But heavy shelling and fierce counter attacks drove them back into the village. Around Houthulst Forest, in another secondary action, the enemy was pressed back farther from the southern outskirts of the undulating wooded marsh, while the French and Belgians drove in on all the western fringes of the forest, and by a northern extension of their victory brought the entire area of the forest screen under direct and complete enfilading gunfire. The enemy was thus severely hammered on both of his wings around Ypres, and although he preferred to yield a large tract of ground to the French and Belgians, in order to concentrate all his reserves against the British, he was yet unable to resist on his centre.

On October 30 Sir Douglas Haig ordered another short advance between the Roulers railway and the Westroosebeek road. The Canadians resumed their attack upon the outskirts of Passchen-

THE PASSCHENDAELE FIGHTING

daele village, while their comrades in the former battle—the Naval 63rd division and the London territorials—endeavoured to press across the Paddebeek and Lekkerboterbeek swamps towards Goudberg. The block-houses and fortified farms on both sides of the Paddebeek continued to give trouble. The work of getting within attacking distance of the dominating machine gun positions was very difficult. At a few points, where the ground was barely passable, a few works were laboriously carried; but, generally speaking, the northern part of the German line held firm.

While the Naval division and territorials maintained their pressure, the Canadian brigades on the drier sandy loam of the Passchendaele heights developed their attack with remarkable speed and success. The brigade on the southern spur, between the Ravebeek and the Broodseinde road, fought up to Crest Farm in less than an hour. The Australians had reached Crest Farm, but could not hold the ground under the flanking fire from the Bellevue spur. As the Canadians occupied the Bellevue positions across the Ravebeek marsh, their grip upon Crest Farm could not be shaken. They captured the survivors of the garrison and, finding a number of machine-guns still intact in the great concrete superstructure covering the ruins, they turned these upon the village, and there mowed down some of the hostile forces who were trying to throw back other Canadian battalions west of the village. The left Canadian brigade that worked from the conquered Bellevue position, again had the more difficult struggle.

As the gallant Canadians fought up the road to Meelchele village on another bastion spur of Passchendaele, they were raked by heavy machine gun fire from block-houses and redoubts along the broken highway in front of them, taken in the flank by guns situated to the north, on the spur near the Paddebeek, while on their other flank they were harassed by four well-placed machine guns in Friesland Copse. It took the Canadians two hours to reach their first objectives. The Germans brought into action batteries of their new infantry gun, which was a very mobile piece, running on low wheels and throwing shrapnel at short range. But the British barrage was very effective. It carried the first waves of attack up both sides of the road, enabling the Canadians to take three isolated pairs of pill boxes in the first part of the attack.

THE ADVANCE CONTINUES

Beyond Meetchele, at the Goudberg cross-roads, was a larger and stronger range of machine gun fortresses. Here the Germans poured such a storm of bullets over the bare ground that approach seemed impossible. Shell-holes were numerous, but the Canadians could not use them as cover, for the water in them was so deep that men who ventured in could not get out again. By individual cunning and courage, however, the strong place was stormed. The German commander made a very vigorous defence of Passchendaele village. He launched an air offensive in great strength. At midday the rain and the gathering mist compelled his air squadrons to retire, and he renewed his strong infantry counter-attacks. All of these, however, were repulsed, and more heavy British guns came forward.

At dawn on November 6 scores of batteries had been dragged through the swamp and fed with ammunition close behind the advanced infantry line, and as the sky began to lighten the Canadians again went forward. Their front of attack was only about two thousand yards, but it overlapped the Goudberg spur and Mosselmarkt and Passchendaele villages. The attacking troops began by creeping out on their left. By working with two companies of Shropshires through the morass of the Paddebeek, where the Naval Division had fought by holding on to exposed outposts, the Canadians won a commanding position for subsequent operations against Goudberg.

The two Shropshire companies were totally barred by a swamp from getting into the wrecked plantation in which was a German concrete work known as Vine Cottages. Borrowing Canadian guides, they made a wide compass of the morass, and from the territory of the Canadian unit they seized the fortress in the copse, driving a wedge into the enemy's line by Goudberg hill. A series of other German advanced works, hindering concerted progress through the mud below the ridge, was also won in preliminary little actions conducted during the first five days of November. In one case a small British force clung to an outpost, surrounded by swamp, and maintained itself there for four days until relieved by the Canadian offensive.

Twice the enemy shelled the Canadian assembly and support positions during the night, but he was comparatively quiet when, about six o'clock in the morning, a barrage began to move over his lines. Only one minute later, however, he in his turn put a barrage upon the Canadians, shelling from the north by

THE PASSCHENDAELE FIGHTING

Houthulst Forest, from the south by Gheluvelt, and from the east along and behind the ridge. The Germans were fully prepared for the closing stages of the battle for the ridge. They knew what was coming and they were ready to meet it.

The Canadians went forward quickly, keeping close to the British barrage. Hindenburg in person had issued an order of the day to the 11th Silesian division that garrisoned Passchendaele, and to the 4th Prussian division alongside them, stating that the village must be held at all costs, and retaken if lost. It was lost very quickly, but it was not retaken. The Canadians swung forward from the Broodseinde road and the marshes fronting Goudberg in an arc-like formation. They had only three hundred yards to go on the southern side from the Broodseinde road to Passchendaele ruins, but more than double that distance on the northern side. They were raked by machine-gun fire from the skeleton wreck of the parish church and from neighbouring emplacements; but they went forward so quickly with the bayonet that the defences were surrendered to them before they could close with the enemy.

No counter-attack of any importance developed. This situation, however, was explained at four o'clock in the afternoon, when two German commanding officers, with a small party, emerged from a pillbox which had been neglected by the Canadians when they saw no firing coming from it. One man was commander of the garrison, the other was commander of the supporting force, and with their staffs they had waited nine hours for sounds of the victorious counter-attack that Hindenburg had ordered. As no counter-attack came, the two commanders decided to surrender. It was no doubt partly because the officer commanding part of the reserve forces had been imprisoned in the new Canadian line, while conferring with the front-line commander, that no concerted effort was made to recover the most famous of all positions on the long ridge. The accuracy of the British artillery also had a great influence upon the fate of the enemy's counter-attack. From Meetchele to Mosselmarkt and Goudberg the battle was longer and deadlier.

The Canadian commander had a difficult problem in tactics, owing to the nature of the ground around the Paddebeek bogs and the distance of the final objective. Moreover, brigade headquarters was heavily shelled during the action, many of its signallers and runners were lost, and the brigadier failed to

A WELCOME MIST

make connexion with his troops in the swamp. But he managed his main movement with remarkable skill.

On their wedge of ground, known at Meetchele spur, his men were nearly encircled by marshes and, in order to avoid the mud and water, their line had to be wheeled to the left until it stretched almost due east and west across the Westroosebeek road. As before explained, they fought a preliminary action in the night against Vine Cottages in the corner of the swamp, and then at dawn, with the German barrage beating on them and the country obscured by smoke and haze, they executed their wheeling manœuvre and became the upper end of the attacking semicircle moving upon the centre of the ridge. By good luck the weather was dry, and when the sun came up there was excellent visibility, and the British pilots, though unable to prevent enemy machines from raking the Canadians, maintained good observation over the enemy lines. The small block-houses were conquered quickly and at light cost. The German infantry gave ground with little or no close fighting, and only at a large redoubt by Mosselmarkt cross-roads was there any prolonged and serious resistance. The Canadians, however, captured this strongly held position by working round its flank.

Mosselmarkt was taken without any remarkable incident, except the capture of several field guns—three being immediately taken and two more found afterwards embedded in mud. When Goudberg, the northern ridge position, was stormed the weather changed in favour of the attack. All that the Canadians then wanted was the opportunity of so consolidating the important stretch of dominating ground they had won as to ensure the holding of it. About half-past eight o'clock in the morning they were rewarded for the speed of their wheeling manœuvre and double drive by a fall of rain and a gathering of mist. The Germans could see nothing.

Sir Douglas Haig was still concerned to keep the German command apprehensive of further attacks round Ypres. On November 10 the Battle of the Ridge was resumed by a short, narrow thrust along the crest of the Passchendaele hills towards Westroosebeek. Canadian and English troops took part in the affair. The drive was made in the rain, and upon the firm ground along the Westroosebeek road the Canadian troops took a series of strong points, while the home battalions gained a tract of fortified ground north of Goudberg.

THE PASSCHENDAELE FIGHTING

About Passchendaele a violent artillery duel opened on November 13, and on November 16 a most successful imitation of an important attack upon Westroosebeek was made by some Highland, Lancashire, and Berkshire troops. The men went forward in the darkness and rain without any clearing bombardment. They struck the German troops at a time when the 4th division was being relieved by the 119th division. In some positions they killed or captured double garrisons, and, by the ground that they welded into their own line, made the enemy commander think that the gigantic wrestle for the ridge was about to end in another terrific struggle at Westroosebeek. But by now, Haig's preparations for his Cambrai offensive were complete, and the agony of the British soldiers in front of Ypres was ended. The terrible battle for the ridge finished when the Germans were most anxious for their positions upon it.

In his despatch on the Ypres campaign of 1917 Sir Douglas Haig remarked that the capture of the entire ridge within the space of a few weeks was well within the power of his men in ordinary circumstances. To the unexpectedly adverse weather conditions in August he attributed his failure to carry the German line quickly and develop the large design for which the operation had been prepared. He points out that from the start he was unable to carry out his original plan as arranged with Marshal Joffre and his first successor in the field command. His forces were first weakened at the instance of the French General Nivelle. He was obliged to take over a further part of the French line and diminish his striking power in order to release French troops for the too ambitious and somewhat hasty operations which the new French commander undertook along the Aisne plateau and among the Champagne hills in the spring of 1917, before the Italian army was ready to strike.

As a further consequence of Nivelle's arrangements, the British 3rd and 5th armies had to continue at heavy cost their successful but very costly operations between Lens and Quéant in order to bring relief to the checked French forces. As a third result, Sir Douglas Haig began his main operations quite a month late, and instead of having the effectives upon which he and Sir William Robertson had counted, he became so pressed for men that he could not properly train his drafts.

Making all allowance for the disadvantages produced by General Nivelle's masterfulness and over-confidence, the failure

A SUMMARY

of the costly operations which Sir Hubert Gough conducted east of Ypres in August, 1917, seems to have been due to other things in addition to the bad weather. The enemy's improved system of block-house defence, with its thick concrete shelters and elastic cushions of steel rails and air, at first defeated the British artillery. British heavy guns do not seem to have been employed in sufficient number to form a barrage under cover of which the infantry could have advanced.

Between April 9, 1917, and November 10, 1917, 130 German divisions were engaged, according to the estimate of Sir Douglas Haig, by less than half that number of British divisions; 24,065 enemy soldiers were captured, with 74 guns 138 trench-mortars, and 941 machine guns. The new model German division contained fewer effectives than an ordinary British division, but the laborious and costly pushing back of superior German forces to a maximum depth of barely five miles was not so satisfactory as it might seem.

The question at issue was rather whether Sir Douglas Haig was not too stern and stubborn in persisting in the attack across the Ypres swamps. The British campaign around Passchendaele has been compared with the German campaign at Verdun. There are points of resemblance. Both operations failed, in the first few weeks, in their original aim and were then continued as processes of attrition. Snow partly checked the German rapid onset; rain impeded the British attacks. The gains were small, strategically unimportant, and were achieved at a cost so enormous that it crippled the power of the attacking forces for months afterwards. Finally, most of the gains were recaptured by the defence within a short period.

Whether the advantages gained from pinning large German forces to the Ypres salient outweighed the costliness and apparent uselessness of these operations will probably always remain a subject for controversy.

CHAPTER 20

Salonica and the Greek Embroglio

GENERAL SARRAIL'S great offensive, culminating in the capture of Monastir, in November, 1916, had no appreciable effect upon the situation in the Balkans. But it was important from both the military and the political points of view, and it was encouraging that the Serbians should have regained a portion, even if a comparatively small one, of their own country. These were positive advantages for the Entente, but with these, progress in this area of the world-war seemed to end for several months. The winter of 1916-1917 saw some heavy fighting, mainly in the shape of trench warfare; but the allied armies made no sharp push forward that inflicted grave injury on the enemy or led to the reconquest of territory. The natural difficulty of the terrain and the severity of the winter had much to do with the arrest of the offensive, which, moreover, was inadequately furnished with men and material, in face of a brave and tenacious foe, who had been strongly reinforced, and held dominating positions. Added to these factors was the uncertainty that existed until June with respect to the action of the king of Greece.

In Great Britain, during the winter of 1916-1917, the question of the utility of the Salonica expedition was much discussed. The original purpose had been to save Serbia, and Serbia had not been saved; the expedition was sent too late, nor was it strong enough to have achieved its aim. But the Entente decided that Salonica, having been occupied, should be retained and made into a great military and naval base. Very considerable forces were landed at the port, and these, gradually moving upward, had taken possession of a fairly extensive area of Macedonia. Enraged by the tame surrender of the east side of Greek Macedonia to the Bulgarians, and encouraged by the presence of the Allies in strength, the Venizelists, who were strongly against Germany and Austria, had broken away from King Constantine and the royalists, formed a national government with Salonica as its seat, and received recognition and support

DIFFERENCES OF OPINION

from the Entente. The next development of the war which materially affected this area, had been the appearance in the field of Rumania in opposition to the Central Powers; and, to help her in the struggle, Sarrail had taken up the offensive, but without success in that particular direction. On the whole, the record of the Salonica expedition had been one of failure, inasmuch as the objects chiefly desired had not been attained.

From the very start there had been a sharp division of opinion among the Allies regarding the expedition. One school of thought, which included some eminent men, took the view that in the Balkans lay the key to the whole war, and declared that an energetic and powerful offensive in that region would have decisive results. The other school, which embraced most military authorities, held an expedition in that quarter to be ill-advised, as it involved the Allies in a serious diversion of their effective strength from other fronts of vastly greater importance. But in any case, a withdrawal was now impossible. Venizelos and his party had stood squarely by the Entente. Many Venizelists had already suffered death, imprisonment, or serious loss of property for their devotion to the common cause, particularly during the dark days in Athens, at the commencement of December, 1916, when the Allies had not been in sufficient force to defend them. Mr. Bonar Law, in the House of Commons, brought forward an argument against a withdrawal from Salonica which it was impossible to rebut—the certain and terrible fate that would be the lot of the Venizelists in such an eventuality. Thousands of Venizelists had joined the Salonica army, eager to take their share in manning the trenches.

After the fall of Monastir and the immediate subsequent fighting, the struggle on the Macedonian front died away, partly owing to bad weather, into a patchwork affair of patrol encounters, air and other raids, artillery duels and naval bombardments, none of which was of high military importance; and this continued into the second week of February, 1917. On the 12th of that month, the weather having somewhat improved, operations became more active. The British raided Palmis and some points in the Doiran sector, capturing several prisoners and doing much damage. On that day the Germans, after heavy preparatory shelling, delivered an attack in considerable force on the Italian positions on Hill 1,050, a height east of Paralovo, six miles east of Monastir, and succeeded in gaining

SALONICA AND THE GREEK EMBROGLIO

a toothhold at various places in the first line trenches, in spite of the valiant resistance of the Italians. During the ensuing night the Italians replied with a desperate counter-attack, which resulted in their retaking the greater part of the trenches they had previously occupied. Next day the counter-attack was maintained with vigour, and on the 15th the enemy was completely ousted, with heavy losses. In this fighting the Germans used flame-throwers for the first time in the Balkans.

At the same time the Italians had done very good work farther west. Italian and French cavalry patrols had been in contact all the way from the Adriatic to Monastir for some time before, but the route had not been cleared of the enemy. It was announced from Salonica that on February 18, complete union was established between the French and the Italian troops, and that the road from Liaskovici to Korcha (Koritza) had been completely freed from Austrians and hostile Albanians in Austrian pay. This achievement was of distinct importance, as it cut off communication between Athens and the Central Powers, except by wireless or aeroplanes. Korcha and Liaskovici lay south west of Monastir, along the south eastern frontier of Albania. The French had occupied Korcha some time previously, and the statement indicated that the Italians from Valona (Avlona) on the Adriatic had linked up solidly with them. With this, the front of the Allies now stretched in an unbroken line from the Adriatic to the Aegean.

March came in with bitter cold and heavy snowstorms on the whole Macedonian front, but in spite of the weather the Italians on the 3rd made a successful assault on the enemy's trenches in the vicinity of Hill 1,050, wrecked them, and repulsed a determined attack of the Prussian Guard, who attempted to regain the lost positions. In the second week of the month violent actions took place on several sectors. During the night of the 12th, the British line south west of Doiran was advanced a thousand yards on a front of 3,500 yards without opposition, the Bulgarians being taken unawares; but next day there was lively fighting, as the result of which the British retained and consolidated their new line. In co-operation with this movement the French and other Allies attacked near Monastir, and after continuous fighting extending for over a week in severe weather, captured Hill 1,248, an important height due north of the city. All the way from the famous Cherna Bend fierce struggles

A BULGARIAN OFFENSIVE

occurred for many miles westward, the French, Russians, Italians and Serbians fighting gallantly in the most difficult conditions. A furious battle raged in the region between Lake Prespa and Lake Ochrida, and east of the former, the Bulgaro-Germans were driven from the Chervena Stena ridge that ran down from the mountain at Pisoderi to within two or three miles of Monastir. It was from positions in this neighbourhood that the Bulgarians had bombarded the town.

To regain the slopes of the Chervena Stena the enemy put forth a mighty effort in April. Here he was in strength, having a German division, a Turkish force, and at least two Bulgarian divisions, with proportionate artillery. His assault began on the 18th, and was vigorously pressed for two days, but after some initial successes it failed. The French counter-attacked magnificently, and on the 20th drove him back completely, inflicting heavy casualties, including many Germans. In the Doiran sector the British, after three days' artillery preparation, began after dark on the 24th, an attack on the Bulgarian positions along a three-mile front on the western side of the lake. By half-past five in the morning of the 25th, more than fifteen hundred yards of the enemy's first system of trenches was carried by the British infantry, who had to advance through a barrage of mortars and 8 in. howitzers, which the steep contours of the terrain made particularly deadly. Though not equally successful at all points, the attack gained considerable ground, nor were the Bulgarians able to reconquer it, though they strove hard to do so by formidable assaults repeated several times during the next three nights. Then there was another lull.

In the second week of May brisk fighting broke out once more in this area. On the night of May 9, the Bulgarians delivered a powerful assault on the new positions of the British in the Doiran sector, south west of Krastali, three miles south west of Doiran town. The enemy at first obtained a footing on Goldies hill, which was held as an advanced post in the middle of the British line, but he was almost at once driven out by a splendid infantry counter-attack. Next day the Bulgarians were again heavily repulsed. About this time an offensive was begun by the other allied armies along the whole Balkan front as far as Monastir. French and Venizelist troops stormed forward on the west bank of the Vardar, Serbians and Russians attacked in the Moglena mountains and on the east bank of the Cherna, while French,

SALONICA AND THE GREEK EMBROGLIO

Russian, and Italian forces advanced from the Cherna Bend to the hills west of Monastir. In the region of Dobropolie, in the precipitous Moglena range, the Serbians made good progress, and took Hill 1,824. The French, on May 10, captured the Skra di Legen, west of Liumnitza, and Venizelists distinguished themselves by taking a strong work near Liumnitza itself. On the Struma, the British defeated two heavy Bulgarian assaults against Kiupri on the 15th, taking a hundred prisoners, and on the following day the French captured a series of works west of the Cherna on a front of eight hundred yards. The enemy now brought up reinforcements, the weather turned unfavourable, and for the rest of the month there was little except cannonading on both sides. On July 3, General Ferrero, the commander of the Italian army of occupation, issued, "by order of the Government of King Victor Emmanuel III," a proclamation guaranteeing the "unity and independence of all Albania under the ægis and protection of the kingdom of Italy."

The political situation in Greece was a constant source of anxiety to the Allies during 1917. Under the pressure of the blockade King Constantine had apparently yielded completely to the demands of the Entente Powers, and in token of apology, representative groups of his army had saluted the flags of the Allies in Athens. But normal relations were not re-established, as some time had to elapse before it could be seen whether he would fulfil the conditions which had been imposed, and which had been accepted by him. After what had happened in the past, he had to prove his sincerity, and this could only be tested by his acts, not by his professions, in which he had been profuse. The chief preoccupations of the Allies with respect to Greece, were the protection of the rear of the Salonica army from attack by Greek royalist troops or irregulars, and the release from prison and the indemnification of the Venizelists for the misery and loss to which they had been subjected, as the result of the events which occurred on December 1 and afterwards in the Greek capital and in other towns throughout Old Greece.

From the date when M. Venizelos had been dismissed from office, the various prime ministers who had succeeded him had been, with their governments, the puppets of the king, who had made himself an autocrat in defiance of the constitution. In the beginning of February, 1917, the nominal government, in reality Constantine, addressed a note to the Entente Powers asking for a

A NOTABLE LETTER

relaxation of the blockade on the ground that the demands of the Allies had been complied with; but the compliance had been so half-hearted that in the third week of February the Allied ministers issued a statement to the effect that there could be no relaxation in any marked degree until their fears on the grounds of the great quantity of arms in Thessaly and of the continued hostility to the Entente in the Athens press, had been relieved.

In spite of some other unpleasant incidents indicating antagonism to the Entente, the Allied ministers once again took up their residence in Athens about March 19, showing their confidence apparently, that the situation warranted this proceeding. A sign seemingly in the same direction was the reappearance of two Venizelist journals in the capital—even in Athens Venizelism was far from being dead. But there was no real change in the mind of the king, as was soon manifest.

As the weeks had gone past it had become more and more evident to the Entente ministers that the stipulations which they had made, and to which the king had agreed, were not being observed and carried out in the spirit, or even in the letter, where evasion and delay were possible. It was not until the second week of May, however, that the general public were put in possession of certain damning evidence of the complicity of the king's son and brother, of whose acts the king himself must have been aware, in the plotting against the Allies.

A letter, the genuineness and authenticity of which were beyond any doubt, was published in *The Times* and the *Daily Mail* on May 9, implicating in the most direct manner the Greek Crown Prince and Prince Andrew, his uncle. This letter had been written by Colonel John Metaxas, of the Greek general staff, one of the most prominent of the personages who formed the pro-German camarilla, and it was addressed to a man called Esslin, a "Greek" of recent Bavarian origin, who had been left by Baron von Schenck after his deportation to carry on the work of espionage in the German interest. From this letter it appeared that Metaxas gave German funds to Gounaris, the strongly anti-Ententist ex-prime minister, and that these funds were earmarked for "use in Thessaly." The document also stated that the Crown Prince had requested Metaxas' office (the Greek war office) to "stop if possible for some time, the affair of Thessaly," lest something should be discovered by the Allies, already suspicious because of the action of Saghias.

SALONICA AND THE GREEK EMBROGLIO

Metaxas also alluded in the letter to General Dousmanis—another leading member of the camarilla—and said he had heard that the general was “very busy with the affair of the neutral zone.” Then followed a bracketing of Prince Andrew and Dousmanis. Here was confirmation, past all effective denial, of the true attitude of the king. A week or so before this letter was published, M. Zaimis had again become prime minister of Greece. The political situation had grown steadily worse. Constantine had a particular end in view. In order to carry out his plans, it was essential to secure the ripening crops in Thessaly, and to this end he was devoting his activities. It was time for the Entente to intervene—and to intervene so that there should be little possibility left of any mistake about the matter.

On June 6 a French warship arrived at Salamis. On board her was a diplomat, who, in a very short time, effected a radical change in the whole situation. He stopped at first but a few hours, and then sailed to Salonica, where he conferred with General Sarrail and with M. Venizelos on the position of affairs. In a day or two he was back in Old Greece, and events began to march with startling rapidity. He was none other than the high commissioner of the Protecting Powers of Greece, by whom he had been given full powers—the powers of a dictator—M. Charles Jonnart.

On the morning of June 11, M. Charles Jonnart had an interview with M. Zaimis, and demanded the abdication of King Constantine and the designation of his successor, to the exclusion of the Crown Prince. In the course of conversation M. Jonnart told the Greek prime minister that the Allies intended to purchase the crops of Thessaly, and superintend their equitable distribution throughout the whole country. He said, further, that what had taken place in Greece since 1915 obliged the Protecting Powers—France, Great Britain, and Russia—to seek more complete guarantees for the safety of the army of the Orient, to provide for the restoration of the unity of the kingdom, and to see to the working of the constitution in its true spirit, and he appealed to the patriotism of M. Zaimis to help in carrying out the national reconciliation, pacifically. That there could be no uncertainty, however, as to the position, he added that the Allies would take measures for the control of the isthmus of Corinth, that military forces were in readiness to assure the maintenance of order in Athens, and that, in fact,

CONSTANTINE ABDICATES

everything was well in hand. Zaimis acknowledged the disinterestedness of the protecting powers, and recognized that their object was the re-establishment of the unity of Greece under the constitution, but he said that the decision must be left to the king after a meeting of the crown council.

Constantine was beaten; but he had at least, the sense to know that the end had come. Next morning Zaimis communicated to M. Jonnart the answer of the king to the note in which the high commissioner had embodied his demands. This somewhat singular reply was in the form of a letter signed by Zaimis himself, and it stated that Constantine, "always solicitous solely for the interest of Greece," had decided to leave the country with the Crown Prince, and had designated Prince Alexander as his successor. The wording of this communication seemed to suggest that the king's choice of Prince Alexander, his second son, was on his own initiative, but Mr. Bonar Law, in the House of Commons, made it clear that this was not the fact. On June 12, King Alexander took the oath and issued a proclamation to the Greek people in which he spoke of his grief at being separated from his "well-beloved father."

Athens remained tranquil, and only a small affair in Thessaly broke the general acceptance of M. Jonnart's coup d'état. The ex-King was shown a consideration by the Allies which he had hardly deserved. Accompanied by Queen Sophia, the Crown Prince, Prince Paul, the princesses, and his secretary, the pro-German Streit, he was allowed to leave Greece on the royal yacht *Sphacteria*, which sailed from Oropos, a small port in the gulf of Eubœa, on the morning of June 14, and landed him at Messina, whence he was freely permitted to journey into Switzerland. Next the high commissioner proceeded to expel from Greece, Gounaris, Metaxas, Dousmanis, and the other members of the camarilla which had shown such determined hostility to the Entente. Venizelos arrived at the Piræus from Salonica on June 21, and shortly afterwards became prime minister.

In the meantime, General Sarraïl, in accordance with the instructions of M. Jonnart, had taken possession of Thessaly. In the evening of June 10, a Franco-British column crossed the boundary of the Neutral Zone, and entered Thessaly from the north. Two days later French cavalry occupied Larissa, the most important town in the district. General Maivas, the Greek commandant, had promised there would be no opposition, but

SALONICA AND THE GREEK EMBROGLIO

in spite of this statement some Greek soldiers under a Colonel Orivas treacherously opened fire. A fight ensued in which the French had six, while the Greeks had sixty killed. Baivas was arrested. This affair was practically the sole incident that marred the peaceful occupation of the region by the Allies. By the 15th all Thessaly, the Corinth district, and part of Phoea were in their hands. French troops had disembarked at the Piræus, the port of Athens, on the 12th, and were subsequently joined by British and Russian contingents.

With the situation, whether military or political, completely under control, the high commissioner published a proclamation to the Greek nation in which he said that France, Great Britain, and Russia desired the independence, greatness, and prosperity of Greece, and were determined to put an end to the violations of the country's constitution and of treaties, and to the intrigues which resulted in the massacre of soldiers of friendly powers. He then informed the Greeks that the blockade was raised, but that all reprisals by or against any party among them, would be pitilessly repressed. He concluded by giving an assurance that the powers had no intention of forcing Greece to mobilise. The proclamation made an excellent impression.

After the short Allied offensive in June, 1917, there was very little activity on the Salonica front. Early in the summer Milne, in order to maintain the health and efficiency of his forces during a period when malaria and dysentery were more or less prevalent in the low-lying areas, withdrew from his forward positions in the Struma valley to the right bank of the river, and to the south of the Butkova valley. The general reported that on the whole the health of his troops was satisfactory, largely owing to the instruction of all ranks in the value of field sanitation and the prevention of disease in the field. Good work was being done with a view to the future. Some of the villages in the plain beyond the Struma were reoccupied by the British in October.

The final solution of the Greek problem came too late to have a material effect upon the Salonica campaign. General Sarrail's position had been one of extreme difficulty: there had always been the danger that the doubtful neutrality of Greece would turn into active hostility, and all his plans had to be made with that possibility in view. The last six months of 1917 were a period of great trial for the Serbian army. After losing half

A PERIOD OF WAITING

its effectives before the Allies came to its help, it had returned to the fighting line in May, 1917, well equipped and with its spirit undaunted. The Serbians had played a fine part in the fighting earlier in the year, but when they had at last gained a foothold in their own country the operations came suddenly to an end; the heroic army had achieved all that was humanly possible, only to find that it was robbed of the full fruits of victory.

In addition to the danger of a violation of Greek neutrality, General Sarrail was hampered by the fact that his forces were never sufficient for the task with which he was confronted. The estimate of reliable military authorities showed that for a really effective effort he should have had an army of at least 500,000 men, but the forces at his disposal never approached anywhere near that number. He had a long frontier to defend, and it was no easy task to maintain his position even without making any attempt to advance; sickness had been rife among the troops, and the reinforcements he received were hardly more than sufficient to make the wastage from this cause.

Before Constantine's abdication the Allied policy in regard to the East had been changed. Great Britain, France, and Italy were all unwilling to send any more men to Salonica. France had definitely decided to economise in man power; Italy wished to use her Balkan army in Albania, and Great Britain had embarked on the Syrian campaign, and the British Government was actually in favour of the evacuation of Salonica. The most that Sarrail could do was to undertake a few minor offensives which were without any material effect on the campaign, and on December 10 General Sarrail was relieved of his command and was succeeded by General Guillaumat, who at once began to reorganize all the armies on his front. Sarrail returned to France, but after a time was sent to take up a high position in Syria.

CHAPTER 21

Conditions in Austria-Hungary

WHEN 1917 opened, the condition of the Austro-Hungarian Empire was causing Germany much anxiety. The Dual Empire, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, had an area of about 261,000 square miles and a population of over 51,000,000. In no other European country was there such a variety of antipathetic races and contending religions: Germans, Magyars, Rumanians, Czechs, Croats, Poles, Slovaks, Slovenes, Serbs, Ruthenes, Italians, Orthodox and Roman Catholics, Protestants, Jews, and Gipsies, with sub-divisions innumerable and shades of difference to infinity. The German-speaking Austrians numbered some 12,000,000 and the Magyars over 10,000,000. The Slavs, who formed the vast majority, were practically in subjection to the Teuton-Magyar minority. This anomaly was at the bottom of the political strife which distracted the Dual Monarchy to an extent which seriously impaired its military power.

There is a little river, Leitha, which flows for some distance between Austria proper and Hungary, and so the German portion of the Dual Monarchy was known as Cis-Leithania, and the Hungarian or Magyar moiety as Trans-Leithania. The Empire thus consisted of two main administrative portions, each linked to the other by the Crown, but otherwise enjoying home rule. The Czechs desired the reconstitution of Bohemia, with Prague for its capital, on a footing of independence as complete as that of the Hungarians. There was another movement in favour of a system which should combine all the southern Slavs into a homogeneous whole, corresponding to the Bohemia of which they dreamed.

Opinions varied much as to the relation which this Jugo-Slav state should bear to the Hapsburg Empire, but the extremists advocated the formation of a "free and independent kingdom under the Karageorgevitch dynasty of Serbia, which should gather into one racial fold all the inhabitants of Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Croatia, and Slavonia, and be

THE DUAL MONARCHY

called the 'Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes,' of some 12,000,000 inhabitants, which would be a powerful bulwark against German aggression and an inseparable ally of all civilised States and peoples."

Delegates from all the Jugo-Slav provinces of Austria-Hungary, towards the end of the third year of the war, sat for six weeks in solemn conclave with the Serbian premier at Corfu on the subject of this political project, after which they visited the headquarters of the Serbian front in Macedonia, and were feasted by Prince Alexander.

The Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the dual crown, who fell a victim to the southern Slavs at Serajevo, together with his morganatic wife, Countess Chotek, was supposed to be favourable to the idea of triality, and perhaps even to the wider "ity," such as was conceived before the war by the Jugo-Slavs; though all these schemes and outlooks were very much altered by the course of the war.

Before the war the principle of home rule nowhere found more practical application than in Austria-Hungary, where each half of the Dual Monarchy had its own separate parliament and cabinet, nominally responsible to it for the management of its own affairs—that is to say, all affairs which did not fall within the fields of foreign policy, defence, or finance, for which there were special Imperial ministers common to both countries. The provision of money for common objects was practically assigned to two special bodies called the Delegations, each of sixty members, chosen by the two chambers of each parliament, which met alternately at Vienna and Budapest. They were, in fact, budget committees of the two legislatures, and among other things, they saw to the payment of the Emperor-King's civil list of £1,000,000, which was drawn in equal moities from the revenues of Austria and Hungary.

For executive purposes the Dual Monarchy had three departments of state: one for foreign affairs, a second for war, and a third for finance. The ministers at the heads of these departments were appointed by the emperor. In addition, both Austria and Hungary had its own ministry under a prime minister who also was appointed by the emperor, but who, as in Great Britain and other European countries, must enjoy the confidence of the chosen representatives of the people. If this failed they had no option but to resign.

CONDITIONS IN AUSTRIA—HUNGARY

The parliament of Austria, called the Reichsrath, consisted of two houses. The upper house was composed of princes of the Imperial family, a certain number of nobles who sat by hereditary right, some archbishops and bishops, and finally a number of life members, not exceeding 170, who were nominated by the emperor. The lower house consisted of 515 deputies elected by all male citizens who were over 24 years of age. The deputies were chosen for six years and were paid. In addition, each of the provinces, of which there were 17, had its own diet, or legislature, which dealt with matters of local concern.

On the other hand, the Hungarian Parliament consisted of a House of Magnates and one of popular representatives—four hundred and fifty-three—but the franchise was not of so large and free a kind as in Austria, and it was elected for five years. The official language was Magyar, though the deputies from Croatia and Slavonia might speak their own tongue; and these two provinces enjoyed a considerable measure of home rule under the paramount power at Budapest. As the working classes, the Magyar peasantry, and the ten millions of non-Magyars were almost entirely unrepresented in the Parliament at Budapest the members could be relied upon to support the wishes of those responsible for the war.

At the close of 1916 two events seriously shook the stability of this polyglot Empire. On October 21 the premier, Count Stürgkh, was shot dead in a Vienna restaurant by Dr. Adler, editor of the leading socialist organ *Was Volk*, as a protest against the autocratic rule instituted since the war. Speaking at his trial Dr. Adler said:

Even before the declaration of war on Serbia it had been decided to declare war upon the peoples of Austria, to treat the Constitution as a scrap of paper, and shamelessly to tread under foot all law and right in Austria! . . . All political offences—high treason, lese-majesty, disturbance of the public peace—for which juries were really instituted, were transferred by the decrees of July 25 to the jurisdiction of the Courts-Martial. . . . We are a State which has not its equal in the whole world. In Austria justice has been degraded to a mere internal machine of war.

He was condemned to death, but was afterwards sentenced to fifteen years' hard labour. Exactly a month after the assassination of Count Stürgkh, the Emperor Francis Joseph died at the

A NEW EMPEROR

age of eighty-seven. He ascended the throne in 1848, when eighteen, and his long reign had been a succession of public and private calamities. For many years it had seemed possible that his death would be a signal for the break-up of the empire, and that Hungary would then demand independence. According to a writer in *The Times*:

The closing months of his life were marked by the establishment of a military reign of terror throughout his dominions, by the persecution of millions of his subjects taught to revere his name, and by thousands of executions for "high treason."

. . . The world will reflect that an era which might have been a great era in Hapsburg history has closed amid ruin, bankruptcy, blood, and tears; but in these reflections there will be place for human compassion with the lot of a man who came as a stripling to the throne, who saw brother, wife, son, and nephew perish by violence, who lost the fairest provinces of his Empire, and who must have ended a long and chequered reign with forebodings of disaster to his House and his dominions graver than any which even he had known. . . .

The direct responsibility of Francis Joseph for this criminal policy [of the war] cannot be ascertained. Age probably rendered him incapable of resisting pressure which in earlier years he might have had the strength to withstand. Rather than upon him, responsibility rests upon the German Emperor, the German military party, and their accomplices in Austria, and particularly in Hungary, where Count Tisza worked in close agreement with German schemes.

Francis Joseph was succeeded on the throne by a nephew, the Archduke Charles Francis Joseph. Born on August 17, 1887, the new ruler was in his thirtieth year, with the training more of a soldier than a statesman. His parents were the Archduke Otto, second son of the Emperor Francis Joseph's brother Louis, and the Archduchess Maria Josepha, sister of the king of Saxony. At his accession the post of Austrian premier was occupied by Dr. von Körber, but in about three weeks' time he had to be superseded. The young Emperor had been taught to see the wisdom of having an Austrian Premier more agreeable to the Hungarians than the "stalwart" Dr. von Körber, an Austrian through and through—the more so since, in view of his forthcoming coronation as King of Hungary, it was found expedient to make certain concessions to the Magyars. This change was soon followed by the substitution of Count

CONDITIONS IN AUSTRIA—HUNGARY

Czernin, by race a German-Bohemian, for the Hungarian Baron Burian as Imperial minister for foreign affairs.

Prorogued in March, 1914, the Austrian Reichsrath had not been allowed to meet during the critical days which decided the question of peace or war, and for nearly the next three years its doors remained closed. The result was that Austria proper lived in a constant state of Ministerial change. Every month, every week almost, brought with it a fresh turn of the kaleidoscope. In all these crises the most hotly-contested topic was the convocation of the Reichsrath, so stoutly opposed by Count Sturgkh.

Dr. von Korber was favourable to the idea, but his successor, Dr. von Spitzmüller, who failed to form a Cabinet, thought it impracticable; while the next Premier, Count Clam-Martinitz, a Bohemian noble—like the new Foreign Minister, Count Czernin—was believed to desire it, but on terms objected to by the German parties whose aim it was to establish a German majority in the Parliament of Vienna as well as a Magyar majority at Budapest, in conformity with the scheme of a "Mittel-Europa" (or Central Europa), under Teuton domination.

The Mittel-Europa scheme aimed at extending German rule from the North Sea to the Persian Gulf. To carry out this plan it was necessary that Austrian subjects of Germanic origin should become predominant over the Slavs. An essential part of the scheme was that, by making German the official language of the Reichsrath, such Slav deputies as could not be excluded would be effectively muzzled. At last, towards the end of April, 1917, the new Emperor signed a decree convoking the Reichsrath for May 30.

At the opening sitting of the Lower House the galleries were crowded, and many deputies appeared in uniform. Wreaths were laid on the seats of four who had been killed during the war. Reference was made to "the heroic fighters who are now in the field for Austria's existence, honour, and glory, especially those now on the Carso and the Isonzo." In face of the ominous abstention of nearly two hundred of its members, the House elected as its president Dr. Gross, leader of the German National League—a signal triumph for the "Mittel-Europa" dreamers and their scheme of "Deutschland über Alles." The keynote of the emperor's speech from the Throne was the frank confession that he meant for the time being to act as an autocratic ruler.

Mindful (he said) of my obligation to take the oath to the

A POLITICAL JOSEPH SURFACE

Constitution, and adhering to my intention expressed immediately after my accession to fulfil this obligation truly, I must at the same time keep in mind the provision of the fundamental law which places in my hands alone the decisions to be taken at the great moment of the conclusion of peace. . . . From these considerations I have decided to postpone the taking of the Constitutional oath until the time, which I hope is not far distant, when the foundations of a new, strong and happy Austria will again for generations to come be firmly consolidated internally and externally. Already to-day, however, I declare that I shall always be a just, affectionate, and conscientious ruler of my dear peoples in the sense of the Constitutional idea which we have taken over as a heritage from our forefathers, and in the spirit of that true democracy which during the storms of the world-war has wonderfully stood the ordeal of fire in the achievements of the entire people at home and at the front.

Flouting of the constitution, sops flung to Slav aspirations, and suggestions of a separate peace with Russia were the chief ingredients of the speech. No wonder that, in an article on The Vienna Sham, The Times wrote:

The Emperor Charles is too young for the difficult part which he had to play at the opening of the Austrian Reichsrath. Training, as well as natural aptitude, is required to sustain the character of a political Joseph Surface with any credit. His Apostolic Majesty's ally in Berlin has often won applause in it, but his own performance wholly lacked spirit. He spoke the words set down for him, but he must have been overwhelmed by consciousness that the world-wide audience for whom he was acting are cold and critical. What he will do when the screen scene is reached, we cannot imagine. There is something much worse than "a little milliner" behind it, and the time is coming when somebody will throw it down. It will be an embarrassing moment.

Nothing could better illustrate the chaos prevailing throughout the polygot Empire than the debate which followed the speech of the Premier, Clam-Martinitz, a Bohemian noble who had given great offence to his own countrymen the Czechs. The Southern Slav deputy Korosec declared that not only the Slavs, but the whole population, were joining more and more in the cries. "Away with German bureaucracy!" "Away with German officers!" The South Slavs intended that all Slovenes, Croats,

CONDITIONS IN AUSTRIA—HUNGARY

and Serbs living in the monarchy should be united under the Hapsburg sceptre within a state of their own. A Czech deputy, Herr Praschek (a former cabinet minister), declared that, whoever was responsible for beginning the war, it was certainly not the Czechs nor the Slavs. The Czechs could only support a Government whose programme included the abolition of the dual system and the organization of independent States in both halves of the Monarchy. On hearing the declaration of the Bohemian club in the Reichsrath to the effect that "the Czechs would insist upon the union of all branches of the Czech-Slovak nation in a democratic Bohemian State, the Magyars accused them of high treason.

A few days later an immense flutter was caused by the issue of an Imperial amnesty in favour of all civilians undergoing sentence for high treason, lese-majesty, offences against the public peace, rioting, etc., and, in fact, of all political offenders except those who had fled abroad—such as Professor Masaryk, who had found an asylum in England. As, however, the Czech deputies, though released, would not be allowed to re-enter Parliament, the whole thing was regarded as a farce, intended to hoodwink public opinion at home and abroad. While this unexpected amnesty was greeted with thunders of applause by the Slav deputies it fell like a thunderbolt on the German parties in the Reichsrath, the first intimation of it reaching there when Dr. Seidler—who had succeeded Clam-Martinitz as Premier—read the Imperial rescript in the Lower House.

It was about this time that the German Kaiser and Kaiserin paid a return visit to their Imperial Majesties of Austria at the Laxenburg Palace, near Vienna, and there was reason for believing that the Potsdam War Lord had considerable influence in inspiring the amnesty, which resulted in the release of some 60,000 political prisoners. The German General Staff had been rendered very uneasy by the growth of revolutionary feeling in Bohemia and the passing of so many Czech soldiers over to the Russians, and had suggested the adoption of this measure with other measures aimed at alleviating the situation brought about by food scarcity and internal troubles throughout the Empire, which were even affecting the army. Another source of weakness was the Austrian policy of separating officers from men of their own nationality, except in the case of Austrians proper. The result was that officers and men in many cases spoke entirely different

AN AMERICAN VIEW

languages. The bulk of the army was Hungarian or Slav, and those troops were mainly officered by Austrians.

Soon after the fall of Przemyśl the higher command of the Austro-Hungarian army became entirely German. No Austrian general could now form any plans of his own; he had but to carry out the plans supplied to him by the German general staff. In fact, by this imposition of the military will of William II. the first stage of converting Austria into the vassal and tool of Germany had been reached, and the Teutonic advocates of a "Mittel-Europa" were consequently jubilant. But this German domination did not come soon enough to save the Austro-Hungarian army from suffering irreparable losses. Some authorities averred that the retreat from Serbia was the most terrible disaster, in the magnitude of the losses and suffering involved, that any of the belligerent armies had to endure.

Though the war proved the Central Empires to be much more self-sufficing than had been generally supposed, and they had the advantage of occupying territories—Rumania and the Russian provinces, for example—that were rich in natural resources, the pinch of hunger was felt very keenly throughout the Dual Monarchy. The American ambassador to Austria-Hungary, Mr. F. C. Penfield, on returning to Washington, said to an interviewer in August, 1917:

The number of war orphans in Hungary alone exceeds 400,000, and misery is everywhere growing, while the demand for peace rings louder every day.

Austria's food supply is being so rigidly conserved that the people have now three meatless days in each week, with other days when fats of every sort and butter are forbidden. At best, the remaining days are but half-ration days. Because the Army has commandeered two-thirds of the cows there is a milk and butter famine.

The average person in Austria has not tasted butter in a year. The pinch last winter was most severe, and summer finds the people reduced to straits of genuine desperation. Starvation cannot well come to a monarchy possessing the grain-fields of Hungary and Moravia, but hunger is already there, and there are degrees of hunger.

Last winter Vienna was almost coalless, because there were no cars to haul the fuel from the mines. The authorities decreed that families could heat but a single room in their abodes, but even for this the dealers could seldom supply the necessary fuel.

CONDITIONS IN AUSTRIA—HUNGARY

There have not been sufficient cars to bring salt in needed quantity from the Salzkammergut, and housewives have had to learn to do without a necessary article of which the Dual Monarchy has a natural store sufficient to last for centuries. One of the costliest commodities is soap of the commonest variety used by the housewife, for fats have become extremely scarce.

These conditions may be met by persons of means, but the masses are in no position to purchase food having inflated values. Great self-denial has to be practised on all sides by the millions, and the wonder is that poor people can find ways of existing.

Horse-flesh is to-day the food of millions. Poor people in Austria-Hungary have always consumed much horse-flesh, but not half the quantity as at present. The price is half that of beef or mutton, and the article is claimed not to be unwholesome.

An informant of *The Times*, writing from Berne, on May 21, 1917, said he had received on excellent authority the following account of conditions in Austria as they existed at that time. Some extracts from it are given:

A person visiting Vienna to-day neither sees nor hears anything of the war. He finds the city full of people who seem to think of nothing but enjoyment; the cafes—where conversation about the war is taboo—are full of people from morning till night, the restaurants, where everything except bread and potatoes can be obtained, if one's purse is long enough, are crowded; the opera and the theatres have nearly every seat booked in advance, and the cinemas are filled at every performance.

In the fashionable streets of the city one cannot help remarking the extraordinary number of officers of all ranks and of both services, who appear to have no other duties than to make themselves agreeable to ladies. Both morning and afternoon the pavements are so crowded that progress is a matter of the utmost difficulty. On all sides are fine shops full of the latest fashions which find purchasers even at the prevailing exorbitant prices. Everything is up to date and of the best, but only within reach of the rich.

If one makes inquiries below the surface, however, one finds that housekeeping, even on the most modest scale, is almost an impossibility, owing to the difficulty of obtaining supplies. The rich solve this difficulty by giving up all idea of catering for themselves and going to a good restaurant for most of their meals, but to those of moderate or small income the food problem is an ever-increasing anxiety. The question is no

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE

longer "What shall I buy?" but "What can I buy?" for it is impossible to procure many articles which were formerly regarded as necessities.

As to the attitude of the Austrian people towards the war the writer goes on to say:

It may be described as one of total indifference—except in regard to its duration. The only desire of the people is for peace, "no matter who wins." For some little time there have been persistent rumours that Austria was about to make a separate peace. . . . If Austria could shake off German influence and get good terms, she would make peace to-morrow; but as she knows that she would be obliged to give up so much of her territory she is obliged to continue the fight, in the hope that something may turn up. As an Austrian soldier friend of my informant expressed it: "We are beginning to realise that all along we have been the tool of Germany, and whether we win or lose we shall have to pay, and pay dearly."

A lady who returned from Prague to England towards the end of August said the crops had been most unsatisfactory. Moreover, all the fruit, cattle, potatoes, and other victuals were exported to Germany, and prices had risen enormously. Food riots were frequent. The suffering was terrible, especially among the poorer classes. The mortality among the children, old people, and invalids was very high. A so-called hunger-typhoid had broken out in some suburbs inhabited by the working classes in Prague.

So much, then, for the state of the Dual Monarchy at the end of the third year of the war, from the point of view of national food. Let us conclude with some official figures about national finance. At the beginning of June, 1917, the national debt committee of the Reichsrath estimated the war expenditure of Austria-Hungary to the end of 1916 at 44,000,000,000 kronen (£1,833,000,000 at the normal pre-war rate of exchange), of which Austria's share was 28,000,000,000 kronen (£1,166,000,000) and Hungary's 16,000,000,000 kronen (£666,000,000). It was further estimated that the total Austro-Hungarian war expenditure to the end of June would reach the sum of 55,000,000,000 kronen (£2,291,000,000), and that the daily war expenditure of Austria in 1916 was 41,600,000 kronen (£1,750,000), while that of Hungary was 25,000,000 kronen (£1,040,000)—the krone being reckoned at about tenpence.

CONDITIONS IN AUSTRIA—HUNGARY

The speech on the Austrian budget by the then minister of finance, Dr. Spitzmuller, which was delivered soon after in the Reichsrath, contained little more detailed information than the Budget itself, which was entirely without figures. By way of explaining this extraordinary omission, the minister said, in effect, that the presentation of an ordinary complete Budget would have shown an enormous deficit likely to be misinterpreted abroad, and would have placed Austria in a most painful situation before the whole world. He went on to say that the expenditure in support of soldiers' families to the end of April, 1917, amounted to 3,500,000,000 kronen (about £146,000,000), a sum exceeding the whole budget of the last year of peace; and it was estimated that the total for 1917 would reach 2,100,000,000 kronen (about £87,000,000), or more than double the aggregate of all the direct and indirect taxes for the year.

Besides this, 600,000,000 kronen (£25,000,000) had been spent in relief of fugitives from Galicia, the Bukovina, and the southern crown lands, and 300,000,000 kronen (£12,500,000) to furnish cheap food for the poorer classes. Several hundred millions would also be required for the restoration of damaged property in Galicia after the Russian invasion. Regarding future plans the minister intimated that there would be heavy taxes on property and concentrations of capital, and confiscation of the share profits of trusts.

The Austrian press received the speech coldly, and expressed surprise and disappointment at the minister's reticence. This disappointment could hardly have been lessened by a statement authorized by the Austrian government on August 25, 1917, which announced that the state budget for the year ending June 30, 1917, showed a deficit of about £140,000,000. Whatever might be the case in Germany, it was obvious that Austria could not bear the burden much longer.

CHAPTER 22

Italy's Stand on the Piave

IN the last week of October, 1917, while the principal armies of Italy were desperately fighting for life, Sir William Robertson and General Foch hastened to the Italian front, and, without waiting for a call for help, arranged with General Cadorna for the despatch of British and French armies of support. There was, however, a critical period of suspense of three weeks between the arrival of French and British armies and the opening of the new turning attack of General von Below. The great danger was that the enemy would burst over the mountain rampart between the Piave and Brenta rivers, destroy the Italian 1st and 4th armies, and compel the allies to make their intended stand farther back along the course of the Adige river. The Adige river was certainly a stronger line, as its stream of water, running by Verona and emptying south of the Venice lagoons, was broad, deep, and constant. Venice and Padua and Vicenza would have been lost, and Verona would have fallen, but from a purely military point of view, the Adige line would have shortened the work of defence and facilitated it in other ways.

On the other hand, there were reasons that compelled General Cadorna and his staff to attempt to stand along the shingle-beds of the capricious torrent of the Piave. Not only would the effect of the loss of Venice and Padua have deepened the depression of the Italian people, but the northern waters of the Adriatic would have come under the dominion of the Austro-Hungarian fleet. There were no good harbours on the Italian shore of the Adriatic. It had always been a matter of difficulty to conduct naval operations against the enemy from the shallow base of Venice. The loss of the Venetian harbourage would have been a very serious disaster, exposing a long line of coast to hostile naval raids, and perhaps to more serious amphibious operations. The Austrians had an incomparable series of natural defences, roadways, and shelters along the islanded waters of the Eastern Adriatic. Their ships could work

ITALY'S STAND ON THE PIAVE

southward, behind mine-fields, fortified isles and islets, and make sudden dashes to the bare Italian coast, where a system of railway guns and motor-guns had to be devised to hold off attacks until the forces based on Venice swept down upon the enemy's line of retreat. The operations of the British monitors, assisting the Italian 3rd army, and the work of all the allied light naval forces that managed to hold the northern Adriatic, would have been very badly checked if the river-line above Venice had been abandoned. The Italian commander-in-chief therefore held on to the Piave line, in spite of the fact that it was almost as easy to cross as the Tagliamento river, though, happily, much shorter.

From the popular point of view, the new battle that opened on November 8 was fought for Venice. One hour's bombardment by long-range artillery was likely to destroy the treasures of ages, which were less a national possession of Italy than the heritage of the human race. The Italian government did everything possible to prevent Venice from being treated as a place of war. Nobody in uniform was allowed to enter the city, and the civilian population was encouraged to leave by means of a free train service. Nevertheless, there were a few aerial raids upon the city.

Early in November, 1917, General Cadorna was succeeded by General Diaz, commander-in-chief of the Italian forces; General von Below began his new operations on November 10. He reached the Piave line from Segusino to the sea, and, driving back the armoured car rearguard of the Italian forces, captured the bridge-head of Vidor on the eastern bank of the river. Immediately, the large Austro-Hungarian army, under General Boroëvic, tried to force various passages of the river and break the new front of the Italian 3rd army. In nocturnal operations, begun in a hurricane of wind and snow, the Austrians crossed by the shingle-beds of the rising mountain torrent that remained uncovered, and by November 13 established bridge-heads at Zenson and Grisolera, while making attempts and feints at crossing in other places.

Then, on November 16, the passage of the river was again forced at Folina and Fagare, but the Austrians were thrown back. General von Below, disappointed by the failure of Boroëvic, was well aware of the fact that he had only a short time in which to carry out his plan of conquering Italy. He knew



The revolution in Russia broke out in Petrograd, later Leningrad, in March, 1917, and the Bolshevik coup d'etat took place here in November of that year. PIERCE fighting occurred, and street barricades, defended by guns decorated with the red flag as shown here, were set up.



A souvenir of the Bolshevik revolution of 1917. The names of the Bolshevik leaders from left to right are : Top row, Rykov, Radek, Pokrowsky, Kamenev. Middle row : Trotsky, Lenin, Sverdlov. Bottom row : Bucharin, Zinovyev, Krylenko, Mme. Kollontai, Lunacharsky.

THE CRADLE OF BOLSHEVISM AND ITS LEADERS



Central News

BOLSHEVIST SOLDIERS IN PETROGRAD. The doom of the Tsarist regime was sealed when Nicholas II refused to accede to the requests of his statesmen to banish the illiterate pseudo-monk, Rasputin. Aristocrats brought about his assassination on December 29, 1916, and so helped to kindle the revolutionary fires. In March, 1917, the Petrograd troops revolted and are seen here demonstrating with revolutionary banners. On the 15th of that month Nicholas abdicated.

on December 29, 1916, and so helped to kindle the revolutionary res. In March, 1917, the Petrograd troops revolted and are seen here demonstrating with revolutionary banners. On the 15th of that month Nicholas abdicated.

Volume IV



THE CAMPAIGN IN EAST AFRICA. This interesting photograph shows the British commander, General Hannington interrogating a German native porter who is guarded by Sepoys.

Plate 39



FROM AN AFRICAN FRONT. Another striking photograph from East Africa. Here British officers are seen watching the fight for Mombo, on the Tanga-Moshi railway. By the end of 1917 German East Africa had been cleared of the enemy.

CONRAD VON HÖTZENDORF

exactly what progress the French and British armies were making in their journey to the Piave line.

With a view to accelerating his last great attack, Below abandoned most of the eastern ways of communication to Boroëvic. He massed his main forces of Germans, Hungarians, and Austrians in the mountains between the Piave and the Brenta. His line was formed in a crescent, of which the centre was at Feltre. He had no feeding railway line, as the Udine track branching to Vittorio was damaged; while the Belluno track, running through the Upper Piave valley, was not linked with the Austrian system beyond the Carnic Alps.

Closely connecting with Below's particular forces was the Austro-Hungarian army of the Trentino, under General von Scheuchenstuel, who possessed the excellent railway and motor communications that had been constructed for the former offensive against the Asiago plateau positions. It was possible rapidly to feed the heavy and light guns which were already sited on either side of the Sugana valley for the resumption of the offensive against the Italian 1st army, the right wing of which was holding the mountains between Asiago and Tezze.

Scheuchenstuel shrank into obscurity as soon as the action opened. Field-Marshal Conrad von Hötendorf, the former commander-in-chief of the Austro-Hungarian armies, was allowed a last opportunity for retrieving his many mistakes. He had always been distinguished as a specialist in Trentino operations, and had continually insisted that his original plan of driving down upon the Italian rear from the Trentino was preferable to making costly counter-offensives on the Isonzo line. It had been the ruling passion of his life to invade the rich Lombard plain from the Trentino, and for years before the war he had planned and practised his various manoeuvres of feint and thrust.

Defeated by Russky and Brusiloff in 1914, the old Austrian chief of staff had been retired by the German high command, and nominally replaced by archducal figureheads. His Trentino plan had been attempted in 1916, but had failed. He was now given a brilliant German as assistant, and was strongly reinforced with men and material. Serving him were two railways from Innsbruck and Vienna that united at Franzensfeste and thence ran in a double line to Trento, with a branch line to the Asiago battlefield. From his point of view, the prospects

ITALY'S STAND ON THE PIAVE

of breaking down the Brenta valley were remarkably good, and in conjunction with Below he opened the battle in much the same circumstances as had obtained at Verdun in February, 1916. Two battering-rams played upon the Italian 1st and 4th armies on either side of the Brenta river. The Austrian field-marshal struck the first blow after a long and intense bombardment of the positions around Asiago. His infantry entered the town on November 10, and swept over the mountains by Gallio, where there was a gateway to a short valley cutting into the plain of Asolo, in the rear of the Italian 3rd and 4th armies.

The ambitious stroke completely failed. The Italian commander fought a fierce street battle in Asiago, but he did not make any decisive stand for the town, as he found it was too completely dominated by hostile artillery. He merely maintained a rearguard action by house-to-house fighting, and placed his main forces in dead ground in a large depression south of the city. At the same time he swung his supports northward to the mountains by Gallio. Here his men rallied, and bore the enemy back from the valley gate of the plain, recovering all the positions they lost during the first hostile rush.

This skilful re-establishment of the 1st army was the first definite victory won by the Italians since their conquest of the Bainsizza plateau. In both material and moral effect it was profoundly important. It taught the Italian soldier that he was still the master of the fate of his nation, and that the power of the invader could be broken. By saving the great mountain rampart above Asolo from being turned, it reserved for the Italians and the French a strong defensive sector in which the enemy could be fought to a standstill. In the night of November 12 the Austrian field-marshal renewed his attack on the Gallio gateway, where the outer Meletta and Longaro mountains barred his way to the critical Frenzela ravine.

Immediately above this narrow ravine was a mountain block, round which the Brenta curved from the Sugana valley. The mountain masses formed a vast promontory, with Monte Lisser dominating the ancient road of invasion to Bassano and the plain, linking its fire with that of the Italian batteries on the Grappa mountain sector. West of the Lisser height was another tangle of mountains, Tondarecar, Badeneche, Fior, Castel Gomberto, inner and outer Meletta, Sisemol, and others, which outflanked and enfiladed the ground the enemy had won at

A HARD TEST

Asiago, projecting like a rugged, gigantic buttress into the enemy's new lines.

Owing to the intensity and weight of the Austrian gun fire, and the difficulty of deploying and supplying large numbers of troops upon the roadless mountains, only one Italian division could be maintained in the high salient above Asiago. When the men were settled in their positions it was difficult to relieve them, so that the splendid Regina and Alpine brigades, that recovered the heights about Gallio, had to hold out for many days and nights against continual assaults, conducted by a succession of fresh hostile forces.

The policy adopted by Diaz was more than bold. He strained his troops to the limit of their powers of endurance in a way that, to anybody who thought the Italians were liable to demoralisation, must have seemed desperately perilous. But he knew his countrymen as no foreigner did. By imposing great ordeals upon them, he vindicated the strength of character of his race, and gained one of the finest defensive battles of the war. His men shattered the attack of November 11, and although they lost Monte Longaro on November 13, they returned to the key position of outer Meletta, and held on to it with marvellous tenacity.

In the night of November 13 and the morning and evening of November 14 the Regina Brigade and the Alpine troops broke up assault after assault between Monti Fior and Meletta. The situation, however, was critical, and General Diaz sent General Badoglio, with a division from the 3rd army, to hold the side gate into the Brenta valley for another five days. Many more days than five, however, were to pass in terrific warfare before the conqueror of the Sabotino, the Vodice ridge, and the Bainsizza plateau received the men and guns needed to make the Frenzela ravine impregnable against the mightily armed invaders. For weeks General Badoglio had to stand against appalling odds.

Having a rail-head close behind him, the Austrian field-marshal brought up more heavy artillery and, resuming the attack on November 15, began to feed his men forward in larger numbers against the mountain line thinly held by the Alpine troops and infantry. The Italian brigade on the outer Meletta and Monte Fior destroyed every force coming in its range with rifles and machine-guns, while the Alpini on Monte

ITALY'S STAND ON THE PIAVE

Tondarecar shot down three successive storming forces. On November 16 the Austrians again advanced against the same mountains and were swept back. The following day the Perugia brigade made a splendid counter-movement around the outer Meletta, and recovered some advance works that had been lost in the long battle. General Badoglio continued to press the enemy back from the Meletta sector on November 18 and 19, deliberately provoking the enemy commander to more violent efforts. These resulted in a great and sustained battle on November 22, in which Conrad von Hotzendorf made a last attempt to justify the fame as a strategist he had enjoyed in times of peace.

By this time he was becoming little more than the political ornament of a Prussian command, a German general being appointed as the real commander on the Asiago plateau. Employing hundreds of heavy guns against the small portable mountain pieces employed by the Italians, the Austrian commander swept all the Italian front and rear with gas-shell and high explosive, and while the overwhelmed Italian batteries had to remain silent to escape destruction, he launched an incessant encircling attack upon the heights directly guarding the narrow ravine road. His waves of infantry were continually renewed, each being covered by a dense barrage that splintered the rocks into hundreds of thousands of flying fragments and quarried the mountain sides.

The violence of the gun fire, however, was not altogether an advantage, for the attacking troops could not keep too close to its screen of shell because of the wide zone of destructive effect. The Italian troops suffered badly from the continual bombardments, but when they could see the hostile infantry masses they counter-attacked them with invincible fury. Two regiments of the Perugia brigade and the Alpini lost two-thirds of their effectives, but did not budge an inch. At times they gave ground under gun fire, when their advanced shelters had been blown up, but in their counter-charges they avenged all their losses upon the hostile infantry, which, as it broke and fled, was pursued with machine-gun fire and low-flying Italian aeroplanes.

At the end of the day the mountain line above Asiago was as strong as it had been before Hötendorf opened his great offensive. The town which the defenders had abandoned early in the engagement, and the advanced positions from

AWAITING THE SNOWFALL

which they had retired, had been only covering works designed to test the strength and direction of the invaders' thrust. The main mountain line was indeed held more firmly than it had been in the second week of November, for General Badoglio was already benefiting by the arrival of allied reinforcements of men, guns and shell which were being despatched to replace some of the tremendous losses in Italian war material.

On the Asiago plateau, where the Austrians and Germans had close railway connexion with their depôts and factories, the mass of guns was at first much larger than that of Krobatin's and Below's armies. Long before Below could bring a 12 in. piece into action, Hötzenndorf was using hundreds of the Great Skoda guns. He had thousands of medium heavy pieces when Below was using a hundred or two hundred 6 in. guns mounted on motor carriages.

Hötzenndorf, like Below, was greatly favoured by the weather. For weeks the snow never fell heavily. In an ordinary winter there would have been ten feet of snow on all mountain paths and roads, and the movement of heavy guns would have become impossible, while the labour of bringing up large shells from the rail-head would have been so enormous as to produce a condition of temporary stalemate. Even a permanent snowfall of a foot or two would have been very useful to the Italians and their Allies, as their reconnoitring pilots would have traced the position of the hostile guns by the patches of bare ground where the snow had melted away under the flame of the charges.

In the Trentino, General Badoglio had reckoned on having to hold out only for five days, in the middle of November, because he thought that the usual fall of snow would completely check the movement of the hostile artillery and allow time for the French and British troops and guns to get into position and relieve the strain upon the hard-pressed and poorly armed Italian armies. But the snow did not begin to fall heavily until the last week in November, and by this time the German commanders, who had taken the conduct of the battle out of the hands of the Austrian field-marshal and grand dukes, had sited by the Piave and Brenta rivers a number of guns exceeding that with which Falkenhayn had tried to batter into Verdun. On the Asiago tableland Hötzenndorf was practically relieved of his command, and one of the ablest of Below's

ITALY'S STAND ON THE PIAVE

experts in heavy artillery tactics took control of the eastern field of war. He was a man of ability, and when he opened his offensive in bright sunshine on December 2, 1917, he employed British methods of artillery demonstrations and artillery ambushes.

He began with a regular gun fire bombardment, which he increased to the usual hurricane fire before an assault. Then his guns suddenly lifted, and while the heavy pieces shut down on the Italian rear and ways of communication, his light and medium guns rolled their attacking barrages up the mountain slopes and down the mouths of the valleys. But when the surviving Italian infantrymen rose to repel the waves of assault not a figure was visible and before they could dart back to their shelters the entire weight of thousands of guns fell upon them, scattering shrapnel as well as high explosive and gas.

Then there was a lull—sometimes fairly long and sometimes brief, but the intensive fire soon began again. The guns so dominated the field that many of them were able to rest in the open field, where the large patches of dark ground clearly indicated their whereabouts. All the guns of General Badoglio had to remain silent and concealed, so that those which escaped the enemy's searching hurricanes of fire could help the infantry in the hour of the great ordeal. In the morning of December 4 the first and second Italian lines were flooded with blinding gas and a new kind of shell containing a powerful emetic. When it was thought that the Italian troops were sufficiently demoralised by this attack, their wire entanglements were broken by a trench-mortar bombardment, and behind the barrages there swept large masses of Austrian infantry, headed by storming-parties of German shock troops who had been well trained in mountain warfare in Alsace.

All the enemy troops were employed in very dense masses; for the German commander expected either that the Italian artillery had been put out of action, or that he could destroy it as soon as the batteries that had survived his bombardments revealed themselves. On the northern sector of the mountain line his shock tactics were successful. His artillery completely smashed the light mountain guns of the defence, and his divisions, storming the slopes in deep waves, and driving through the valleys in columns, outstripped the barrage of the survivors in the Italian line. Most gallantly did the defenders of the

ITALIAN VALOUR

Tondarecar and Badenecche mountain sector fight. In the morning they broke attack after attack; and when part of their line was driven in, enabling the enemy to climb on to one of the spurs, they counter-attacked and won back some of the ground, lost it again, and yet charged once more. One runner of the Alpine troops took a message to headquarters at Foza when his comrades were surrounded. The general could give no help, as he was being pressed back on the other wing and his centre was reeling. All he could do was to send an answering message to his lost brigades, asking them to fight on while they had ammunition left, and thus rearguard the breaking line while fresh positions were taken up.

The scene was one of the most memorable in the whole war, and certainly a most precious example of Italian valour, for the Italian troops were men of the 2nd army, under the best commanding officer of that army, who had begun life as a doctor, won high fame as a military conqueror, and then lost all that made life worth living when the troops beyond his sector broke on August 24. Instead of having an army to command, he had only a single division, and most of his men were dead or dying.

After the Austrians turned Badenecche on the south and thrust over the saddle between the summit and Tondarecar in the evening of a day of continual fighting, some of the Bersaglieri fell back on the western slope and there fought all night. In the morning there were eighteen privates left in a sea of Austrians. As the small party skirmished along the valley they found that Monte Fior, in their path of retreat, was occupied by the enemy. They charged up the peak, and by some miracle recovered the great mountain. It took the Austrians twenty minutes to discover that they had been frightened away by eighteen officerless men. They climbed back to the mountain-top in hundreds and killed seventeen out of the eighteen heroes. But one of the Bersaglieri, though wounded, managed to crawl down the mountain-side and gain the new line running by Monte Spitz, Monte Miela, and the Frenzela ravine.

About the time that Monte Fior was thus strangely recovered for an hour, General Badoglio made an equally astounding recovery of his original line on Monte Tondarecar. He launched two battalions of his Alpine troops, who had been attacked

ITALY'S STAND ON THE PIAVE

around Castel Gomberto, midway between the old and new Italian lines. It was these troops that had lost Monte Fior, having there been outflanked and threatened with envelopment. But, instead of retiring southward, the Alpini made an utterly unexpected charge forward, using nothing but their own machine-guns to cover each rush they made against the enemy's distant left centre. They recaptured the high mass of Tondarecar, thereby throwing into complete confusion all the operations of the hostile commander. When his line broke at the most critical point, he could not tell in what way the Italian general would follow up his stroke. He had to draw back on his centre, where he was fighting in the ravine road to the Brenta valley, and make a fresh concentration against the survivors of the 2,000 Italians who had broken right into his flank. As he had more than 100,000 men immediately available on a short front, he was able to recover the lost mountain; but, by the time he had done so, he had lost the battle.

General Badoglio had given ground and sacrificed some sixteen thousand men of heroic temper. But the ground he had lost was of no permanent value, as it had formed a salient exposed to an overwhelming cross-fire of heavy artillery, and useful only for the temporary purpose that it had completely served. It had broken up the final grand offensive made by the enemy on the western bank of the Brenta, and when it was abandoned the attacking forces were so utterly wasted in working over the mountainous outwork that they had no strength left with which to attempt their main task.

At Foza village, south of the Meletta height, the position was extremely critical while the Alpine battalions were making their tiger leap back to the Tondarecar. Foza was the headquarters of the Italian general, and, like Sir John French at Ypres, he stayed in person to meet the enemy. When his staff urged him to retire, he said he would wait until the building was hit. In the night of December 5-6 the Austrians cut the road between Foza village and the house occupied by the general and his staff. Thereupon a major of an Alpine regiment collected some stragglers, placed them on the hill behind headquarters, and shot down the leading Austrian force, while the general and his staff motored under fire to the Frenzela ravine.

The Austrians also reached the ravine, but few of them returned from it. It was as narrow as an ordinary staircase

THE FRENZELA RAVINE

in places, with two walls of rock rising almost sheer on either side. Here and there were ledges on which Italian engineers had blasted hidden shelters out of the rock. The cliffs seemed absolutely uninhabited when the Austrians approached, but when they reached certain marked ranges a machine-gun barrage brought the foremost men down, and then travelled over the trapped column. There was no path to the plains through the Frenzela ravine. Another Austrian division, therefore, tried to work around to the Brenta valley by the Vecchia road to Valstagna. Here, however, another Italian general, who had lost most of his men, improvised a new command out of a considerable number of retiring groups, and with short-ranged machine-gun fire completely blocked the southern road and kept the line below Asiago.

On the southern side of the Frenzela ravine the battle swayed most violently between Buso village, Ronchi valley, Monte Sisemol, and the heights south of Asiago. By reason of his enormous weight of artillery the enemy commander was able to shatter the Italian lines, covering the white summits, the pine-wood slopes, and the patches of bare rock with rolling hurricanes of flame and steel, brick-red shrapnel bursts, and poison gases. When the smoke and fume cleared away, the mountains looked as if they had been transformed into huge quarries. The Italian infantry was compelled to give ground and shelter on the reverse slopes.

When, however, the Jaegers and the other storm troops of the Austrian army topped the abandoned summits and crests, the Italian guns that had remained silent through all the bombardments came furiously into action, and the Italian infantry surged back with officers in low-flying aeroplanes leading them on and shooting at the enemy with aerial machine-guns. The 4th Bersaglieri brigade finely distinguished itself by the defence of Monte Sisemol. After the enemy broke over the Meletta defences in the evening of December 5, and tried to storm into the Frenzela ravine, the Italian centre withdrew in the night from the Ronchi valley. At daybreak on December 6 the parks of hostile artillery sited around Asiago and Gallio swept all the southern Italian line as far as Monte Kapelaba, and in the afternoon, division after division of Austrian infantry tried to sweep down towards the plain by the wider winding valleys below the narrow Frenzela gateway. For twelve hours

ITALY'S STAND ON THE PIAVE

the two regiments on Monte Sisemol fought the enemy off, standing six great attacks, counter-charging whenever they were forced to retire, and throwing themselves into wild mêlées of hand-to-hand combats.

In the meantime the rest of the division was preparing a line in the rear on the Col del Rosso and the neighbouring mass of Monte Melago, under a heavy long-range bombardment by the enemy's big guns. When all was ready for the Bersaglieri to withdraw, some of them either preferred to fight to the death or did not receive the order. Fighting still continued on Sisemol after the enemy had announced the capture of the mountain, and when the last man fell, on December 8, a long and significant period of quietude occurred on the western bank of the Brenta river. There the principal Austrian army had been so depleted of man-power by a few Italian divisions that the gigantic mass of guns, which Conrad von Hötzendorf had sited, became impotent. Seldom has one great battle so resembled another as the battle of the Brenta resembled the battle of Verdun. What *Homme Mort* was to Verdun the peaks above the Frenzela ravine were to the Grappa mountain defences. When Hötzendorf exhausted the strength of his country in vainly endeavouring to reach the Brenta river at a point some miles behind the north-eastern Italian front, General von Below withdrew with most of his men from Italy, thereby tacitly admitting to the world the failure of his main scheme of conquest.

Before, however, the Prussian commander retired, he made a prolonged, costly, and yet ingenious attempt to retrieve the failure of the Austrian field-marshal. He placed his own troops of the 14th army along the Piave river, and lined out the Austrian army, under General Krobotin and General Krauss, on the northern front held by the Italian 4th army. At the same time he brought a considerable part of the forces of General Boroevic from the Lower Piave and employed them as a general reserve. In the matter of men and guns the army of General Robilant was more than outnumbered—it was overwhelmed. It had lost a very considerable number of men and a large amount of matériel in the long and difficult retreat from the Carnic Alps and the Dolomites; and when it turned to make a stand on some twelve miles of mountainous terrain between the Piave and the Brenta, it was half-surrounded by some three armies,

FIGHTING ON THE BRENTA

each of which was stronger than itself in men and guns. Most of the artillery saved by the mountain troops was of the lightest kind, some pieces being so small as to be portable. General von Below, on the other hand, possessed many mobile 5.9 in. batteries, consisting of pieces mounted on motor-vehicles. He was able also to bring rapidly into action on the northern front of the corner of the Italian line many Austrian pieces ranging up to 12 in. calibre, which were moved along the Trentino railways towards Tezze and Primolano.

When the eastern battle of the Brenta opened on November 13, the Italian 4th army stood around Monte Tomatico, below the lost town of Feltre, and extended towards Fonzaso, covering Primolano, and there joining with the Italian 1st army by Monte Lisser. In the preliminary action of November 13 the Austrian left wing of Below's crescent advanced in the mountains between the Brenta and the Cismon valleys, and occupied the old fortifications on the frontier and the town of Fonzaso. This movement gave Below command over a good highway running southward towards Primolano, which he wanted as a central rail-head. Hotzendorf and he therefore enveloped Primolano from either side and captured it on November 14.

Then, in strong force, with his columns spread out fanwise and skirmishing forces deployed between the masses in the valleys, the Prussian commander advanced towards the confluence of the Brenta river and Cismon stream, succeeded in outflanking the garrison of Monte Roncone, and carried the Tomatico ridge. All this part of the work was carried out by Bavarian and Austrian mountain troops, and it went forward with unusual speed. After getting the command of Monte Lisser, the four invading armies were able to assail from three sides the advanced positions of the small forces defending the eastern corner of the mountain wall. The Italians were swept by fire across the Piave, bombarded and assaulted along the northern front, and often enfiladed from the Brenta valley.

At first it seemed as though the forces commanded by Alfred Krauss might repeat the Caporetto stroke, and drive down the corridor of the Brenta valley with its two good roads and railway track. But for five days the Italian 9th regiment held the Brenta pass with wonderful tenacity and skill. Standing on Monte Cismon, the gallant three thousand broke every attack by fire or by counter-charge, and when the whole line

ITALY'S STAND ON THE PIAVE

had to bend, the men drew back to the little cluster of stone houses by the tall belfry of San Marino, in the neck of the Brenta gorge. Here they connected, across the river, with the army holding the position above the Frenzela ravine, and with desperate stubbornness kept the enemy back during the most critical phase of the conflict for the mountain corner of the Venetian plain.

Meanwhile, the right wing of the Italian 4th army was driven in by a terrific blow. Below was making open preparations for his grand offensive. His array of forces crowded the roads on the opposite side of the river, moving in plain sight against the background of autumnal hills above Vidor Bridge. Had General Diaz possessed the power of gun fire that General Cadorna employed a month previously on the Isonzo, the hostile movements could have been disastrously blocked in a hundred places. But any attempt at barraging operations by the weakly-armed Alpine force would have provoked a duel of light mountain guns against 5.9 in. howitzers and cannon which played searcingly on the Italian flank and rear.

A like bombardment was opened by Austrian gunners on the northern front until the doubly-assailed garrison of the angle of mountains by Quero was compelled to give ground. The Como brigade, unrelieved since the opening of the struggle, was pressed back on Quero on November 16, and the Alpine troops on the more central mass of Monte Prassolan were also compelled to retire before mingled forces of Bosnians, Austrians, and Prussians. Then, in the evening of November 17, Below in person, with his enlarged 14th army, delivered the stroke he intended to be the death-blow to Italy. All day the Austrians had been thrusting with utmost violence on the front of the 4th army while the Germans lashed the rear, where the mountain wall ended and the plain began. As darkness fell the slopes beyond the Piave river blazed with gun fire, and the steepes, inclines, and uplands between Quero and Cornuda smoked and rocked under the exploding shells.

Holding down the Italian garrisons by the riverside with his intense artillery fire and vicious machine-gun barrages, the Prussian commander wasted no time in trying to bridge the Piave, but sent his men across the stream in a flotilla of boats. Punting and rowing, in about forty of the river-craft used on the Friuli waterways, and firing at the defenders' searchlights,

A SHATTERING THRUST

several companies of Germans endeavoured to win a footing near Fener village. At Fener the river is split by a long island of shingle, and as the boats rounded the obstacle the Italians swept them with machine guns and completely broke up the flotilla. The disappointed enemy commander kept his guns bombarding the opposing positions along the river. He destroyed Fener village, and with a tremendous concentration of fire ploughed up the ground about it. At one o'clock in the morning of November 18 he made a stronger essay to form a bridge-head some two miles below Quero. He was successful. A larger flotilla set out, directly opposite Fener village, under cover of a deep, dense barrage, under which the survivors of the force of defence could not rise. The Germans kept close to the wall of thunderbolts, and, winning a footing, rushed the battered trenches. The swiftness of their movements, showed that the operation had been perfectly rehearsed. Scarcely had the leading men reached the village than the sappers were swinging pontoons into position behind them.

Over the bridge, while darkness still held, the shock troops of Below's army passed between Quero and the plain, and stormed up the spur of Monfenera. At Monfenera the mountains ended near the road that ran from Pederroba to Bassano, well in the rear of Monte Tomba, Monte Pallone, Monte Grappa, and the eastern cliffs of the Brenta river. It was the stroke of Caporetto, delivered with direct, downright force, as before, but without any suggestion of co-operation from the men who broke under it.

The immediate effects of this shattering thrust into the Italian rear were far-reaching and effective. The surprised Italian commander had to give ground, drawing his force back from Quero and Alano, and making the central heights around Monte Grappa the base of his defence. The new Italian line still rested partly on the Monfenera spur and its higher western continuation, Monte Tomba. Thence it boldly curved north in a high salient, enclosing Monte Spinoncia, Monte Salarolo, and Col dell' Orso. Behind these heights was the Grappa mass, 5,827 feet high, forming a system of peaks, saddles, and hollows, and overlooking all the other heights. Tomba and Monfenera were mere hills compared with Grappa. North-west of Grappa the 4th army held Monte Pertica and the Berretta saddle sloping to the Brenta.

ITALY'S STAND ON THE PIAVE

Great as the set-back was, it was retrievable. The enemy could not debouch into the plain, through the narrow gap he had made in the mountain wall, while the Grappa system and all its connexions rose above his flank. What should have been done at Caporetto was skilfully carried out at Monfenera. Standing strong on its centre, and swinging back on its wing to keep good contact with the 3rd army, the commander of the 4th army held the enemy back by counter-charges. Four times, on November 18, General von Below launched strong forces on the riverside spur to complete his conquest of it and extend over Monte Tomba. In his final attack he succeeded in gaining some important trenches, but the Italians rallied, returned, and recovered the position. Then in the night of November 19 a fresh force of Germans threw the Italians back again. In turn, Italian reinforcements renewed the swaying struggle, tiring out the available forces of assault, and winning precious time for the elaboration of new defences and the arrival of more supplies.

It was, however, upon the original garrison of the mountain line between the Piave and the Brenta that the supreme task fell—upon Garibaldi's brigade, the Reggio brigade, the Como brigade, and others. The most famous composed the 56th division, which fought on the salient above Grappa, and in a long battle, ending on November 22, broke up Württembergers, Tyroleans, Bosnians, Prussians, and Jaegers. The defenders' losses were heavy in proportion to their numbers, for they were continually raked with medium heavy artillery, against which their mountain guns could not reply, and they were subjected to vehement infantry attacks on three sides. At Monfenera and Monte Tomba the struggle went on, day and night, for nearly a week. On November 22 the Calabria brigade, clinging to the heights in hastily made shelters, was hammered in a manner extraordinary in a mountain battle. Below brought up more heavy guns on the hills beyond the river, and with both German shell and captured Italian shell devastated the positions. The dug-outs were not deep enough to shelter the garrison, so infantry and gunners were horribly used.

Nevertheless, the Calabria brigade fought on for twenty-four hours against every force Below could deploy against them. They lost the Tomba crest, and captured the Monfenera summit, lost that, and recovered the other, and lost it

FRENCH SUPPORTS

again. When the struggle ended in mutual exhaustion, the Prussians and Pomeranians were in the position of having won the ground and lost the battle.

They were settled on the Tomba crest, with the Calabria brigade and its supports digging themselves in on the lower southern slopes, but extending forward over the top of the saddle and the Monfenera ridge. The Italian forces seemed to be in a precarious position, as in clear weather they were overlooked from the Tomba crest. But although enemy observers directed heavy gun fire upon them, no further infantry attacks were made on the mountain edge by the Piave river. After a long pause for fresh preparation, General von Below shifted his German spear-head, and on December 11 advanced against the high salient above Grappa. The new battle lasted for eight days, the Italians, with French batteries assisting, losing some of the mountain wedge at Monte Pertica, Mont Spinoncia, and Monte Asolone, but once more gaining the victory.

Only on the Asiago plateau, after another pause, did the enemy commander achieve any definite success. On December 23 the western Austrian wing broke over the Col del Rosso, by the Frenzela valley, and took, farther south, Monte Melago. The Italians recovered the latter height, but failed to return to the Rosso saddle. This slight loss was more than balanced by a New Year's gift to Italy from France. On December 30 French Chasseurs and infantry of the line, backed by French, Italian, and British guns, carried the summit of Monte Tomba, from which the allied forces could dominate the Piave valley and relieve the troops on the eastern flank of Grappa.

The victorious appearance of the French army of support, on December 30, was connected with the policy adopted by General von Below; on November 24, when desisting from operations on the Tomba and Monfenera heights, his men were a week too late in reaching the height immediately above the plain behind the Italian 3rd army. Had the Prussian commander, with his original force of a hundred thousand men terribly wasted by battle, and his Austrian supports still more weakened by the work of preparing Prussian victories, attempted a swift descent into the plain, he would not, in all probability, have escaped destruction.

It had apparently taken General Foch and Sir William Robertson, with General Fayolle and Sir Herbert Plumer, a

ITALY'S STAND ON THE PIAVE

considerable time to reinforce the armies of Italy. In the age of railway manœuvring, many persons in civilian life, misled by legends of the shuffling of German forces from east to west, expected that a long succession of troop trains, running through Mont Cenis and along the Riviera, would quickly restore the balance of military power in the Venetian plain.

The work of carrying two modern armies from northern and central France to eastern Italy was carried out with remarkable speed. But it took a month. The movement of the men was comparatively easy. They marched, entrained, and marched, sometimes over the Alps, sometimes along the Lombard plains; but they were useless without the vast machinery of the new warfare. The guns, shell, charges, smaller weapons and ammunition, entrenching material, horses, mules, carts, lorries, and general supplies of two well-equipped armies were not to be moved in a week. The number of available locomotives and trucks was limited, as the armies in action and preparing for action required many of them.

The task of arranging the withdrawal of men and material was intricate and huge, and the arrival of the western armies, in the nick of time, was a magnificent achievement in rapid organization. When the British and French troops crossed the Italian frontier and marched towards the Piave line, their path was a happy one. The Italian people hailed them as saviours.

In anticipation of Below's movements, the British army established itself on the Montello ridge, by the Piave, so as to form a strong pivot, in case a fighting and manœuvring retirement from the mountain wall, above Robert Browning's old home at Asolo, were necessary. The French army settled just above Asolo, to receive Below's thrust from Tomba. When Below refused to continue his attack, General Fayolle assailed him. The result was that Below returned to Germany. Without anything like a battle on a grand scale, the arrival of the British and French forces had, for the time, decided the issue of the campaign. Below won on the Isonzo; he lost on the Brenta. By their splendid recovery the Italians had saved themselves; and their Allies arrived in time to see the final episodes in their victorious stand.

CHAPTER 23

Europe's Neutral Nations

INTERNAL conditions in the Scandinavian countries, Switzerland, Spain, Denmark, and the Netherlands, which remained neutral during the Great War, underwent no decided change from the spring of 1915 until that of 1917. At intervals the Germans made threats of invasion against Norway, Switzerland, and Holland, but these threats were designed only to terrorise the small neighbouring neutral States, make them submit to the effects of submarine piracy, and compel them to yield further under the economic pressure of the Teutons.

So long as the countries bordering Germany continued to feed the German armies, their existence was tolerated. Their absorption into the Middle Europe system was temporarily postponed, owing to circumstances over which the German general staff and marine office had no proper control. In Holland, in Sweden, and in German-speaking Switzerland there was some partial inclination to unite with the Central Empires. In Holland popular feeling was against the Germans. Only the landed gentry and the large business interests linked with the German export trade saw any solid and permanent advantages in the proposed scheme of military, political, and economic serfdom. The ancient nobility of Holland—headed by the Bentinck family—had sent sons as volunteer officers into the German army, and some of their older men, occupying important positions in the Dutch army, made no secret of the fact that they desired to see a general triumph of German arms.

The Dutch Jonkheers sympathised with the Prussian Junkers for selfish class interests. There was no national base for their policy. On the contrary, they were disturbed by the growth of democratic and socialistic activities among their own populace, and hoped eventually to obtain the help of a victorious and reactionary Prussia in repressing the Dutch working classes.

A considerable number of Dutchmen of the upper middle class took the same view. Not only did they want as docile and serf-like proletariat as Prussia, but they required a mighty and

EUROPE'S NEUTRAL NATIONS

prosperous German Empire, to which they could continue profitably to act as export agents. Their principal port, Rotterdam, was the grand outlet of the immense industries of the Rhine basin. Anything that damaged the Germans damaged also the Dutch. On the other hand, anything that injured Antwerp profited Rotterdam; and, among other things, the German occupation of Zeebrugge, the great new base for Belgian ocean traffic, gave considerable relief to some menaced Dutch mercantile interests. Members of leading Dutch business houses would have lost nothing if the Germans had succeeded in dominating the world. They would have amalgamated on fair terms with German business houses, and become prosperous partners in the supreme Teutonic system, bringing in their rich East Indian plantations as a great asset of the new partnership.

On the whole, therefore, the *haute bourgeoisie* of Holland inclined to the same policy as the *Jonkheeren*. The farming class did not worry about any policy, being content to enjoy its advantages of making large profits out of the ineffectual British blockade. Agricultural Holland, built up by exports to Great Britain under the British free trade system, was transformed into a huge factory for turning American cattle-cake and fodder into highly-priced provisions for German soldiers and munition makers. All that the ruling and influential classes of Holland feared was that Great Britain would intervene and forcibly stop the leak in the blockade of the Central Empires.

By March, 1916, Sir Edward Grey was commonly regarded in the Netherlands as the most Machiavellian statesman that ever existed. It was supposed he had let the Dutch treat him as a blind weakling, until he had accumulated against them an overwhelming case for warlike action. The loss of the rich plantations of Java and Sumatra and the capture or internment of Dutch shipping were, so rumour ran, only part of the price that Holland would have to pay. The great new national armies of the British Empire were ready for action, and Lord Kitchener, so the Dutch staff apparently believed, intended to kill two birds with one stone—invade Holland and turn the German flank.

The Dutch army actually mobilized to meet the attack. On March 31, 1916, the general staff requisitioned the railways and strengthened the personnel at strategic stations. All leave for military and naval officers and men was stopped. Guns were expedited to the coast and the defences of the estuaries, of the

THE NETHERLANDS

Scheldt and Rhine in particular, were reinforced. On the Stock Exchange there was a general slump in prices, steamship shares falling heavily. Some liners postponed their sailings, and there was a run on the banks. A secret session of Parliament was held, and the general perturbation continued for more than a week. Very gradually, as the anxiety of the people calmed, the reason for all the military, naval, and political activity was revealed. The German general staff had warned the Dutch general staff of a British attack near the mouth of the Scheldt, and had suggested that if Holland did not feel strong enough to oppose the disembarkation of the British army, the German forces in Belgium would undertake the task.

The affair was an historic farce with a moral. It indicated the weight of German influence upon the uneasy mind of the Dutch governing class. The larger part of the Dutch Press was then hostile to Great Britain, who was accused of tyrannic endeavours to reduce the Netherlands nation to a condition of vassalage. When, for example, the *Tubantia* was torpedoed by a German submarine, the *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant* insinuated that the liner had been sunk by a British submarine. Then, after the *Berkelstroom* was openly torpedoed by the *U 18*, the same organ of the Dutch merchant classes mildly remarked that the incident would tend to tell against the general sympathy felt throughout Holland for the German people.

At the opening of the campaign of Germanic piracy, in 1917, seven Dutch steamers were torpedoed on leaving Falmouth, after an assurance had been given by enemy authorities that the vessels would not be attacked. Some were outward-bound in ballast to neutral ports; one was returning to Holland with wheat for the Dutch government. Even then, the majority of the directing classes did not lose faith in their neighbours.

In so far as the Dutch working classes were organized for political action in the interests of labour, their influence was employed to promote the intrigues of the Prussian masters of Middle Europe. Mynheer Troelstra, the leader of the Social Democrat movement in the Netherlands, co-operated with Herren Scheidemann and Ebert and other socialist leaders. In July, 1916, he welcomed them in a German speech to a conference at which an attempt was made to revive the international organization as an instrument for obtaining a German peace. He also took an important part in arranging, in 1917, a socialist

EUROPE'S NEUTRAL NATIONS

conference at Stockholm, in which the Russian revolutionists were to be invited to break with the democracies of France, the United States, Italy, and the British Empire, and make a separate peace with the autocracies of Germany and Austria.

In addition to Dutch socialism, Dutch religion was transformed into a political weapon against the Entente powers. A leading politician, Dr. Kuyper, was the head of a Calvinist league directed against "atheistic and revolutionary France." The leader of the league applauded the destruction of the Lusitania, and said the victims had been punished for trying to act as a shield to the cargoes despatched by American armament firms. Alongside the Protestant pro-German force was an equally powerful Roman Catholic group, directed by Cardinal van Rossum and the Archbishop of Utrecht. Dutch priests and ministers at times proclaimed from the pulpit the righteousness and glory of Germany's war.

The calculating Dutchmen reckoned that the German submarine menace was their protection, and the means by which they retained their East Indian colonies and oversea imports. The ships they lost by German attacks represented the cost of insurance against British action. Most of these ships did not belong to members of the Teutonising party. The menace of German absorption did not trouble the majority of the directing and commercial Dutchmen. As one of them put it: "After all, it is better to be annexed and alive than independent and dead."

Not until the United States entered the war did the governing and trading classes in Holland become perturbed. What disturbed them was the American proposal to stop all superfluous provisioning of countries bordering on Germany, by reducing the supply of American grain and cattle food to the proportion required for home consumption. America had been providing Dutchmen with food, while the Dutch sold their own produce at famine prices to the Germans. The peril of a stoppage of these imports upset the Dutch people far more than anything they had suffered in the German submarine campaigns. The Dutch heart was hard and so was the Dutch head, but the Dutch purse was extremely sensitive to the shocks of war. Enormously fat it had grown, and as it covered the remnants of the Dutch conscience, the intervention of the United States and some of the countries of South America seemed to many Dutchmen a greater calamity than any German atrocities in Belgium.

SWEDEN AFFECTED

Sweden was also affected, in the spring of 1917, by the American scheme of restricting exports to neutral States that were adjacent to Germany. For 34 months of the war Sweden had been a potential ally of the Central Empires. On several occasions there was danger of a Swedish advance through Finland towards Petrograd.

For some months the Swedish camarilla was foiled by the force of circumstances. Their government, under Herr Hammar skjöld, whose sympathies were openly German, had to let "I dare not" wait upon "I would." And the same policy was followed until he was succeeded on March 30, 1917, by Carl Swartz. With a remarkable amount of assistance from Swedish publicists belonging to the court party, the Swedes were inundated with German news and views. British men of letters were not allowed to give addresses advocating the cause of the western democracies. The machinery of administration, education, and social influence was directed entirely to the effort of convincing the Swedish people that it was their duty to advance the cause of liberty on the Prussian system. They were told that the age of democracy had passed and the age of organization had arrived. But the stubborn Swedish working men could not be convinced. They made neither threat nor movement, but their attitude was such that the reactionary government was still afraid to strike at Russia during the critical weeks in the summer of 1915 when all the Russian armies were in retreat. When, however, the Swedish government saw that, as a matter of fact, the recovery of the Russian power of offensive largely depended upon the transit of munitions through Sweden territory, there opened a long, intense, and yet quiet struggle between Great Britain and Sweden.

The Swedish reactionaries schemed as though they desired to bring about armed conflict, so that it would seem to have been forced upon them by the "maritime tyranny" of Great Britain. The interruption of the huge Swedish traffic in contraband in the Baltic, by the British submarine operations of 1915, was one of the motives for the Swedish action.

After a visit of the queen of Sweden to Germany, where she publicly prophesied the triumph of German arms, her husband and his ministers openly began to play their part in the Teutonic plan of action for 1916. The British government arranged, with considerable difficulty, a Swedish system of controlling imports,

EUROPE'S NEUTRAL NATIONS

similar to the systems established in Switzerland, Holland, Denmark, and Norway. The control was loose and leaky, and allowed large profits to be made by devious methods of contraband traffic. Yet the Swedish ministers fought furiously against the *Transito*, as the control system was named. When borne down by the pressure of public and political opinion, they nevertheless introduced in the act of legislation a clause that undid everything the ruling opinion of the country desired to establish. It was, for example, made illegal for a Swedish importer of British goods to inform the British manufacturer of the names of the person or persons to whom the goods would ultimately go. In the debates on the measure it was clearly revealed that the intention of the Swedish ministry was to encourage the entrepôt traffic in contraband between America and Germany. Failing to obtain complete success in regard to the *Transito*, the party who were intriguing for war selected another point of dispute with Great Britain, and narrowly missed the declaration of hostilities which they desired.

In December, 1915, a Danish steamer, *Hellig Olaf*, was brought to Kirkwall for examination of the Swedish parcels mail she was carrying from the United States. One third of the parcels addressed through Sweden were found to contain contraband of war destined for Germany. The parcels of contraband were put in the Prize Court, and the remainder of the mail was forwarded to Sweden. The action of the British naval authorities was undoubtedly sound in international law, but the Swedish war party thought it gave a fit opportunity to make the case the ground for their long-contemplated struggle with Great Britain. By way of reprisal, the British parcels mail for Russia was detained while passing through Sweden. The mail was delayed until August, 1916, but most of the parcels were ultimately released.

It was intended to stop all transport of munitions to Russia over the land route through Sweden to Finland. There was a rough, slow traffic route through northern Norway to Finland—but without a railway, and employing reindeer sledges, available only for small parcels—in the critical winter months when Archangel was ice-bound. The new ice-free port near Kola was not ready, and the Murman railway was still under construction.

In August, 1916, when the quarrel over the parcels mails became acute, the Swedish government adopted another method

SWEDISH IRON ORE

likely to provoke war. The Sound was closed to British warships, by laying a minefield in the Kogrund Channel and setting Swedish naval forces to watch over the passage. The pretence was that all belligerent vessels, and especially all belligerent submarines, were to be prevented from entering or leaving the Baltic through Swedish waters. A report was then spread that a German warship was sunk in August, 1916, when trying to make the forbidden passage. It was against the victors at Jutland that the minelayers and warships of Sweden acted. Thus the Swedes helped to hold the Baltic until the German navy had recovered its strength. Not until May, 1917, was there any movement by Sweden to open the Kogrund Channel. Foreign merchant ships and steamers trading between foreign ports were shut out from traffic through the inner Falsterbo route on another amazing pretence that German contraband traffic would thereby be prevented.

Fine iron ore from the state mines of Sweden poured into Germany. The German Baltic ports could not make use of all the ore, owing to the lack of coal in North Germany. Therefore, a considerable portion of the ore was carried to the foundries on the Rhine coal fields by a voyage through the territorial waters of Sweden and Denmark, and behind the mine-fields of the German North Sea coast, and thence along the territorial waters of Holland to the Rhine. Yet, according to an official Swedish shipping organ, the Falsterbo passage was shut to prevent the contraband traffic of the Germans! The Germans themselves publicly praised one of the later Swedish ministers of the reactionary school for the good work he had done in preventing a British syndicate from obtaining control of a new Swedish iron mine, by purchasing shares for the government. Evidently, the German idea was that everything controlled by the Swedish government was available for German use.

Such appeared to be the position of affairs in the critical summer of 1916, when the Russian drive into Galicia was checked and the Franco-British offensive on the Somme still left Germany sufficiently strong to overthrow the army of Rumania. The Swedish war party conducted a campaign of a virulent character against the pacific Socialist Party. The Socialists, however, though divided into two schools, showed great political sense, and by balancing the reactionary group, left the Liberals as the deciding factor in the assembly. By combining on any vitally

EUROPE'S NEUTRAL NATIONS

important matter the Socialists and Liberals could out-vote the reactionaries, therefore, were compelled to be careful in their intrigues against the Allies. They succeeded, however, in exhausting the patience of Viscount Grey, the foreign secretary, and practically every man in Great Britain who was acquainted with the trouble with Sweden expected a declaration of war by the autumn of 1916.

The alarmed Russian bureaucracy protested that the stoppage of the transport of munitions through Sweden was in itself sufficient to destroy the striking power of the Russian armies. A long-distance British blockade from the gateways of the Atlantic might have quickly produced such discomfort among the Swedish population as would lead the angry Socialists to rise in insurrection. Then an insurrection in Stockholm might have had a contagious effect upon the revolutionary forces in Petrograd. The Finns were already in a fiercely revolutionary frame of mind and assisting the enemy in many ways.

British exports to Sweden and Swedish exports to Great Britain were prevented by government action on both sides. Traffic between the two countries in cotton and woollen goods, timber and iron ore, and other merchandise diminished. A great stoppage of coal imports occurred in Sweden, which the distant German mines, of inferior quality, were unable, in spite of great effort, to remedy. Swedish exporters had denuded their land of stock, crops, and farm horses for the benefit of Germany, and the universal failure of harvests in the autumn of 1916 aggravated the results of the impoverishment of Swedish farms. The wealth of the farmers could not be transformed again into live stock and grain. Denmark, Norway, and Holland were in a similar condition of vital penury. All had oversold into the German markets, and possessed no rapid means of recovery. The unusually prolonged and severe winter of 1916-17 told on the small remaining stock of sheep, hurt the more delicate breeds of cattle, and diminished the store of fodder. The economic difficulties were increased by the holding up of grain ships by Great Britain.

The Swedish people then had to be placed on rations. The rations were afterwards reduced, and food riots began to occur. The leaders of the reactionary party then openly prepared for war on the ancient plan of preventing intestinal struggles by action against any foreign nation within reach. They asked the Landthing for a large sum of money to enable stronger measures

SWEDISH MINISTRIES

to be taken for the preservation of neutrality. The Liberals and Socialists did not consider that more armament was necessary for purely pacific purposes. They did not, in fact, think that anything of a pacific nature was intended. So they combined and voted down the proposals of Hammarskjöld's ministry. King Gustav intervened and tried to effect a compromise between the warlike anti-British camarilla and the peaceful anti-German majority. Herr Hammarskjöld, however, was, after long negotiations, compelled to resign. Another ministry was formed, and again from the reactionary group.

Undoubtedly the Swedish king, backed by the nobility, exercised power in establishing the new ministry. By the middle of March, 1917, the reactionary party of Sweden and the Scandinavian counterpart of Constantine of Greece had other things to think of besides their struggle against British "navalism." The spirit of revolution was again loosed in Europe and clothed in such might as had not been seen since the fall of the Bastille.

It was rumoured in April, 1917, that some Swedish naval men and soldiers were inclined to side with the people in a hunger-born revolution. A month afterwards there were discussions in the Congress of the United States on the policy of imparting new and deadly rigour to the British blockade of Germany by depriving Scandinavia and Holland of all imports not actually needed to feed those neutral States.

In these circumstances the new Swedish ministry, in May, 1917, reopened negotiations with the new British ministry. The long period of tension was over, for the time at least, and the rations of the Swedish nation were increased. Stockholm became for a while the most agitated centre of pacifism in the world. All the Social Democrats of the Germanic school made arrangements to meet so that they might devise means of saving the Prussian system of kindly internal government and the humane, enlightened rule of the Turkish Party of Union and Progress! At the same time the Cabinets of Scandinavia held another conference at Stockholm, at which the problem of destroying the maritime supremacy of Great Britain was not the principal topic of discussion.

The previous meetings of Scandinavian kings and ministers had been more menacing to the common interests of the Allies than appeared on the surface of press comment in the western democracies. German agents had attempted to make Norway

EUROPE'S NEUTRAL NATIONS

believe she was in danger of Russian attack since 1909. The Norwegians were implored by the Swedish war party to co-operate with Germany in putting an end to the Russian menace.

When the war broke out the Norwegian people remained profoundly distrustful of the Russian government, yet confident in the protecting influences of Great Britain and France. Great Britain, in particular, had been the stay of the Norwegian democracy in 1905 when they broke away from the oligarchy of Sweden. A British princess had become Queen of an independent Norway, and Norway was, moreover, related closely by language and historic tradition with the Denmark that had been maimed by Bismarck in order to consolidate German sea power by means of the Kiel canal. From Denmark the enfranchised Norse people had chosen their King. Denmark retained their romantic Viking colony of Iceland, and their old Faroe settlement; yet they had no grudge against the Danes, but rather affection for their kinsmen. The general result was that the majority of Norsemen refused to be frightened by the Russian bogey and sympathised with the Allies.

On the whole, the Norwegian democracy was as benevolently neutral towards the Entente as the Swedish oligarchy was determinedly hostile. Most of the Norse shipowners and seamen became actively friendly to the Allies during the campaign of German submarine piracy. Norway possessed the largest mercantile marine in the world in proportion to population. Her modern power in shipping was indeed practical evidence of the fact that the spirit of the Vikings fully survived, amid all change of circumstances, in their descendants.

By the spring of 1917 Norway's losses in ships were tremendous, and her losses in lives were considerable. During March and April, 1917, for example, she lost one hundred and thirty-six ships—an average of seventeen a week when the British losses were twenty-four a week. Having regard to the smaller tonnage of Norway, her losses were thus comparatively far heavier than those of Great Britain.

Still the Norsemen carried on. It has been said that Hindenburg, when in control of both the German army and navy, let it be known that he contemplated employing part of his general reserve in an attack upon Norway. It appeared an idle threat. That it should have influenced the Norwegians shows how the passive policy of the British in naval blockade had affected Europe.

NORWAY IN DANGER

It scarcely made for the ultimate advantage of Germany that she should go out of her way to find a new enemy, in attacking whom she would expose herself to British sea power. The distance between the Orkney Islands and the western Norwegian coast was not very great—in fact, it was much less than the distance between Wilhelmshaven and Christiania.

On his submarines only did the German dictator depend for stopping the commerce between the Norse and the British kingdoms. German submarines ranged to the northernmost part of the Norwegian coast, in the operations directed against the commerce of the Kola and White Sea ports of Russia. There was reason to suppose that the territorial waters of Norway were often employed as cover by the German submarines. The Norwegian government, therefore, at last followed, on January 30, 1917, a policy similar to that of the Swedish government, and forbade all belligerent submarines to use their territorial waters. All submarines in the forbidden area were liable to attack by armed Norwegian forces.

The Germans had not shown any indignation over the action of the Swedish government, yet the much slighter precautions taken by the Norwegian government provoked a tempest of angry comment in Germany. The difference between the two Scandinavian States was that the Swedes helped the Germans by taking vigorous measures against British warships, while the Norsemen only indirectly helped the Allies by policing their own waters with a view to protecting their own mercantile marine.

In spite, however, of the general friendly feeling between Great Britain and Norway, a quarrel arose in the summer of 1916 over the blockade problem of the export of copper and pyrites from Norwegian mines to German munition works. In August, 1916, Lord Robert Cecil, as minister of blockade, decreed that no British coal should be supplied to Norwegian ships maintaining trade with Germany. The Norwegian skippers, however, managed to continue working across to Germany, by means of secret supplies of British coal. Another cause of dispute was found in a large haul of fish which was despatched to Germany in the autumn of 1916. The export of copper and pyrites, however, remained the chief matter of contention, and from the Norse mines there continued to flow, in diverse channels, a stream of copper for the manufacture of German shells. In both Sweden and Norway the copper was often made

EUROPE'S NEUTRAL NATIONS

into sham manufactured articles, such as tanks that would not hold water, and forwarded to Germany as raw metal.

When Mr. Lloyd George became prime minister means were at last adopted to bring the Norwegians clearly to appreciate the British view. No hostile measures of any kind were taken, but during one of the longest and severest winters on record the entire export of British coal to Norway was stopped. Owing to the season of the year, the water power of every Norwegian river and stream, harnessed to a turbine or dynamo, was reduced practically to nothing. The country people had an abundance of log-wood for domestic fires, and some of the southern towns managed to obtain a little coal from Germany for which they paid a high price. This, however, did not help the industrialists, and the general economic pressure of the stoppage of British coal supply was irresistible. Early in the spring of 1917 the Norwegian government agreed to prohibit the export of copper and pyrites to Germany, and the Norwegian fish harvest was largely sold in Great Britain. The salt herring, which might have fed millions of Teutons, was diverted to the stores of the new British food controller.

The position of Denmark was one of passive responsiveness to pressure. The Danes had no wealth of iron and copper ore to provoke alternating pressure from the British and German governments. The Danish dairy farmers were a source of vital strength to the enemy, yet they maintained a fair show of distributing their produce westward and southward, taking lower prices from Great Britain than they obtained from Germany.

The Danes hoped for eventual salvation in a Scandinavian union, but were unable to reconcile their very democratic tendencies with the oligarchial fabric of Sweden. In the meantime, they were not only between the hammer and anvil of Great Britain and Germany in the matter of the blockade, but torn between the United States and Germany in a perplexing Colonial problem. The Danish West Indian islands, on a traffic route to the Panama canal, had become valueless to the Danes. The German government had seen a means of dominating the United States; and after the Hamburg-Amerika line established a coaling-station there, it had tried to purchase the islands.

The United States seemed asleep, yet was really in a state of quiet, intense watchfulness. In the European difficulties of the Great War came America's opportunity, and in the summer

THE DANISH WEST INDIES

of 1916 President Wilson, apparently calmly unconscious of the German intrigues in the Caribbean Sea, offered to purchase the Danish West Indies. The Danish Cabinet wished to remain on friendly terms with everybody. The islands were worth nothing to Denmark; were, indeed, an economic burden; and the sum of about £5,000,000, which the United States was willing to pay, could be employed in some important social reforms by the dominant labour party of Denmark.

As the United States was, at the time, a neutral country, it appeared to the Danish government that the proposed sale was a happy solution of a grave international difficulty. The Danish ministers underestimated the tenacity of the Germans. The matter of the sale of the islands suddenly became a tempestuous problem of domestic politics. The extraordinary amount of opposition displayed was a measure of the tremendous influence the Germans exercised among the people they had defeated and oppressed. The sufferings of the Danes in the conquered frontier province had endured for two generations, and made the Danish gentry and Danish middle classes more subservient to the Hohenzollern.

The affair might have become very serious, had the opposition lasted until the United States entered the war against Germany. The Germans then would have been able reasonably and forcibly to protest against one of their valuable private coaling-stations being sold to an enemy. Happily, the danger was avoided by means of a referendum, before hostilities opened between the Americans and Germans. The United States acquired the Virgin Islands, and safeguarded the eastern approach to the Panama canal from domination by the Teutons.

It must be confessed that the curious quarrel among the Danes themselves over the sale of their West Indian colonies had a disturbing effect upon British and French opinion. It revealed the extent and depth of Germanic control in Denmark, which had greatly increased during the commerce in imported war material. New vested interests of subtle and far-reaching power had been established by the first futile attempts at a British blockade, and the corrosive action of gold upon the character of an influential body of Danes became clearly evident.

The Danish Jews, who, by the brilliance of their talent, exercised an intellectual and political sway out of proportion to their numbers, were mainly German agents. A famous man of

EUROPE'S NEUTRAL NATIONS

letters, Georg Brandes, inclined to the enemy, and was denounced by Clemenceau and other leading Frenchmen as a renegade. Brandes' brother was minister of finance, and Brandes himself the director of the young Danish democratic mind.

The intrigues of the Danish labour party in regard to the proposed Stockholm Peace Conference, and the manœuvres among the Danish gentry and middle classes in connexion with the opposition to the sale of the West Indian colonies to America, combined to show that, for all practical international purposes, Denmark bade fair to become, in a degree, one of the neutral allies of the Central Empires. In Holland, Denmark, and Sweden strong outposts of the Prussian scheme of a Middle Europe Bund were patently established before January, 1917.

Switzerland also was, to a considerable extent, won over by the enemy. The French-Swiss were outnumbered by three to one by the German-Swiss, and their military forces were controlled by a German-Swiss commander, General Wille, with a German-Swiss staff that did not trouble to conceal its sympathies with the Prussian military monarchy. The merchant patricians of Berne, Zurich, and Bâle were intimately connected with the German industrial magnates, represented by the National Liberal party, which was even more greedily aggressive than the Junker party. The Swiss Socialist party was similarly linked with the German Social Democrat Majority party, and continually acted as the go-betweens of the Kaiser in intrigues with Italian and French deputies and delegates.

All the noble and impartial work of humanity conducted in Switzerland was created and organized by the French-Swiss. The Red Cross of Geneva was a French-Swiss invention, in the reflected glory of which the ruling German-Swiss pursued their special interests and the general interests of the Germanic races. From Germany were derived the coal, iron, and steel upon which most of the fine Swiss engineering work was based. The Swiss were large producers of the dynamo and several other important mechanical goods. Their turbine, oil, and petrol engine manufactures were of high class. Their watch-making industry was also of great military value, as it could be transformed into a fuse-making industry for high-explosive shells. The German design was to make the main industries of Switzerland auxiliary to their own enormous production of general war material. They increased their financial and commercial interests in the country.

SWITZERLAND

and, with the tacit consent of the Swiss government, maintained a strong and intensive system of propaganda.

A German journalist, Herr Stegemann, made himself notorious as a supposed neutral military critic on the pro-German Bernese journal, *Der Bund*. He exercised the art of concealing the defeats and exaggerating the victories of Germany, and executed many variations upon the theme that the French armies were exhausted and the British forces ineffectual. Like other journalists of the same school, his "Kaiserlich" task was to make the Swiss people still more amenable to Prussian influences by convincing them that the success of the Allies was hopeless, and that it would be profitable to make early arrangements with the assured victors.

Stegemann did his work so well that Ludendorff proceeded to make him the grand organ of pure, neutral, disinterested military criticism in Europe. The Philosophical Faculty of Berne University was a representative German-Swiss institution, for it consisted of nineteen professors, of whom eight were Imperial Germans. At a meeting at which only three Swiss but all eight German members were present, it was resolved by a majority rule that Herr Stegemann should be proposed to the Canton Council as university lecturer on military science. The Swiss commander-in-chief, General Wille, appears to have recommended the appointment, as also did the Swiss staff authority, Colonel Sprecher. But so widespread was the opposition to the sorry intrigue, especially in French-Switzerland, that the Berne Council refused to sanction the appointment. From the pro-German point of view the affair became dangerous when it began to excite attention in France and Great Britain and Italy.

The Stegemann affair, which ended in April, 1917, was only a straw in the current of German-Swiss opinion. Floating on that current, however, were other straws, far too numerous even to catalogue, and they all showed the same trend. Brilliant exceptions, of course, there were, among whom was the fine poet, Carl Spitteler. Seeing that in Germany itself there was a small anti-Prussian minority, it was only to be expected that a similar minority should flourish more freely in German-Switzerland.

The event of the battle of the Marne, combined with the more distant menace of the pressure of British sea power, made the German-Swiss camarilla cautious and politic. Only when the Imperial armies had definitely broken the back of France could

EUROPE'S NEUTRAL NATIONS

any action be safely undertaken; for the German-Swiss caste had exceptional difficulties of a domestic kind. Not only were its working classes largely infected with French doctrines, but one-third of its forces were of French stock, and likely to rebel or secede if Switzerland attempted to march with the Central Empires.

The mobilised French-Swiss force was kept from its own frontier, and dragooned in Prussian style, to make it obedient to any commands of the German-Swiss. The French-Swiss territory was held by troops of Germanic stock. Rumours were circulated at intervals to the effect that the Imperial forces were massing for a drive through Switzerland. In 1916 Falkenhayn was said to be preparing to thrust through the Alps into Italy. Early in 1917 Hindenburg was reported to have gathered a large army in the Black Forest, in the design to break across the Jura Mountains and enter France below Belfort.

Naturally, the German-Swiss leaders adopted an independent attitude on these occasions. Happily, Hindenburg's reserves were soon required to fill the gaps in the Lens-Auberive line, and Switzerland was saved from the dreadful ordeal of battle. There had been some scandals in regard to the authorities on the Swiss staff communicating to German headquarters information of the movements of French troops. Yet the national honour of Switzerland was not touched.

In addition to the show of military pressure by Germany, the Swiss were subjected to some economic pressure. It was in Switzerland that the enemy secretly set up a system of controlling neutral commerce, which was gradually and inefficiently imitated by the Allies. The Germans stipulated that the raw materials they supplied should not be used directly or indirectly for the eventual benefit of France or Great Britain. Quite early in the war they black-listed Swiss firms that continued to trade with the Allies, and established a thorough system of espionage to strengthen their control.

When the Allies countered, by organizing a Swiss society for handling French and British imports, the Germans made some savage attempts to break the new system. On June 8, 1916, the Swiss government was staggered by a Note from the German government threatening that the supply of coal would be stopped unless stocks of cotton and fats were given in exchange. The enemy hoped to obtain the contraband war material secretly.



Imperial War Museum

PART OF A COMPANY OF TANKS. It was armour that finally ended the stalemate on the western front and revolutionised modern infantry tactics—not inert armour of the helmet type, but mobile armour propelled by its own power—the land battleship, the tank. This is a train of tanks, each with its bundle of fascines for crossing deep trenches, on the rail in readiness for the Cambrai offensive which opened on November 20, 1917.



Imperial War Museum

A LAND BATTLESHIP. A British invention, the tank was designed to overcome obstacles which restricted the mobility of infantry. At the battle of Cambrai, on November 20, 1917, the Mark IV tank, of which one is here shown about to "topple" at Wally, proved its value as an engine of war.

17
A LAND BATTLESHIP. A British invention, the tank was designed to overcome obstacles which restricted the mobility of infantry. At the battle of Cambrai, on November 20, 1917, the Mark IV tank, of which one is here shown about to "topple" at Wailly, proved its value as an engine of war.

Volume IV



BRITISH AND GERMANS AT GRIPS. The illustration shows the attack of the British dismounted cavalry on the German stronghold in Bourlon Wood on November 23, 1917. This encounter, one of the fiercest hand-to-hand fights in the war was part of the battle of Cambrai.

Plate 43



Imperial War Museum

BRITISH ATTACK ON BOURLON WOOD. This photograph shows a British tank moving forward during the British operations west of Cambrai, on November 23, 1917. The tanks pushed to the outskirts of Bournon Wood, and succeeded in clearing it, with the support of the 40th division. The British captured their objective but later found the salient they had created untenable, and retired without loss.

SWISS FOOD SHORTAGE

through the Swiss authorities fraudulently breaking their agreement with the Allies. The news of the Note transpired, however. The Allies stood firm; and the German coal supply was not stopped. Again in January, 1917, economic pressure was brutally applied to Switzerland. Swiss imports were interdicted by Germany, and practically stopped by Austria-Hungary. This was in preparation for the revival of the submarine campaign against neutral and belligerent shipping.

On February 1, 1917, the Swiss people were allowed one line of sea-borne import through Cette. This port was utterly insufficient for the commerce of Switzerland, and the French railways behind the French port were largely required for French purposes. The situation of Switzerland was further aggravated by the entrance of the United States into the war, with the plan, already mentioned, for placing an embargo upon superfluous food supplies to neutral States adjoining enemy countries. For Germany insisted upon the Swiss having a superfluity of imported goods from the Allies and forwarding the stores across the Rhine. She again stopped the export of coal to Bâle, and most seriously diminished the goods-train service.

At this time the Swiss themselves were beginning to suffer from a shortage of food. They had sold too much to Germany. So many tens of thousands of cattle had gone every season to feed the enemy armies that Switzerland, the land of milk, was short of milk for her own towns. Another sixty thousand head of cattle had to be apportioned to the Germans, in May, 1917, in order to obtain coal from Westphalia. This demand the Swiss resisted. Apparently the Teutons had no further prospect of winning the military aid of the German-Swiss, and were bent merely upon draining Switzerland to the uttermost.

In regard to this it may be remarked, by way of summarising the story of all the neutral States adjoining Germany, that they enjoyed incomparable prosperity during the first two years of the British blockade, but felt the pinch of misery immediately the Germans opened their submarine piratical operations in earnest. It was not merely the murderous character of the enemy's campaign against shipping that made the difference, but the military efficiency of his system.

By the middle of May, 1917, the industries of Denmark were stagnant for lack of coal. Gas works and electric works reported they would have to close if commerce with Great Britain were

EUROPE'S NEUTRAL NATIONS

not resumed quickly. The stock of petrol was exhausted, and only a small store of candles remained for lighting purposes. In Sweden political discontent increased with the increase of the general rigour of living. In Norway the government had to adopt extraordinary measures to calm popular indignation.

In Holland there were symptoms of a similar ferment, but the defenders of Germany there tried to turn against the Allies the anger born of apprehension of the results of the U boat campaign and discomfort at the stoppage of trade. In Switzerland the disillusion of the majority of German-Swiss was profound. So profound was it that at times they were almost inclined to believe the statements in the French and British communiqués.

Spain had the peculiar distinction, among European neutral States, of standing outside the immediate commercial radius of the Central Empires. She could not send iron ore or other contraband material to Germany without her ships running the Franco-British blockade. Some Spanish iron ore reached the Rhine foundries by way of the river passage of Holland, but this was eccentric to the main line of Spain's commerce during the war. Great Britain, France, and Italy took all that Spain could get ships to carry, and were in a position to maintain permanently important commercial relations with the Spaniards. It is true that France had recently discovered in Algeria an enormous wealth of iron ore, reputed to be of as high a quality as Bilbao ore. Bilbao, nevertheless, was closer than Bizerta and Bône to the British, and Northern French, coalfields.

Yet Spain continued to remain aloof. She was the motherland of the rich Spanish-American States. Her prestige over their social leaders was still considerable, although politically they were quite independent of her. The warring races—Teuton and Briton, Frenchman, Italian, and, later, Northern American—were anxious to obtain commercial advantages in Spanish-America. Each reckoned that friendship with Spain would be a help in the contest for Spanish-American trade.

It was for this reason that Spain set a high price on herself. From Germany she then received large but vague promises, all conditional upon a decisive German victory. From Great Britain came a more definite offer of a smaller kind, implying effort and sacrifice on the part of the receiver.

The Spaniards were violently divided among themselves. The Spanish aristocracy wanted an alliance with a victorious Teu-

THE POSITION OF SPAIN

tonic nobility for frankly selfish reasons. Their estates and their privileges were menaced by the socialist revolutionary party. Therefore, they revered the Kaiser and his Junkers as the champions of their class interests, and passionately desired to see such a complete defeat of the western democracies as would establish their own authority in Spain for generations.

There can be no doubt that the reactionary noble and clerical forces in Spain would have failed to check the tendency towards a fighting alliance with the Entente powers had they received no powerful help. Spain would gradually have followed the same course as Italy. There was, however, the extraordinary number of 80,000 Germans in the country. Some of them were refugees from France, some were crews of interned ships, a large number were German soldiers from Cameroon, who had crossed to Spanish territory in Africa and been conveyed to the healthier climate of Spain.

They formed two army corps of able, active men, skilfully disciplined. They were sorted out according to their social attainments. Some went to the industrial centres of northern Spain to preach revolution, organize strikes and hold up exports to France and Great Britain. Others settled in Spanish ports, and did all they could to bedevil things there. Lonely points on the Spanish coast were occupied by the Teutons, with consequences seen when their countrymen were operating off the shore in submarines.

German financial houses in the chief Spanish cities augmented their funds and established new branches. Periodicals and daily newspapers were acquired, not only in Madrid and the other large cities, but in hundreds of small places. The Teuton combined wisdom with economy, and, appreciating the cheapness and intensive authority of small country-side papers, he obtained the control of them, and worked them with his usual energy. The local clergy and sometimes the grandees readily assisted him. In turn he organized the peasants as a political force.

The first two and a half years of the war was a busy and troubled period in Spain. The amount of unrest was amazing. Strikes occurred on little or no provocation, and there were threats of revolution, needing the temporary application of martial law. All this was extremely mysterious, because the labour organizations sympathised with the embattled French democracy and produced war material for the Allies.

EUROPE'S NEUTRAL NATIONS

Much that was prevented from happening in Spain had a bearing on the course of the war; but little that actually occurred had any immediate relation of importance to the events of the battlefields until the historic date, February 1, 1917. The futile desire of some Spaniards that their king should be the peace-maker of the world, their anger when President Wilson was still essaying to win the position; the fine work done personally by King Alfonso to mitigate the miseries of war, and the noble protest made by a large body of leading Spaniards against the action of the Germans in Belgium; these were among the incidents of Spanish history in the middle of the struggle.

With the opening of the Teutonic submarine attack on both neutral and belligerent shipping the neutrality of Spain became endangered. One of her merchant ships, the *Ferrucio*, was torpedoed by the Germans on February 6, 1917. It was soon afterwards discovered that the German consul at Cartagena was providing with stores a German submarine operating off the port between Cape Palos and Tarragona. German action was also traced in the origin of a serious explosion in a Bilbao shipyard, and in the placing of an infernal machine in a load of coal about to be delivered to a British steamer. All the murderous devices that Captain von Papen and Count Bernstorff had employed in the United States were used in Spain. The day after the *Ferrucio* was torpedoed a band of workmen and students demonstrated in Madrid in favour of neutrality. It was a suggestive coincidence that the demonstration should have taken place on the day when Count Romanones sent a strong note against the German submarine policy.

The diplomatic note by Count Romanones had as little effect as the diplomatic notes of President Wilson. The Spanish premier prepared for warlike action. But he was suddenly overthrown on April 19, 1917, by the pro-German ministers, who sought to maintain Spain in a state of passive neutrality while her commerce was being ruined by the German submarine operations.

CHAPTER 24

Safeguarding the Merchant Fleets

DURING the year 1917 the issue of the war at sea can truthfully be said to have hung in the balance. It was not because another great fleet action seemed probable, but because Great Britain and Germany were both trying to force a decision by means of the blockade. The British blockade of the German coast was carried out entirely by surface ships; that of Great Britain by Germany depended upon the unrestricted submarine campaign. That the situation in January, 1917, was a very serious one was pointed out by the First Sea Lord, Sir John Jellicoe, in a notable speech on January 11. "The submarine menace to the merchant service," he said, "is far greater now than at any period of the war, and it requires all our energy to combat it. It must and will be dealt with, of that I am confident."

Even then, in the third year of the war, Sir John had to make an appeal to the shipyards, begging the men there—who do not seem to have fully realized the tremendous danger—not to strike, or keep bad time, or idle. The fate of the nation, indeed, was going to depend on whether the workers could or would redouble their energy, increase their output, and so meet the enormous mechanical resources of Germany. The British blockade of Germany had so far failed to stop many necessities. There would be no make-believe about the German blockade of Great Britain. Unless the British people broke the submarine menace the British Empire must fall: the allied munition factories, deprived of iron ore, petrol, oil, nitrates, glycerine, cotton, and all the ingredients of explosives that could not be obtained in the British Isles, must be gradually brought to a standstill: the British people be slowly starved; and the British Empire cut up into a number of disconnected fragments. Moreover, the Empire could never reunite unless the submarine challenge could be defeated.

On the eve of the German proclamation of unrestricted submarine war on shipping the situation was this: The Germans

SAFEGUARDING THE MERCHANT FLEETS

were destroying shipping, according to the lists of vessels which were then published day by day in the press, at the rate of at least 150 a month. The ships which appeared by name in these mortality lists, between December 1 and 31, numbered 147; and between January 1 and 31, 148. The lists were not quite complete, as a certain number of allied and neutral vessels were sunk without figuring in the British reports. This rate of loss was three times heavier than in the earlier submarine blockade which began in February, 1915.

The decision to disregard the notes of President Wilson was notified to the Reichstag by Bethmann-Hollweg on January 31. He said that "the moment has now arrived. Last autumn the time was not ripe." There had been, he declared, several changes in the position. "The number of our submarines has been very greatly increased as compared with last spring, and thereby a firm basis has been created for success." The harvest had failed in Great Britain and the allied states. The coal question was becoming critical for France and Italy, which depended on sea-borne British fuel. In Great Britain there was a shortage of ore for munition manufacture and of timber for pit-props, without which coal could not be raised. There was a great scarcity of allied cargo ships owing to the earlier operations of the German submarines, which had thus prepared the way for a decisive blow. Austria was acting in conjunction with Germany, and while Germany drew a blockade round Great Britain, Austria would encircle Italy with her submarines. He concluded by discussing the risks of war with the United States, which event had been carefully studied by the German staff.

The effect of the submarine campaign was necessarily cumulative. It aggravated other troubles. It was true that 2,000,000 tons of new shipping had been built to replace that lost by Great Britain in the first two years of the war. But one of the difficulties of the Allies was that in wartime each ship did only about two-thirds the amount of work that she had done before the war. This was due to delays caused by waiting for instructions, by the congestion of certain ports, and by the lack of labour to unload and load. Each reduction of tonnage or of carrying power was felt, as each successive reduction of a man's food would be, more and more severely. So the Germans hoped that the progressive destruction of shipping would tighten the garotte round the neck of the Allies. It would be a mistake to accept

A CONFIDENTIAL CIRCULAR

the view, which was current in some quarters, that Germany adopted this plan of merciless submarine war as "a last throw" of the gambler's dice, or with some desperate desire to drag the United States into the war, and then use her appearance as the excuse to make a hurried peace.

Germany had long been preparing the campaign; she opened it not with any intention of "riding for a fall," a practice unknown to the German staff, but because her experts were firmly convinced that it meant victory—and speedy victory. They declared on every hand that while they had greatly underrated the capacity of the British army, they had overrated the energy and leadership of the British navy. In a curious, confidential circular, which was issued to the German press, a copy of which came into the possession of the British government in February, 1917, the German newspapers were told that there must be no doubts or discussions as to the usefulness of unrestricted submarine war.

The determined approval of the entire people must ring out from the Press. It is a question, not of a movement of desperation—all the factors have been carefully weighed after conscientious technical naval preparation—but of the best and only means to a speedy, victorious ending of the war. . . . Materiel, personnel, and appliances are being increased and improved continually; trained reserves are ready. Britain's references to the perfection of her means of defence, which are intended to reassure the British people, are refuted by the good results of the last months. Each result is now much more important, because the enemy's mercantile marine is already weakened. . . . The psychological influence should not be under-estimated. Fear among the enemy and neutrals add to difficulties with the crews and may induce neutrals to keep ships in harbour.

The safety of the Allies and the fate of Great Britain depended on two factors. The first was the shipping sunk by the submarines. The second was the new shipping completed. If the first exceeded the second, the collapse of the Allies could only be a question of time. Obviously, however, the building of ships to replace those sunk was a mere passive measure of defence. The only satisfactory solution of the problem was to lessen the number of ships sunk. Before the war 1,900,000 tons of shipping had been launched in Great Britain's best year, but by 1916 the

SAFEGUARDING THE MERCHANT FLEETS

output had fallen to 542,000 tons. In 1917 this was distinctly improved, and 1,163,000 tons were launched. In 1918 it was hoped to construct 1,800,000 tons, and eventually to reach an output of 3,000,000 tons a year. But many difficulties arose.

Shipbuilding was conducted by the State and taken over from private firms; and the State made many mistakes, with serious consequences. The steel needed for an enormous programme of shipbuilding left so much less for offensive weapons, for the construction of guns and shells and warships. The labour needed had to some extent to be taken from the fighting ranks, as women could only be employed to a limited degree. The plant necessary had itself to be created, and this made further demands on the supply of material and men. The cost to Great Britain, whose shipping suffered most, was grievous, and was aggravated by the conduct of some workers in her shipyards who frequently struck work, and by the slackness of others who, when their wages were raised, did less work.

As early as October, 1916, Sir John Jellicoe had expressed to the prime minister his anxiety at the increasing menace of the German submarine campaign, and in consequence of his communication a conference was held in London to consider the whole position. At this conference both Mr. Bonar Law and Mr. Lloyd George raised the question of the possibility of employing the convoy system, but naval opinion was at that time wholly opposed to the idea. It had been tried in the Mediterranean, not only by the British but by the French and Italians, and it was stated that any attempt to convoy more than one ship at a time had led to losses which definitely disposed of the possibility that the convoy system would prove an effective reply to the submarine menace.

The arguments used by the naval experts appeared to have sound reason behind them. The work of convoying, they contended, would have to be done mainly by destroyers, and at that time the navy was not so well supplied with ships of that class as to be able to spare many of them for this new task. Neither the Grand Fleet which included about eighty destroyers, nor Harwich with fifty upon which had been thrust many new duties in addition to those which they originally performed, nor the Dover patrol which was charged with guarding the British military communications with France, and therefore could not be weakened, could afford to lend ships for

THE CONVOY SYSTEM

convoys. Indeed Dover had had to draw upon Harwich for destroyers which were badly needed in the North Sea. Besides the shortage of destroyers there were, in the opinion of the naval experts, other grave objections to the convoy system. It was pointed out that, with a number of merchant ships gathered together, any submarine which approached within striking distance could, by the discharge of a single torpedo, be practically certain of making a hit. There were technical difficulties, too, which had to be considered.

The essential need of a convoy is that the ships should keep together—that it should preserve a formation requiring uniformity of speed and manœuvre. The majority of the merchant ships had at this time been denuded of their best officers, who had been absorbed in the navy, and watches had to be kept by young and comparatively inexperienced men who could not be expected to fulfil the exceptionally difficult duties which would fall to them. Moreover, merchant ships were not equipped with the steering gear, the engine room telegraphs, and other specialised appliances which made keeping station a more or less mechanical routine for ships of the Royal Navy. The speed of the convoy would necessarily be the speed of the slowest vessel, and this fact, together with the necessity of collecting a convoy and keeping a number of ships waiting until it was complete, would obviously mean that each of the ships comprising it would complete a smaller number of round voyages than she would have done if she sailed unescorted.

There was one more consideration which no doubt weighed heavily with the Government. Many of the convoys would have had to assemble in neutral waters, and though there is nothing in international law to prevent their doing so it was possible that neutral powers—particularly the United States—would object on the ground that such an assemblage might draw warships of both belligerents into territorial waters and thus create grave complications. While Sir John Jellicoe was commander-in-chief of the Grand Fleet he was of course bound to look at the convoy question chiefly from the point of view of the efficiency of his Fleet, but when in November, 1916, he became First Sea Lord of the Admiralty he was able to study it in its broader aspect. Admiralty opinion was still entirely opposed to the use of convoys, and an official pamphlet issued in January, 1917, repeated the arguments which had already been put for-

SAFEGUARDING THE MERCHANT FLEETS

ward and declared that "a defensively armed merchant vessel of good speed should rarely, if ever, be captured. If the submarine comes to the surface to overtake and attack with her gun, the merchant vessel's gun will nearly always make the submarine dive, in which case the preponderance of speed will allow of the merchant ship escaping."

Sir John Jellicoe alone was not inclined finally to reject the convoy system, and a few officers of the younger school definitely favoured it. It is remarkable that the chief advocates were members of the Cabinet, notably the prime minister Mr. Lloyd George. Another supporter of the scheme was Mr. Winston Churchill who, though he held no official position at the time wrote in March, 1917, a memorandum to Sir Edward Carson, then First Lord of the Admiralty urging its advantages. Mr. Lloyd George all along believed that the Admiralty opposition was based to a certain extent upon technical considerations which were not insuperable, and that the whole problem could be resolved into a few clear arguments, for and against, which could be weighed and judged by a civilian with more impartiality than could be expected from an expert.

At his desire Sir Maurice Hankey, secretary to the war cabinet, prepared a memorandum early in 1917 in which the considerations which influenced his opinion were set forth. After summarising the objections recorded, the memorandum went on to point out that the conditions had now changed. It suggested that the restriction of imports would to a great extent compensate for the fewer voyages which could be made under the convoy system and that special measures had already been taken to prevent congestion at the ports. The difficulties in regard to trained men would be overcome by nationalization of the merchant service and by giving special training to officers in the matter of keeping station. Then the existing methods of protecting merchant ships were examined and their weaknesses indicated. Finally the advantages of the convoy system were summarised in this passage:

The enemy can never know the day nor the hour when the convoy will come, nor the route which it will take. The most dangerous and contracted passages can be passed at night. Routes can be selected as far as possible so deep that submarine mines cannot be laid. The convoy can be preceded by minesweepers or by vessels fitted with paravanes. The

SIR M. HANKEY'S ARGUMENTS

most valuable ships can be placed in the safest part of the convoy. Neutrals, and other unarmed vessels, can be placed under the protection of armed vessels. The enemy submarines, instead of attacking a defenceless prey, will know that a fight is inevitable in which they may be worsted. All hope of successful surface attack would have to be dismissed at once.

The adoption of the convoy system would appear to offer great opportunities for mutual support by the merchant vessels themselves, apart from the defence provided by their escorts. Instead of meeting one small gun on board one ship the enemy might be under fire from, say, ten guns, distributed among twenty ships. Each merchant ship might have depth charges, and explosive charges in addition might be towed between pairs of ships, to be exploded electrically. One or two ships with paravanes might save a line of a dozen ships from the mine danger. Special salvage ships might accompany the convoy to save those ships which were mined or torpedoed without sinking immediately, and in any event to save the crews. Perhaps the best commentary on the convoy system is that it is invariably adopted for our main fleet, and for our transports.

These arguments appear to have had no effect upon expert naval opinion until April, when certain proofs of the efficacy of the system were produced. The convoy system had been tried in the case of vessels engaged on the coal trade to northern France, and the decrease in losses which had followed its institution showed that it had possibilities elsewhere. In point of fact, as early as July, 1916, it had been used on another route. Great Britain was drawing large supplies of foodstuffs, especially meat and margarine, from Holland; and the ships engaged in this traffic in the shallow waters of the North Sea proved easy targets for the German submarines. The losses grew so heavy that it became necessary to escort the ships, and the convoy system was used. Three destroyers and one light cruiser convoyed groups of merchant ships, at times numbering as many as eleven vessels. The convoys made the voyage entirely at night, and though there was some difficulty owing to the wide variation in the speed of the ships, the experiment proved a marked success. From the inception of the plan down to the time when Germany began unrestricted submarine warfare in February, 1917, only one ship was lost, the Colchester, and she was captured before she had picked up the destroyer escort.

SAFEGUARDING THE MERCHANT FLEETS

Early in 1917 the losses in the North Sea became so great that Holland, Sweden, and Denmark decided that their ships should as far as possible remain in port. Norway showed greater courage and independence. Though her losses by February 11 had reached 338 vessels of 464,900 tons, her merchant navy continued its voyages and her seamen faced unperturbed the risks of German attack.

The Norwegian government protested against the German blockade, in common with the other Scandinavian powers, but appears to have permitted Sweden to weaken the force of its remonstrance. If it did not go to war, it was because it had seen the fate of Rumania, which was hardly such as to encourage the smaller neutrals to resolute action. This attack upon neutral shipping was the result of the note which the German government had sent to the United States and all other neutral powers on January 31, 1917, announcing the unrestricted submarine campaign. It stated that German submarines would thereafter observe no restraints. It forbade neutral shipping to enter the waters round Great Britain, France, and Italy or to voyage in the Eastern Mediterranean. In these circumstances an Admiralty conference decided that the convoy system should be applied to the Scandinavian trade, but it was not at once put into operation. The chief objection from the point of view of the Navy still lay in the shortage of the destroyers.

They based their view on the official return of the number of voyages made each week by British ships. This showed that they totalled 2,500 a week. To provide sufficient escorts, if those figures were correct, would have necessitated the employment on escort duty of most of the destroyers in the British Navy. When, however, the Government insisted upon a closer study of the problem, it appeared that the figure of 2,500 voyages bore no relation to the actual facts. It was put forward purely to deceive the enemy. In arriving at it, every call of every ship of 300 tons or upwards at a British port during the week was taken into account. If a coasting steamer made a short voyage and called at half a dozen ports, the trip from one port to another, taking perhaps only a few hours, was officially a voyage. Such figures may have discouraged the Germans, but they also very effectively discouraged the Admiralty from adopting the convoy system. When the figures were carefully analysed it was found that the voyages of ocean-going ships, which were

SIR J. JELLCOE'S OPINION

really the important consideration, numbered fewer than 150 a week. It then became clear that about seventy destroyers could do all that was needed. Without unduly robbing the Grand Fleet and the patrols, about thirty destroyers could immediately be spared, and there was a possibility that new construction and American assistance might, within a reasonable period, make the full number available.

The prime minister was not, however, yet fully satisfied that every possibility had been explored. He proposed to make personal investigations at the Admiralty, but before he could do so one of the chief opponents of the convoy system changed his mind. This officer was Vice-Admiral A. L. Duff, Director of the Anti-Submarine Division of the Admiralty. He had already admitted its value on the Scandinavian routes owing to the special conditions there prevailing, but on April 26, 1917, he addressed a memorandum to Sir John Jellicoe, in which he said: "It seems to me evident that the time has arrived when we must be ready to introduce a comprehensive scheme of convoy at any moment." Admiral Duff's change of view was no doubt due to two facts—first, the entry of the United States into the war, which would make a number of American destroyers available; and, second, the revised estimate of the number of ships which it would be necessary to convoy. All that the prime minister had now to do was to press upon the Admiralty the necessity of putting convoys into full working order at the earliest possible moment.

Sir John Jellicoe, however, did not share Mr. Lloyd George's view that the submarine menace would be entirely averted by the convoy. Only a few days after the Admiralty had accepted the convoy system he addressed a decidedly pessimistic note to the prime minister. After reviewing the whole naval situation, he wrote:

The real fact of the matter is this. We are carrying on the war at the present time as if we had the absolute command of the sea, whereas we have not such command or anything approaching it. It is quite true that we are masters of the situation so far as surface ships are concerned, but it must be realized—and realized at once—that this will be quite useless if the enemy's submarines paralyse, as they do now, our lines of communication.

History has shown from time to time the fatal results of basing naval and military strategy on an insecure line of

SAFEGUARDING THE MERCHANT FLEETS

communications. Disaster is certain to follow, *and our present policy is heading straight for disaster*. It is useless and dangerous in the highest degree to ignore that fact.

I must, therefore, advise that the Government should so shape its policy as to recognise that we have neither the undisputed command of the sea nor even a reasonable measure of that command. If we do not recognise this it is my firm conviction that we shall lose the war by the starvation of our people and the paralysing of our Allies by failing to supply them with coal and other essentials.

The policy of the war must, of course, be decided by the Government. It is merely my duty to advise whether the Navy is in a position to give effect to that policy, and I have no desire to trespass beyond my proper functions. I feel, however, that, as I am addressing this serious memorandum to you in the hope that through you its contents may have some influence on the War Cabinet, I ought to indicate several very important matters which, in my judgment, demand immediate attention.

I feel certain that the Navy will indubitably fail in the near future to satisfy the demands made upon it by the present policy of H.M. Government unless—(a) we at once withdraw the whole of our forces from Salonica, as this is the quarter which taxes our resources most heavily and, from the military point of view, gives no promise of a successful offensive. Apart from all questions of securing shipping and releasing H.M. ships from escort work in the Salonica area for use elsewhere, it is a fact on which I am bound to insist with great emphasis that the Navy will be unable to meet the demands recently put forward for the removal of sick and wounded from this area.

(b) We realise that we cannot continue to bring reinforcements of troops into this country unless they are conveyed in ships carrying other essentials from the Colonies, such as food, etc., as we cannot afford to provide the necessary escorting ships.

(c) The policy of importing labour is at once abandoned for the same reason.

(d) The import of everything that is not essential to the life of the country is ruthlessly and immediately stopped.

If the Government will deal at once with these proposals a certain quantity of tonnage will be released, and, as it becomes available, should be devoted entirely to the import of food-stuffs until we have placed this country in a position to withstand the siege to which it is about to be subjected.

The release of the transporting, escorting and conveying vessels now devoted to the purposes named above will also assist in providing protection for convoys of ships bringing

A VALUABLE SUGGESTION

into this country essentials in the way of food and munitions, but, even with all this, we shall be very hard put to it unless the United States help to the utmost of their ability.

When with this help supplies have been received and the country is in a position to withstand a siege, then we can reconsider the whole position. Without some such relief as I have indicated—and that given immediately—the Navy will fail in its responsibilities to the country and the country itself will suffer starvation.

Fortunately, Sir John Jellicoe's forebodings were not realized, nor was it necessary to carry out his suggestion that the Salonica expedition should be abandoned. Once more a suggestion from a civilian minister proved of great value. This minister was Sir Leo Chiozza Money, then parliamentary secretary to the Ministry of Shipping. Until this time the Allies had drawn their supplies of food and raw material from several countries, and in many instances their transport involved long sea voyages.

Sir Leo's suggestion was that if the United States and Canada would give the Allies a prior claim on these supplies the number of ships needed to carry them would be materially decreased, and as they could all follow one route it could be patrolled far more easily than the longer and more scattered routes followed before. Sir Leo Money's proposal could be carried out more easily after the Admiralty's acceptance of the convoy, which would protect the ships when they got into the real danger zone. The waters most frequented by submarines were those in which the depth conditions were most favourable, ranging from 100 to 200 feet. There a large submarine could safely "sit" on the bottom with engines stopped, and without any risk of surface ships colliding with her. She would require a depth of 40 feet or so completely to submerge her, and on the top of that at least another 30 or 40 feet of water to take ships clear of her; a greater depth was desirable if she was not to be seen and reported by aircraft or troubled by heavy seas.

On the other hand, at a depth of 250 feet the pressure was severe, and though British submarines, and probably also German boats, during the war descended to greater depths, there was some danger in so doing. In deep water a submarine had either to remain on the surface or to keep her engine running if she submerged, and this both used electricity and was apt to disclose her presence. These facts explain why the

SAFEGUARDING THE MERCHANT FLEETS

German boats cruised mainly at certain points, such as the entrances to the English Channel, the Bristol Channel, and the Irish Sea.

The declaration of war by the United States on April 6, 1917, added to the number of ships available for convoy, but the American navy was relatively weak in smaller craft. Admiral Sims, the commander-in-chief of the United States fleet, immediately accepted the view that the submarine campaign was the great danger that confronted the Allies. The most confidential figures as to the losses of Allied merchant shipping and the sinking of German submarines were disclosed to him, and he at once urged the United States Navy Department to send across the Atlantic every available ship capable of anti-submarine work. Before the end of May the Queenstown command, to which fell the protection of ships coming from the United States and Canada, was strengthened by eighteen American destroyers.

The first convoy on a large scale did not sail until the beginning of May. The Admiralty had arranged for it to assemble at Gibraltar, and on May 2 Captain H. C. Lockyer, who had been appointed commodore, sailed for Gibraltar with two special service ships which were to form the escort until home waters were reached. Meanwhile the merchant ships to the number of sixteen had assembled at Gibraltar. The utmost pains had been taken to give full instructions to their officers in the matter of keeping station and to equip the ships as far as possible with the necessary mechanical devices. Three armed yachts were to accompany the convoy through the Mediterranean danger zone, and when it reached home waters it was to be picked up by an escort of six destroyers. The speed of the convoy was fixed at six and a half knots, that being below the speed of the slowest ship, but, even so, difficulties arose, as the slower ships could not maintain their nominal speed at sea. In spite of these difficulties, the ships kept station fairly well.

The convoy was met by the destroyers on May 18. Off the Scillies it divided, and five ships bound for West Coast ports left it with an escort of two destroyers, while the remainder proceeded up Channel. Off Portland the duty of escort was taken up by twenty-four drifters, and on May 22 the convoy arrived safely in the Downs, and the ships dispersed to their destinations. The experiment had been a complete success, and the skippers of the merchant ships expressed strong approval.

GUARDING THE TRANSPORTS

Following upon this success, a Convoy Committee was formed to put the system into operation upon the largest possible scale. Rendezvous ports were fixed at Gibraltar, at Dakar, and at certain ports on the American continents. The convoys were to number about twenty ships capable of a speed of not more than 12 knots nor less than $8\frac{1}{2}$ knots, except in the case of convoys sailing from Gibraltar, which were to include ships capable of only seven knots.

The reason for these speed limits was that ships with a speed of more than 12 knots were considered to be fast enough to escape from submarines, while those whose speed was less than $8\frac{1}{2}$ knots would unduly slow down the whole convoy. The ships were to be escorted from their rendezvous by armed merchantmen or light cruisers while they were on the ocean, as in deep water they would not be exposed to submarine attack, but on reaching the danger zone the escort duty was to be taken over by destroyers and drifters. It was estimated that these escort duties would involve the employment of over eighty destroyers, with over fifty larger ships for ocean escorts.

Sir John Jellicoe was now fully convinced of the value of the convoy system, and the arguments which Sir Maurice Hankey had set forth in his paper had been abundantly substantiated. At first the United States were opposed to the system. A proposal that a squadron of destroyers leaving for Europe should convoy British merchant ships across the Atlantic was rejected on the ground that the numbers were too large for efficient protection, and in the end the destroyers crossed the Atlantic alone and the merchant ships took the risk of making the passage unescorted. In transporting troops across the Atlantic, however, the United States made the fullest use of the convoy system. All the transports carrying American soldiers to Europe were escorted by cruisers and destroyers. These escorts were chiefly furnished by the United States navy, the British and French navies together supplying less than one-fifth of the ships employed. The United States, having no great mercantile marine was able to supply only about half the number of transports required, the rest being chiefly British ships. Considering the number of troops carried the losses were extraordinarily small. The few transports which were sunk were returning to America and the escort was not as large as on their east bound voyages.

SAFEGUARDING THE MERCHANT FLEETS

The Admiralty once having adopted the convoy system spared no effort to make it completely successful. Gradually the difficulty of providing the necessary destroyers was overcome. In January, 1917, the number available for convoys was twenty-nine; by November, 1917, it had risen to 139. Of the destroyers employed to convoy merchant ships on the Atlantic about 70 per cent. were British and 30 per cent. American.

While the convoy system was markedly successful in the Atlantic it was open to counter-measures by the enemy off the east coast of Britain. The obvious reply to it was attack by surface raiders. The most vulnerable of British convoys, because it moved nearest the German fleet, was that which at regular intervals crossed the North Sea to the Norwegian coast. It included many neutral vessels from whose crews the Germans were probably able to ascertain the force employed by the British and the methods followed. Such a convoy of twelve steamers left the Norwegian coast on the afternoon of October 15, 1917, bound for the Shetlands. As an escort against submarine attack two British destroyers, the *Mary Rose*, Lieutenant-Commander C. L. Fox, and the *Strongbow*, Lieutenant-Commander E. Brooke, with three small armed vessels of the trawler class, only one of which was equipped with wireless, were attached. No provision was made by the responsible naval authorities against attack by surface ships. Early on the 17th the armed trawler, which was fitted with wireless, fell back to screen a ship that had dropped behind owing to the shifting of its cargo.

The weather was foggy, and day had not broken when, some 65 miles from the Shetlands, two large vessels appeared. They proved to be two fast German cruisers, the *Brummer* and the *Bremse*. Against them the British destroyers were at a terrible disadvantage, inferior in speed, in steadiness, and, most of all, in gun-power, in which they were enormously outmatched. There could be no real battle when the odds were so great. By some obscure chance or by surprise the Germans were able to put the wireless out of action in both destroyers before the alarm could be given. The *Strongbow* was first attacked and subjected to a terrible fire, which speedily crippled her. She made an heroic fight and sank with the colours flying. Forty-seven officers and men went down in her; the rest of her crew were rescued by neutrals. The *Mary Rose* fared even worse. One of the earliest shots from the German cruisers struck her magazine, causing a

A MESSAGE FAILS

violent explosion, and she, too, sank. Of her crew only ten escaped drowning in the heavy sea that was running by clinging to two large lifebuoys until they could struggle to a lifeboat floating near them.

The Germans, after destroying the two British warships, opened fire on the neutral ships. Three vessels of the convoy were able to escape into the fog because they were some distance off and because of the gallant resistance offered by the British destroyers. The others, five Norwegian, one Dane, and three Swedish vessels, all of them unarmed, were sent to the bottom. The crew of the Norwegian steamer Kristine, twelve in all, had taken to their boat at the first alarm. A German shell, fired at the boat, sank it and killed nine men. The other three struggled back to the wreck of their ship, where they were again shelled till only one was left, and he fell back into the sea.

The total of lives lost in the merchantmen was about 85. The affair was over in a little more than half an hour, and the German cruisers immediately made off at full speed. They had a distance of nearly 400 miles to cover if they returned to the German North Sea base, and some 350 miles to steam if they made for the Baltic. Soon after they had disappeared small British patrol vessels arrived and rescued all who were left alive in the water. The British cruiser forces had not engaged the Germans on their approach and failed to intercept the Germans when they retired. According to an official statement, "no message reached the admiral commanding the Orkneys, the commander-in-chief of the Grand fleet, or the Admiralty, that the convoy had been attacked until the surviving ships arrived at Lerwick." The destruction of the wireless installations in the two destroyers was blamed for this.

The action, though glorious to the officers and men of the two warships engaged, who behaved heroically, was unfortunate. It weakened the confidence of neutrals in the British navy. The Cologne Gazette sneeringly remarked, "England can neither guard her own waters nor those of her Allies." It deepened the feeling that the Admiralty and war staff needed thorough reorganization and a change of personnel, and that the old methods had broken down. An enquiry was promised. The official account stated that "the enemy raiders succeeded in evading the British watching squadron on the long dark nights both in their hurried outward dash and homeward flight."

SAFEGUARDING THE MERCHANT FLEETS

The Norwegian government in a note to the German government said: "A profound impression has been made upon the Norwegian people by the fact that not only have the German submarines continued to sink peaceable neutral merchant ships, paying no attention to the fate of their crews, but that now even German warships have adopted the same tactics."

On December 12 a double repetition of the convoy affair occurred off the Tyne and off the Norwegian coast. In the night of December 11-12 a south-bound convoy was proceeding down the British coast when two neutral steamers, which belonged to it and had dropped some distance astern, were attacked by three large German destroyers. Both were torpedoed; one sank at once and the other broke into halves which were ultimately salvaged. The Germans then steamed up to two trawlers which were fishing off the Tyne and sank one of them and damaged the other, killing eight men. They made good their retreat.

The other affair took place in broad daylight that morning, and affected a convoy bound from Scotland to Norway. It consisted of six ships—one British, two Norwegian, two Swedish, and one Danish—protected by the destroyers Partridge and Pellaw and four armed trawlers. The attacking force consisted of four of the newest and fastest German destroyers, escorted for a time by the very fast light German cruiser, Emden. At 11.45 a.m. the Partridge sighted strange destroyers coming up, and immediately went to quarters and engaged them. The British were once more exposed to overwhelming force. The Partridge, offering a most gallant resistance, was severely hit early in the action; soon after, an explosion took place in her hull, and she sank. The Pellaw was badly damaged by hits below the water-line; her engines were partially disabled, and she was crippled though she was not sunk. The convoy was then attacked and all the vessels in it destroyed, including the four armed trawlers. Fortunately another convoy in the neighbourhood escaped, probably owing to the British destroyers.

The German seamen rescued 24 officers and men of the Partridge's crew and 26 of the crews of the other British vessels sunk, and they offered to save some of the neutrals in the ships they had destroyed. Several survivors reached Norway in boats, and 100 men, 88 of whom were neutrals, were rescued by four British destroyers which arrived after the Germans had vanished.

A MISCHANCE OF WAR

The escape of the Germans after the previous convoy affair had been ascribed to the destruction of the wireless in both the British warships engaged, and to the long, dark nights. In this instance the Germans do not seem to have damaged the wireless in the convoying vessels before signals could be made, and they appeared in daylight. The previous attack had been a "tip-and-run" affair; in this case a certain deliberation was manifest. A court of enquiry reported that "all possible steps" were taken by "the other forces that were at sea for the purpose of giving protection to the convoys." The system of long-distance observation the British navy adopted was clearly attended by serious risks. One result of that system was that it left the submarines free to come and go, and the North Sea open to German raiders. Changes at the Admiralty had long been necessary, and now at last they were made.

They were hastened by a sad incident which seems to have been one of the inevitable mischances of war. At 10.30 on the night of December 22-23 a number of British destroyers, which had been engaged in protecting a convoy on its voyage to Holland, were waiting for a return convoy, laden with food in the shape of cheese and butter, in foggy weather off the Dutch coast, when they were attacked by submarines. One of the vessels in the escort struck a mine but was not sunk, and was able to return to port.

Four destroyers were in line with her. Immediately after she had been damaged, the second British destroyer in the line went up in a sheet of flame and steam. The destroyer next astern of her very gallantly steamed close to her, to save her crew, and was also torpedoed and sunk. Meantime, the leading destroyer had turned; as she came round a third torpedo struck her with deadly results. The fourth destroyer in that welter of sinking ships and dying men was handled with consummate coolness and devotion by her commander. She quickened to full speed, zig-zagged to avoid any further German torpedoes, and worked round to the points where the other destroyers had sunk, dropping boats, lifebelts, and everything that would float to help the men in the water, until the submarines near her had been driven off. No German craft was distinctly seen, but in the darkness and stormy weather this was no cause for surprise, and the Germans claimed the three vessels as torpedoed, not mined. A total of 13 officers and 180 men perished in this tragic mishap

CHAPTER 25

Battle of Cambrai

At the end of October, 1917, Sir Douglas Haig and his army commanders were in a position of extraordinary difficulty. The attack upon Passchendaele had temporarily failed, but it was necessary to continue the operations against that place so as to secure a good northern position for the winter. This had to be done with regiments worn by fighting and at a time when a strong and well-equipped British army had to be sent to the help of the Italian forces. As he could gather only comparatively few divisions for the new offensive, while increasing the strength of his attack on Passchendaele, he had to find an important sector of the enemy's front which was liable to break under a surprise assault. He found such a sector near Cambrai, where General von Ludendorff was relying upon the strength of the Hindenburg line in order to detach troops for the grand concentration around Passchendaele Ridge. The Cambrai sector had become a resting-place for German divisions exhausted in the Ypres battles. These tired troops were confident in the protection of the Hindenburg tunnel and the wide zones of wire entanglement in front of their three trench systems, which had flanking defensive works built into or along three canals that crossed the main systems of fortification.

Both Ludendorff and his local commander calculated that these defensive works could not be smashed sufficiently to enable hostile infantry to pass through without an intense, prolonged bombardment by many heavy guns. When the bombardment opened, there would be time, they reckoned, to reinforce the defending artillery and bring down to Cambrai fresh divisions to receive the grand British attack. The Germans thought they had defeated the tank by means of their new infantry guns and widened trenches.

The power of the tank, however, had been improved by a year of practical experience. The Germans did not know what it could do on the dry grass of almost undamaged land between Havrincourt and Lateau Wood. Its great virtue was that it

BYNG'S ARMY

gave the British commander the opportunity of launching an offensive without first warning the enemy by prolonged fire.

On the other hand, there was the difficult technical problem of getting a multitude of tanks into position, without arousing suspicion. The organization for the attack had to go on stealthily at night, over lines that, in daytime, had to seem empty of life and new objects. A little evidence of work was permissible. The Germans were busy making new lines behind Cambrai, in preparation for the next year's campaign. They were ready to allow a similar show of defensive preparation along the British front. But the British work that went on, apparently slowly in daylight and energetically swift in darkness, was connected with an immediate attack by part of the 3rd army, under the former commander of the Canadian Corps, General Sir Julian Byng.

Sir Julian Byng used a very small army. It was formed of the Ulster (36th) division, the West Riding territorial (62nd) division, the Highland territorial (51st) division, the 6th division, the 20th division, and the 12th division, with the 29th division and the 5th cavalry division in support. In reserve were the 40th division, the London territorial (47th) division, and a strong force of cavalry. Afterwards, there were brought into action the 2nd division, the 59th division, the 25th division, and the 55th division, with a division of Guards and other forces; but many of these did not appear until the forward movement had been proceeding for some days, and did not enter the surprise operations, in which only seven infantry divisions, all much under establishment strength and worn in the Ypres battles, got within reach of one of the greatest victories on the western front.

Early on November 20 the ground was favourable to the attack, but the weather, being misty and threatening rain, impeded the action of the large force of British flying machines secretly collected for ensuring the local command of the air. Not a gun was fired by British artillerymen while the squadrons of tanks rose from their hiding-places and crawled from Havrincourt Wood to Bonavis Ridge, into the Germans' wide fences of barbed steel. But as the tanks came out into the open, with files of infantry ready to march through the lanes they made, the guns of the 3rd army started a whirlwind bombardment.

In the meantime, demonstrations were made on practically the whole of the British front south of the Scarpe River. Over

BATTLE OF CAMBRAI

the German lines rolled artillery barrages, followed by dense smoke-screens, behind which were no infantry. In other places gas attacks were made, with whirlwind bombardments, in order to alarm the hostile commanders. There was some substance, however, behind all these threats. Between Fontaine and Bullecourt, battalions of the 16th Irish division and the 3rd division made a successful assault upon the great tunnel trench and the curved system beyond Bullecourt. There was some hard fighting in the support trench, and in the nine counter-attacks following upon the Irish victory. In the neighbouring Bovet position, which the Englishmen of the 3rd division also overran, there was a similar successful rush, ending in fierce but vain counter-thrusts by the division garrisoning the Quéant salient. Far south, beyond the other end of the main line of assault, West Lancashire territorials made another demonstration thrust by Vendhuile, and succeeded in drawing away and holding the German forces from the field of battle.

The hardest task of all fell to the Ulster division, acting as the left wing of the attack. The Ulstermen set out, near Hermies, in a bombing and trench-mortar attack upon the great bend of the Hindenburg line running along the Canal du Nord, from a point by Havrincourt towards Mœuvres and Inchy. The Ulstermen had no tanks to help them through the zones of barbed-wire and the mazes of concrete forts, entrenchments, and tunnel-ways. They went forward with hand grenades, Lewis guns, and trench-mortars, and began, at first slowly, to blast their way up the Hindenburg line by means of personal skill and daring. The Germans held a dominating position on a fortified and tunnelled mound, some sixty feet high, formed of earth excavated from the dry bed of the canal. Close and savage was the fighting up to the mound, but, in vehement bombing combats and trench-mortar bombardments, the 109th brigad., of the 9th, 10th and 11th Inniskillings, and former citizen volunteers of Belfast, broke down the entanglements, worked through the great line, stormed the mound, and transformed it into a dominating Ulster machine-gun position and observation point.

The divisional staff had foreseen the difficulty of crossing the dry canal, and had prepared against it. With surprising speed some Belfast shipwrights, serving as sappers, threw a temporary bridge over the cutting, and, passing over the artificial ravine, the infantry cleared the ground of "pockets" of Germans, and

TANKS IN ACTION

enabled the 109th brigade to battle forward beyond their objective. By four o'clock in the afternoon the Cambrai-Bapaume road was crossed, and the main Hindenburg line was reached at the bend by the outskirts of Mœuvres. Here the Ulstermen rested all night, with the key position of Mœuvres almost in their grasp. The main Hindenburg line, with the great tunnel, extended from Quéant and Pronville along the southern edge of Mœuvres village to the Canal du Nord, and ran along the cutting, to bend again round the end of Havrincourt, thence stretching south-east below Ribecourt, Marcoing, and Crèvecœur. The Ulstermen's advance of 4,000 yards was an extraordinary feat of arms. It penned the Germans into the new Quéant salient, while breaking them, by downright personal prowess, for miles along the strongest part of his Hindenburg system.

In the matter of depth of attack the territorial division of West Riding men excelled the men of Ulster. They pierced the enemy's defences to a depth of nearly 7,000 yards. The Yorkshiremen, however, were helped by British armoured cars, and fought for a considerable distance over breadths of open ground. They stormed over the German lines running across their front, while the Ulstermen worked up through connected labyrinths, but in the circumstances the two achievements may be regarded as equal. Certainly, the West Riding territorials shed new lustre upon territorial organizations generally, as did the Highland territorial division that fought on its right.

Upon the Yorkshire line facing Havrincourt a battle-line of tanks operated with surprising effect. The day broke dull and grey, with low-hanging clouds foretelling rain. The downpour, however, did not begin until midday. On the dry, rolling fields of withering grass and thistles the great line of grey armoured cars crawled up to the front 300-foot belt of wire without a gun being fired. Wide lanes of flattened entanglements were made at appointed places. Then, as the British infantry began to follow in the wake of the tanks, the secret concentration of attacking artillery was revealed to the startled foe.

The West Riding division put two brigades into action and held one in reserve. The advance was opened on the right by the 185th brigade, composed of the 2/5th, 2/6th, 2/7th, and 2/8th West Yorkshires. On the left was the 184th brigade, formed of the 2/4th and 2/5th King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry and the 2/4th and 2/5th York and Lancasters. They

BATTLE OF CAMBRAI

stormed Havrincourt, and then, with their tanks, chased the surviving fugitives across the undulating country towards Graincourt. There followed some stiff fighting at Graincourt, where nests of German machine-gunners, with troops rallied after the break of Havrincourt, endeavoured to check the Yorkshiremen's advance, while against the tanks two anti-tank guns in Graincourt came into action. The British tanks destroyed the special artillery designed to destroy them, and helped the infantry into Graincourt. Then some cavalry came into line with the foremost battalions, and tanks, horse, and foot pushed onward into the village of Anneux, where a bomb and machine-gun fight went on until the following morning.

The cavalry first charged into the village, and were met with machine-gun fire, compelling them to retire and dismount. Thereupon the tanks went forward, finding out the German machine-gun positions, while infantry and dismounted troopers beat the garrison down with hand-bombs and Lewis-gun fire. In the interval a fresh German division, the 107th, poured down into the caverned village and renewed the strength of the defence.

In the meantime other Yorkshiremen extended along the Cambrai-Bapaume road, maintaining touch with the Ulster division on one side and throwing out, on the right, a long defensive flank linking with the Highland territorial division by the western spur of Flesquières. When night fell, the men of the west riding had completed an advance of four and a half miles from their original front, overrunning the two principal systems of the Hindenburg line, gaining possession of two villages, and entering a third. On their way they took a battery of 5.9 in. guns, and when in the morning of November 21 they captured Anneux village and began to push on to Bourslon wood, they secured two more 8 in. howitzers.

If all had gone as well in the centre as on the left wing, the battle of Cambrai would have ended in a great decision. But the movement of the 51st Highland division, on the right of the West Riding troops, was definitely checked by the heroic action of a German artillery officer.

The Highland division was formed of the 152nd brigade of 1/5th, 1/6th Seaforths, 1/10th Gordons, and 1/8th Argyll and Sutherland, with the 153rd brigade of 1/6th and 1/7th Royal Highlanders, 1/5th and 1/7th Gordons, and the 154th brigade of 1/9th Royal Scots, the 1/4th Seaforths, 1/4th Gordons, and

TANKS DESTROYED

1/7th Argylls. Their objective was the high Flesquières Ridge where, by the village on the cross-roads from Cambrai and Ribecourt, there were screened pits of guns covering the Hindenburg line. Over the lower undulations the Highland territorials and their squadrons of armoured cars advanced from their position near Trescault. The tanks drove over the Hindenburg outpost line and crossed the ditched fields, with the attacking infantry in open order chasing the remnants of the German garrison.

When, however, the flanks of this central advance were secured, and the grand surprise stroke was about to be driven home, tank after tank fell as it tried to break the way for the Scotsmen. Then men went up the slope against the southern side of the village. Here there was a strong brick wall, skirting the grounds of a château, and affording excellent cover for a line of German machine-gunners. The German fire was impassable by infantry, and the tanks therefore were deployed, head on, against the formidable obstacle. Some of them were knocked out, at short range, by direct hits from German field-batteries sited beyond the crest of the hill.

A German officer serving a field-gun alone, obtained hit after hit upon the tanks, and when at last he fell dead beside his gun the Highland division had but one tank left in action. With grim fury the troops cleared all the German works around the village, bayoneted some of the gunners in the eastern gun-pits; but the machine-gun fire from the park wall and the fortified houses held them up all day and night. By noon on November 20 they had taken all their second objectives, except the village itself; but, owing to the disaster to their armoured cars, there remained at the close of the first critical period of the battle a gap in the central sector of the British advance.

In the morning of November 20 the tide of tactical successes continued to flow along the line of attack, with the exception of Flesquières Ridge. On the right of the Highland division was the 6th division, which drove through the Hindenburg system in the direction of Marcoing. Its 71st brigade was formed of the 1st Leicesters, the 2nd Sherwood Foresters, the 9th Norfolks, and the 9th Suffolks. In its 16th brigade were the 1st West Yorkshires, the 2nd Durham Light Infantry, the 11th Essex, and the 14th Durhams. The 3rd brigade was composed of the 1st Buffs, the 8th Bedfords, the 1st Shropshires, the Northamptonshires, and the 2nd York and Lancasters.

BATTLE OF CAMBRAI

In the opening of the attack the 71st brigade, with its tanks, carried the village of Ribécourt after sharp fighting. Beneath Ribécourt was a subterranean labyrinth, where parties of snipers and machine-gunners were concealed. They fired from places about the village, and from ditches and spinneys between Ribécourt and Flesquières, until they were all tracked down in the morning of November 21. While the difficult work of clearing up the catacombs of Ribécourt was proceeding, the 2nd Durhams and 1st West Yorkshires of the 16th brigade swung to the left against Flesquières Ridge. There they helped the Highland division by attacking and taking a battery at the point of the bayonet and clearing the ground east of the long rise.

The 6th division then fought forward with tanks and cavalry towards the village of Noyelles. A squadron of dragoons took the village at a gallop, in the face of severe machine-gun and rifle fire. Then patrols of infantry arrived and, clearing the valley, held it until the Lancashire troops of the 29th division took over the position. On the right of the 6th division was the 12th division, consisting mainly of Eastern County troops. Its 35th brigade was composed of the 7th Norfolks, 7th Suffolk, 2nd Essex, and 5th Berkshires. In its 36th brigade were the 8/9th Royal Fusiliers, 7th Sussex, and 11th Middlesex; while the 37th brigade was formed of the 6th Queen's, 6th Buffs, 7th East Surreys, and 6th West Kents. The outlying fortress village of La Vacquerie was the first objective of the leading brigade of the 12th division. With the help of tanks, the village was stormed, leaving the Germans still entrenched upon the powerful fortifications of Welsh Ridge. Over this long rise the attacking troops fiercely worked, while on their right the 20th division fought over Bonavis Ridge and had a wild struggle in Lateau wood.

In the latter light division were the 10th and 11th King's Royal Rifles, and 10th and 11th Rifle Brigade, forming together the 59th brigade. The 60th brigade was composed of the 6th Oxford and Bucks, the 6th Shropshires, and 12th King's Royal Rifles. In its 61st brigade were the 12th Liverpools, the 7th Somerset, the 7th Durhams, and the 7th Yorkshire Light Infantry. These troops were the extreme right attacking wing, and as they went forward the German forces on the St. Quentin sector drove into their flank and poured around their front to assist the defending forces in the Cambrai sector.

A BRIDGE DESTROYED

To a British tank commander fell the honours of war about Lateau wood. With a degree of skill more amazing than his courage he charged a battery of 5.9's, steering his storming car between two of the guns, and then, turning down the line, killed or scattered the crews. With other tanks the car then picketed the position, and held it until the infantry arrived. At half-past ten in the morning, when most of the Hindenburg reserve line had been taken, and cavalry was preparing to ride forward, the 29th division moved out through the 20th and 12th divisions towards the canal at Marcoing and Masnières.

The tanks again acted as path-breakers. Twelve went into Marcoing, each with a designated point to take and hold. They arrived at the moment when a German party was running out an electric wire to blow up a bridge over the canal. The Germans were caught by the machine-guns of the tank before they could fire the charge, and the important bridge was secured intact. At Masnières, however, the Germans held up the British patrols with machine-guns that swept the approaches to the crossing and seriously damaged the bridge carrying the main road; consequently, the first tank that tried to cross fell into the canal.

The destruction of the Masnières bridge enabled the Germans to hold out in the northern part of the village, while the 5th cavalry division of Canadian, Umbala, and Secunderabad brigades was moving forward at noon, in the design to pour over the passages which the 29th division were securing. There was a fierce infantry battle at Les Rues Vertes (or Green Streets), a suburb of Masnières, south of the canal. After this the 88th brigade of 4th Worcesters, 1st Essex, Royal Newfoundlanders, and 2nd Hants broke into the main position, crossing at a lock when the bridge had been broken, and engaging in cellar combats amid the old catacombs of the town.

During the action a temporary bridge was constructed, and in the afternoon a squadron of Fort Garry Horse, of the Canadian brigade, crossed, captured a battery of guns, and broke up a body of German infantry. The Canadian troopers then took up a position in a sunken road and, after maintaining themselves there against all attacks until nightfall, cut their way back to the British lines, bringing with them some prisoners they had taken in their gallant and extraordinary action.

Their success showed what an entire cavalry division might have done in dashing into the wreckage of the last positions of

BATTLE OF CAMBRAI

the Germans if Masnières bridge had been captured intact. The action of the local German commander in holding the bridge against the advanced parties of British infantry, and gaining time to ruin it before the first tank arrived, was considered by the British commander-in-chief to have been one of the two deciding factors in limiting the success of Sir Julian Byng.

In the meantime, the 87th brigade of 2nd South Wales Borderers, 1st Scottish Borderers, 1st Inniskilling Fusiliers, and 1st Border regiment stormed into Marcoing, and extended in a line some fifteen hundred yards from the bridge-head at the bend of the canal. In front of the brigade was the last defence of Cambrai, consisting of the Beaufort line. This, however, was so strongly reinforced by the enemy from Cambrai that the splendid Scottish, Welsh, and Irish force could not make farther progress. The left brigade, the 86th, formed of the 2nd Royal Fusiliers, 1st Lancashire Fusiliers, 16th Middlesex, and Guernsey Light Infantry, fought alongside the 6th division, and made a successful attack upon Nine Wood, lying between Marcoing and Noyelles. While the left wing of the 29th division cleared the ground around Marcoing, its right wing occupied most of the burrows of Masnières and began to extend towards Rumilly.

When night fell, the 3rd army had broken the German system of defence to a depth of four and a half miles on a wide front. The larger part of the thirteen miles of Hindenburg tunnel was conquered, some 5,000 German prisoners were captured, and only fragments of the last German trench systems, the Beaufort and Marquion lines, remained unconquered. From the recovered villages in the rear came streams of women of all ages, old men, and little children, all surprised at the suddenness with which they had been released.

It began to rain about noon, and thereafter, when the landscape was not veiled by a downpour, it was shrouded in thick white mist. The pilots of the Royal Flying Corps became unable to inform the generals conducting the attack of the positions of the advanced British forces. Nevertheless, they attacked German batteries and small groups of German infantry with machine-gun fire and bombs, losing eleven machines while skimming over trees and houses and bumping against hillsides. In the German rear British pilots assailed lorry trains, transport columns, railways, and aerodromes, and obtained some valuable information in spite of the rain, fog, and gale.

FIVE HUNDRED HIGHLANDERS

In the rainy autumnal night energetic efforts were made to get forward the guns that had stuck in the sunken roads, and bring up supplies to the divisions around Cambrai. Then, in the morning of November 21, the attack was renewed in a race against time, while the German commander was busy bringing the Prussian Guard down from Lens and collecting all other reinforcements immediately available.

The Highland territorial division made a glorious effort to retrieve the check to its armoured cars. The Scotsmen carried Flesquières in a rapid rush, swept into Orival wood, taking a battery of 5.9 in. howitzers on their way, and got in line with the West Riding division and the 6th division by carrying the village of Cantaing. The 4th Seaforths and the 7th Argylls of the 154th brigade swept northward by La Folie wood and, clearing another stretch of country to a depth of nearly two miles, stormed into the village of Fontaine-Notre-Dame.

Assisted by tanks, the small Highland force cleaned up the village at the point of the bayonet, and then, in the strength of two companies, fought all night against the German battalions launched against them from three sides. Smitten by plunging flanking machine gun fire, shelled from three sides, and attacked by men six times their number, it was not until noon of November 22 that the survivors of the 500 Highlanders withdrew from Fontaine. All their ammunition was spent, and they were nearly surrounded by some three thousand attacking Germans, who still held possession of the great dominating mass of Bourlon Ridge. On their left the men from the west riding completed the capture of Anneux village, and with a number of tanks and squadrons of the 1st cavalry division worked forward upon the wooded hump of Bourlon Ridge. This ridge rose above the Cambrai-Bapaume road, overlooking all the battlefield, and affording observation over Cambrai on one side and the Quéant salient on the other. It was the key position between Cambrai and Arras, and gave high military value to Fontaine village and La Folie wood immediately eastward, and to the Hindenburg defences between Mœuvres and Bourlon village immediately westward.

If the British advance ended short of Bourlon Ridge no great and direct strategic result would issue from the victory. If, on the other hand, the ridge were taken and firmly held, the position of the German forces between Cambrai and the Sensée

BATTLE OF CAMBRAI

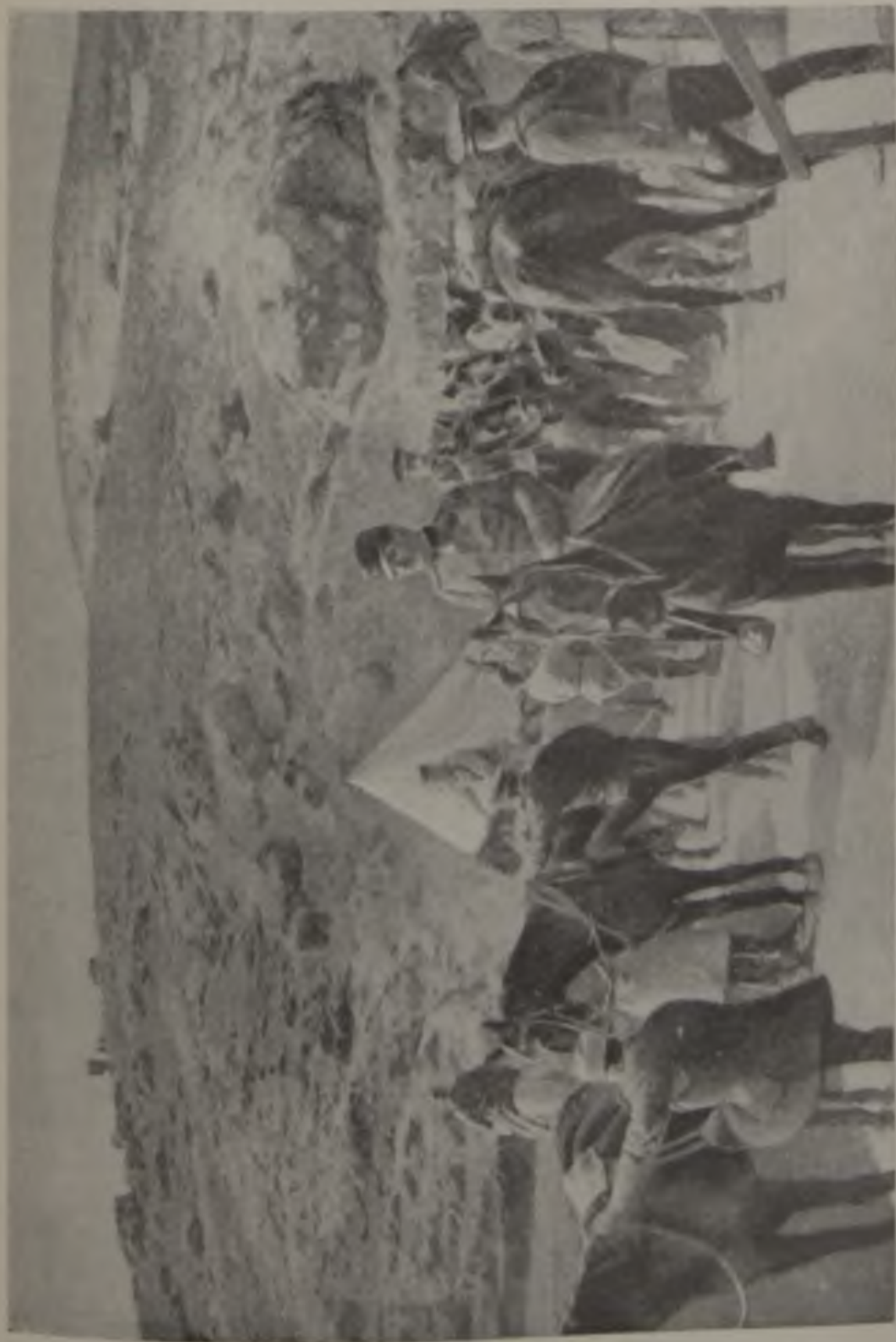
river would become so desperate that General von Ludendorff would be compelled to exhaust his available reserves in a bottle-neck battle against a deep, enveloping British movement.

At first the local German commander did not divine the intention of Sir Julian Byng. As soon as the Prussian Guard arrived from Lens they were rushed into the defences of Cambrai between Noyelles and Masnières. There the Guards pressed upon the infantry of the 29th division and dismounted regiments of the 1st and 5th cavalry divisions, but were beaten off with such slaughter as recalled the early days of the war. In dense masses the Prussian Guardsmen came over the crest north-east of Masnières, and moved along the railway to Marcoing. So terrible was the work of the 29th division that the last fragments of the storming battalions dropped into shell-holes, pits, trenches, and gullies, and refused to go on.

The defence of Noyelles was taken over by a company of the 1st Lancashire Fusiliers. The Prussians gathered under the cover of the spinneys, on a stretch of rising ground, worked forward in open order, and closed in sharp, quick rushes. They reached some of the houses, and tried to take the rest with the bayonet, but the Middlesex men and Royal Fusiliers reinforced the Lancashires, and broke the Guardsmen after two hours of hand-to-hand fighting, and drove them back across the canal.

As a result of the combat the British troops remained in the Beaufort line, north of the Scheldt Canal, at a point halfway between Masnières and Crèvecœur. Hence their line ran north-west above Masnières and Noyelles and Cantain to Fontaine. From Fontaine it bent back westward along the southern edge of Bourlon Wood to the Canal du Nord, south-east of Mœuvres. The West Riding division had been unable to take the Bourlon Ridge on the critical day of the battle, November 21. As they pushed forward in the morning, they came to a trench of the last Marquion line, running along the edge of the high wood.

The anxious Germans showed themselves too much, with the result that the men of the West Riding stormed into the outskirts of Bourlon Wood, and almost achieved a decisive victory about the time when the Seaforths and Argylls were holding the flank at Fontaine. There were, however, strong German forces hidden amid the trees on the ridge, supported by machine-guns in an old quarry, and assisted by more machine-guns near the end of the Anneux road, who poured an enfilading fire



PRINCE ALEXANDER OF SERBIA VISITING A SERBIAN ENCAMPMENT



Known to-day as Beitin, this litter of ruin covers the site of the ancient Bethel, prominent throughout Jewish history from the time of Abraham. It was occupied by the British on December 30 1917.



Air view of part of the British trenches cut in the desert during the fighting for Gaza in 1917, amid discomforts of heat and blinding sand

THE WAR IN THE HOLY LAND

upo
mar
the
On
the
the
villi
the
the
S
pos
Fles
pre
Anc
surj
he
he
larg
thro
V
side
of
arr
his
The
figh
me
In
div
of
Fla
the
in
giv
for
vor
the
blo
Ge
fici

BOURLON RIDGE

upon the storming-parties of Yorkshiresmen. A few tanks managed to climb for some distance into the high wood, but the infantry could not get through the machine-gun barrage. On the left of the Yorkshiresmen, in the evening of November 21, the Ulster division bombed and trench-mortared their way into the Hindenburg line, on the southern outskirts of Mœuvres village. Then some five and a half miles of the end part of the Bapaume-Cambrai road was occupied and overlapped by the 3rd army.

Sir Julian Byng and his seven divisions had done all they possibly could in the 48 hours allotted to them. The check at Flesquières and the delay at the broken bridge at Masnières had prevented them from reaping the full fruits of their victory. And when, in the evening of November 21, the effects of the surprise were exhausted, Sir Douglas Haig had to decide whether he should be content with all the ground he had won, or whether he should open a pitched battle for Bourlon Ridge against the large fresh forces the German commander was bringing up by three railways and the knot of roads at Cambrai.

When all the factors of the situation were taken into consideration, it was clear to Sir Douglas Haig that a tempting prize of war was still offered in Bourlon Ridge, and he therefore arranged to make a second struggle for it. Sir Julian Byng and his men were, however, unable immediately to give battle again. The troops were severely strained by constant marching and fighting. Thirty-six hours had to be sacrificed in resting the men and relieving or strengthening those that were most worn. In this period the Germans, who had already brought two fresh divisions and five resting battalions into line, with the survivors of his original forces, railed troops up from the Aisne and from Flanders, besides bringing forces direct from Russia, and turned their main reserve away from Italy towards Cambrai.

An able cavalry commander, General von Marwitz, was placed in control of the Cambrai front, while General von Hutier was given command of the St. Quentin sector. Ludendorff prepared for the pitched battle in a large way, even bringing General von Below back from the campaign in Italy, in order to get all the best minds in the German army behind the heavy return blow he was organizing near the centre of the western front. General von Marwitz gave little attention to the direct but feinting thrusts towards Cambrai. He left the 29th division

BATTLE OF CAMBRAI

almost undisturbed until the end of November, on the Marcoing and Masnières line, and placed his main counter-attacking divisions at some distance from the Bourlon and Mœuvres critical front. Whenever a British force won any considerable part of ground there, he used his men like human battering-rams, and by downright weight of numbers recovered the key positions.

On the British side the Ulstermen were strengthened by the 56th London territorial division. The 62nd (West Riding) division, which had entered Bourlon Wood and withdrawn after hard fighting, was relieved by the 40th division. One brigade of the 40th, the 119th, was a Welsh unit formed by the 9th Welch Fusiliers, the 12th South Wales Borderers, and the 17th and 18th Welch. In the 120th brigade were the 11th Royal Lancasters, the 13th East Surreys, the 14th Highland Light Infantry, and the 14th Argyll and Sutherlands. The 121st brigade was composed of the 12th Suffolks, the 13th Yorkshires, and the 20th and 21st Middlesex. The 51st Highland territorial division remained in front of the salient village of Fontaine, two miles from Cambrai. The Guards were being brought up to relieve the Highlanders, and the 2nd division was moving down to replace the Ulstermen, while the West Riding men, who had fought from Havrincourt into Bourlon Wood, could only be given a short period of rest before they resumed their attack upon the ridge alongside the British Guards.

By the morning of November 23 the reorganization of Sir Julian Byng's forces was sufficient to allow the new attack to be undertaken. In the previous night a battalion of the Queen's Westminsters obtained an important tactical success by storming forward on the left of the Ulstermen and pushing the Germans out of the wooded point of Tadpole Copse, rising west of Mœuvres village. The morning attack was made in a line stretching from Tadpole Copse and Mœuvres to the village and hill of Bourlon and the hamlet of Fontaine-Notre-Dame. Four British divisions swung upon and around Bourlon and against the fortified villages and entrenchments on either side of the height. The 40th division, with armoured cars in front and Hussars behind, swept up the slopes of the rounded ridge and along the road to Bourlon village, while the Highland territorials again attacked Fontaine-Notre-Dame, and the Ulstermen bombed their way back into Mœuvres village, with the London territorials surging forward on their left flank from Tadpole Copse.

IRISHMEN GO FORWARD

The Ulster and London divisions had to attack slightly downhill, through the four-square maze of the main Hindenburg line and support line. From Tadpole Copse, a rise slightly above the sunken fortress, the territorials of London advanced in a double stream towards Pronville, while dominating the enemy's wired and well-defended positions in Mœuvres Cemetery. As they were sternly battling forward and threatening Inchy, the Ulstermen, having tanks at last to help them, pushed into the double labyrinth of Mœuvres against most determined opposition. The German garrison cleared out of the path of the tanks, but when the armoured



batteries had lumbered by, they immediately emerged from their secret hiding places and bombed and sniped the Ulster infantry. The Irishmen, however, carried one cottage after another, routing the Germans out of caverns and tunnels, pinning them against broken walls, and beating others down with the butt of the rifle.

From the west, the German batteries in the Quécant salient maintained a continual flanking fire; from the north an ever-increasing number of German batteries rolled barrages up and down the broken edge of the Hindenburg line, in co-operation with the movements of fresh forces of their counter-attacking infantry. Then, as this infantry marched towards the furnace of death, low-flying British machines harried them with machine-gun fire, or directed gusts of shrapnel upon them from the

BATTLE OF CAMBRAI

attacking British batteries. There were times when Mœuvres seemed to be entirely conquered, but fresh waves of Germans arrived and reinforced the remnants of the garrison, who bore the attacking troops out of the upper part of the village. On the east side of Inchy the Rangers, Kensingtons, London Scottish, Queen Victoria's Rifles, and Queen's Westminsters, with other battalions of the 56th London territorial division, were held up on their left by fierce machine-gun fire. On their right, however, they made a gallant advance and greatly helped to relieve the pressure upon the indomitable Irishmen, who had fought continually since the opening of the action. Practically every British movement was answered by violent bombardment and counter-attack. There were occasions, as on November 24, when an entire fresh German force, some 1,000 strong, was caught by the British artillery and smashed on the open field, so that none of the troops got into the battle-line.

At the end of the battle, when the 2nd division relieved the long-enduring Ulster division, the gain of ground in and about Mœuvres was not important. General von Marwitz lost some five field-guns and had to withdraw division after division, but at the close of the month, Mœuvres remained in his possession. The same situation prevailed on the other wing of the six miles of bitterly contested ground around Bourlon Ridge.

The village of Fontaine-Notre-Dame stood well above the plain about Cambrai. The buildings on the outskirts of the city were only two miles away, and were used by German observation officers in directing gun fire upon the right flank of the British force. The possession of Fontaine was vital to the success of the enlarged plan of the British Commander-in-Chief. He wanted the village both as an outwork to the Bourlon Ridge and as a distracting menace to Cambrai. So in the morning of November 23 the Highland territorials, preceded by a line of tanks, made another fierce and sustained attempt to capture Fontaine. Covered by a barrage the tanks charged the village. Thereupon, the German garrison set fire to the houses and retired. When, however, the armoured cars went right through the flaming ruins, breaking down some of the cottages, in pursuit of the retreating infantry, the Highlanders found that the flight was only a clever trick. A considerable number of the defending troops had merely hidden

WAVES OF INFANTRY

themselves when the tanks approached. When the Highlanders arrived, Fontaine became alive with Germans, who had machine-guns in cellars, behind broken walls, in the windows, on the roofs of various houses that had not been set alight, and in the shell of the church.

On the northern side of the village the tanks were attacked by special batteries and also by machine-guns. Meanwhile, the gallant Scotsmen were gradually pressed back by the reinforced German garrison to the edge of the village. As the leading Highland brigade retired in front, there was delivered against the flank of the division a tremendous surprise blow. Along the Scheldt Canal, between Fontaine and Noyells, the Germans had retained a considerable patch of woodland known as La Folie Wood. While the frontal battle was raging, the German commander sent large new forces down the western bank of the canal to re-occupy the wood. Then, early in the afternoon, an attack in force was made upon the flank of the Highland division, apparently with the design to break in towards Cantaing and turn the British line below Bourlon Wood. This design was upset by the Scotsmen, who shattered and dispersed the enemy in La Folie Wood.

Northward, denser waves of German infantry surged into Fontaine, and when the Highlanders again stormed into the village from the western side, they could not bear up against the fresh hostile forces sent against them. When the battle ended, the Highland territorial division, which had taken Fontaine easily with two companies in the night of November 21, was unable to secure another strong foothold in this critical part of the battlefield. Yet the sacrifices made by this magnificent set of fighting men were not in vain. By furiously driving at the enemy, in the morning and in the afternoon of November 23, they compelled the German commander so to deploy his last available reserves against them that he had not sufficient men to hold the centre of the six-mile stretch of the swaying front of battle. Bourlon Ridge was won in spite of the apparent lack of progress at Fontaine and Mœuvres. The British wings stretched the enemy beyond his strength, and he broke under pressure from the 40th division.

Bourlon Wood consisted of a mass of thickly-growing oak and ash, under which was a dense brushwood. The forest covered some six hundred acres, and rose about 132 feet

BATTLE OF CAMBRAI

above the village of Anneux and the outskirts of Fontaine. The German garrison had dug deep trenches along both the front and the reverse slopes, and stretched barbed-wire between the trunks of the trees and excavated machine-gun holes beneath the brushwood. In ordinary circumstances it would have been wild folly for the infantry of a single division to attempt to carry Bourlon Wood in one stride. The German gunners could put a cage of fire around the ridge. Forest fighting would have been impossible for the three British brigades if it had not been for the aid given by the improved armoured cars.

The tanks set out at half-past ten in the morning of November 23. Over the tanks, and over the Welsh, Scottish, and English infantry, spreading out from the paths made by the tank commanders, were low-flying British aeroplanes. A good many of the men in the German division garrisoning the forest fought with desperate bravery. As in other places, they let the tanks go by them and drive lanes of attack through the trees and brushwood. But when the British infantry appeared the Germans poured streams of machine-gun fire from their various hiding-places. All the leading British platoons and their supports had to conduct enveloping operations, or rush attacks upon the nests and burrows of the enemy.

But after four and a half hours of close fighting a British victory was announced by the German guns. For these guns, instead of maintaining their fire upon the approaches to the ridge, altered their elevation and bombarded all the great wooded hummock. German gunnery officers had learnt that their impregnable centre had fallen, and although they could not see where the victorious British troops were, they blindly lashed the forested height, on the chance of doing some damage to the victorious 40th division and its line of tanks. If the German air service had been equal in skill to the British, the victors might have had to pay dearly for their important success. The British pilots, however, remained the practical masters of the patch of sky around Cambrai, and, in spite of adverse weather conditions, contributed materially to the fine general achievement.

In Bourlon village, at the north-western corner of the wood, the conflict was of an extraordinary intensity. The Germans were able to pour in fresh forces from the north, and also to counter-attack continually from the west, between Sains and

THE GERMANS REPULSED

Inchy. The pressure exerted upon them more to the south and south-west, around Mœuvres and Pronville, was insufficient to exhaust their strength in the Quéant salient. Such was their abundance of troops that they were able strongly to resist in a concentrated effort in the Quéant salient, at the same time as they brought new forces into battle from the Arras-Cambrai road down to Bourlon village.

No doubt, if Sir Douglas Haig had been well provided with men, he could have held Bourlon village by opening another action on the opposite side of the Quéant salient at Cherisy and Bullecourt. Strong, however, as the British armies on the western front had been at the beginning of 1917, the succession of their burdens had been too much for their strength.

The British losses had been heavy in the fighting along the Hindenburg line, in the battle of Arras, the storming of the Vimy Ridge, and the campaign round Lens, in the actions on and beyond the Messines Ridge, and, above all, in the terrible swamp battles of Ypres. All the commander-in-chief could finally do was to attempt to turn the enemy's line through Bourlon before he was compelled to retire to Flesquières.

When night fell on November 23 the whole of Bourlon wood was in British possession, but Bourlon village remained in the hands of the Germans. There followed several days of fierce, swaying struggle over the ridge and in the flanking villages, in which English, Scottish, Welsh, and Irish battalions, with Hussars and other dismounted cavalry, did all that men could do to achieve the impossible.

The German commander launched his first counter-attack soon after losing the ridge. He threw in three thousand Guardsmen of the 9th Grenadier regiment, but they were completely repulsed. In the morning of November 24 strong German forces made another attempt to recover the high wood. When they were thrown out, in spite of the increasing fury of their barrages, another German force was launched upon the weary Britons. In the north-eastern corner of the wood the enemy made an important gain of ground, only to be stabbed out of it by the 14th Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, remnants of the 119th infantry brigade, and the dismounted 15th Hussars. After the attack on the north-eastern corner of the ridge was broken, the enemy swung another dense force on the high ground west of the wooded height, where more gallant dismounted

BATTLE OF CAMBRAI

cavalry shattered the German waves, while the infantry, with rifle fire and the covering curtain of shrapnel from their gunners, held off a thrust upon the middle part of the wood.

Then, when the aggressive strength of the German forces was partly worn down, the 40th division made a superb effort to complete the great work it had carried out the previous day. Part of the 120th brigade, including the 13th East Surreys and the 14th Highland Light Infantry, attacked the smoking rubble of Bourlon village and made themselves masters of the whole of this supreme key position. Roused by his loss to a mood of desperation, as night was falling on November 24, the enemy commander flung every battalion within reach into the furnace of Bourlon Ridge. There were many fierce and wild incidents in the twilight battle, but the personal courage of the British soldiers, the assistance of the tanks, and all the artillery that was hauled up to the new front, overcame the foe. By midnight it seemed as though the gate to a success of large strategic importance had at last been won.

The splendid 40th division, having borne the brunt of the struggle, badly needed relief. The fact that cavalry had to dismount and fight for considerable periods in the front line indicated how hard pressed and outworn the infantry were becoming. Sir Julian Byng, however, had no means of immediately strengthening his line on Bourlon Wood and in Bourlon village. The German general got more guns into position and brought up strong fresh forces of infantry. Then, in the evening of November 25, when the ground of approach was screened in mist, he attacked with overwhelming strength the 40th division and its cavalry supports.

Along the high wood the shooting of the riflemen and machine-guns on the ridge, and the brilliant directing work of observation gunnery officers, so shattered the waves of assault that the remnants which flowed into the British lines survived only as prisoners. In Bourlon village, however, the German enveloping movement was more successful. While the Englishmen and Scotsmen were, like their comrades on the right, warding off the frontal attack, their western flank was broken and some of the troops were surrounded; but the garrison of the village was able to make its escape.

The territorials of the West Riding division relieved the 40th division, and the Guards took the place of the Highland

DEEDS OF THE GUARDS

territorials in the approaches to Fontaine. With the enemy in possession of a shoulder of the ridge by Fontaine, and holding the high western ground of Bourlon village, only sixty-five feet below the summit of the ridge, the British position was a difficult one. On November 27 Sir Douglas Haig made his final attempt to carry out his original plan, and thereby disorganize the enemy's preparations. The tanks again were formed into line and directed against Fontaine-Notre-Dame and Bourlon village, followed by the British Guards. The German machine-gunners had a long field of fire between the village and the face of Bourlon Wood. They held many posts along the railway line and behind it; they fired from the sugar-beet factory on the Cambrai road, from the railway-station, and the sand-pits beyond and around the Crucifix on the Raillencourt. But the Guards stormed the sugar factory, chased the Germans among the houses and farmyards into the Cambrai road, and searched the cellars and ruins with bomb and bayonet, while the German gunners curtailed the village off on one side and the British gunners barraged it northward.

The Grenadier Guards fought through the ruins of the village against an intense machine-gun fire. On their right were the Scots Guards, working up to the eastern side, under hostile flanking fire from La Folie wood, while on the left the Coldstream Guards fought into the sugar factory and over the sand-pits, and the Irish Guards, moving towards the shoulder of Bourlon Ridge, faced a terrific plunging fire sweeping down the slopes. When the Guards reached north of Fontaine, the German storming battalions burst upon them, and all the freshly detained infantry, covering the country west of Cambrai, were rushed into the battle. At first it seemed as though the Guards would accomplish a miracle, so well did they stand on their newly-conquered line against attack after attack. But, as the day wore on, the incessant and severe pressure of more numerous forces began to tell, and the British line gradually swung back again through the village. By the evening it was bent back from the Cambrai road, but it still curved farther north of Bourlon wood than it had been at daybreak.

In the other corner of the battlefield the territorials of the West Riding once more stormed into Bourlon village. Like the Guardsmen, however, they were then counter-attacked front and flank by much superior forces, and violently pushed back

BATTLE OF CAMBRAI

to their lines on the ridge. As the result of five days' constant fighting the British troops still held a promising position on Bourlon Ridge, without having been able to gain all the ground necessary for the security of their high salient. Sir Douglas Haig then resolved to answer the German preparations by organizing another offensive movement on a larger scale. Part of the troops engaged was relieved, and some fresh forces were brought up from quieter parts of the front. In the interval of preparation, the right flank of the Cambrai salient was improved in the neighbourhood of Banteux, and the German line north-west of Bullecourt was again attacked by the battalions forming the 16th (Irish) division.

As the British preparations for another attack were going on, the registering fire against them became more menacing, and it was seen that the Germans' field of activity not only covered all the ground they had lost, but extended southwards towards Epéhy. On the other hand it was clear, from reconnaissance work, that the German commander remained anxious about his Sensée river line, which was endangered by the British conquest of the Bourlon Ridge. Everything pointed to the principal hostile effort being made between La Folie Wood and Mœuvres.

In these circumstances Sir Julian Byng arranged his forces most strongly around the new ground he had won. Part of the 56th (London) territorial division, with the 2nd division and the 47th (London) territorial division, held a front of about five miles, extending from the eastern edge of Bourlon wood to Tadpole Copse, west of Mœuvres. Below Tadpole Copse the left brigade of the 56th division formed a defensive flank across the Agache Marsh to the old British front line. Linking with the 47th division in Bourlon Wood was the 59th division, holding the line south of Fontaine, while the 6th division at Noyelles occupied the ground it had conquered on November 20. The 29th division had not moved from its bridge-heads at Marcoing and Masnières. The 12th light division and the 20th division held the line from Lateau wood northward, while the 55th Lancashire division, with the Liverpool Scottish, occupied the old British front beyond about Honnecourt. The Guards division and 2nd cavalry division were in reserve, with the 62nd West Riding territorials, and farther back a fresh South Midland division was assembling while two cavalry divisions were within two or three hours' march to the battlefield.

THE USE OF SMOKE

When the battle opened in the morning of November 30, the German commander began by a holding attack upon the British flank. With a view to preventing the British forces there from reinforcing their comrades on the principal northern front, he launched against them some five divisions, with portions of two other divisions. Between seven and eight o'clock in the morning the German gunners on the north began furiously to pound the Bourslon sector with gas-shell, and, while this bombardment was proceeding, a splutter of gun fire was opened upon the British forces around Gonnelleu and Bonavis Ridge. A series of long columns advanced through the mist without any heralding barrage, and, while the infantry of the Lancashire division was under cover, and awaiting the grand bombardment, the Germans broke into them. At points where any serious resistance was offered, the attacking troops stopped and formed a defensive line, while the forces behind them swerved away towards the spot where an opening had been found.

In the previous battles in the Cambrai sector the Germans had appeared to be weak in the air, yet around Gouzeaucourt, in the morning of November 30, there was an extraordinary number of low-flying German aeroplanes raining machine-gun fire upon the defending infantry. The Germans also employed large quantities of smoke, shell, and bombs to blind and bewilder the troops they were surrounding, and to screen their own enveloping movements. They broke over the northern end of the Bonavis Ridge and made their way through the ravine between Villers Guislain and Gonnelleu. Three British divisions—the 55th, the 12th, and the 20th—were involved. With amazing rapidity the Germans exploited their two successful thrusts, taking in flank and rear the British defences on the ridge and in the villages, capturing Gouzeaucourt in the morning and reaching the outer defences of La Vacquerie.

Isolated parties of British troops made a gallant resistance. There was a fine stand made in Lateau Wood, and another occurred south-east of La Vacquerie village. North-east of this village the 92nd Field Artillery brigade warded off four attacks, in some of which the German infantry approached within two hundred yards of the guns. When the surviving gunners were finally compelled to withdraw they removed the breech-blocks from their pieces. On the high ground east of Villers Guislain the garrison of the forward British positions held out strongly

BATTLE OF CAMBRAI

against the Germans along their front, at the time when the valley between them and the village was occupied by large hostile forces. At Limerick Post, south of the same village, some of the troops of the 1/5th Royal Lancaster regiment and the 1/10th Liverpool regiment held out all day long against repeated heavy attacks. One German division, the 34th, with some support thrust through Villers Guislain and Gonnelleu to Gouzeaucourt and beyond, to a depth of nearly three miles.

The real strength of the German forces that broke into Gouzeaucourt was tested at midday on November 30, when the British Guards came up. The Guardsmen closed upon Gouzeaucourt from the west, while the dismounted Indian cavalrymen filled the gap on the right, and began to work towards Villers Guislain from the south and south-west. The counter-attack was facilitated by the skill of a party of men from the 29th division, who, with a company of North Midland Royal Engineers, were holding on to a position in an old trench near the quarry at Gouzeaucourt, where their divisional general had been surprised in his headquarters.

A still more remarkable reinforcement of the British line was obtained from the railway line by Villers Plouich and Gauche Wood. Here, when the Germans came over the ridge, some Canadian and American railwaymen and engineers were driving engines, unloading trucks, and doing constructive work. Bursts of high explosive, gas, and shrapnel, with volleys of bullets, drove them through and beyond the village. There, however, they stopped and asked for rifles. Though untrained for the war, many of them were good shots, and there were veterans of the Spanish campaign among them. The engineers, with a British battalion of troops engaged on constructive work, went forward with the Guards, and after fighting gallantly and winning the high admiration of their comrades, they helped to picket the lines in the night. The tank commanders and crews had been engaged in previous actions, and were moving their machines from the Cambrai salient, to refit and rest. On receiving news of the German success, the officers and men of the tank brigade brought their travelling forts rapidly into Gouzeaucourt, amid the confused overcrowding of the ways of communication by Metz and other places just behind the new fighting front.

Under the pressure of the Guards, who battled into Gouzeaucourt and up the high ground eastward known as St. Quentin

BORDER BATTALIONS

Ridge, the Germans suddenly gave ground, leaving a rearguard to cover their retirement. Many British guns were recovered, together with some of the men who had been taken prisoner.

Soon after daybreak observers of the 29th division in Masnières reported that they had seen large forces of German infantry in Crèvecœur, a mile and a half away. The alert was sounded, and troops stood-to at the alarm posts. At Masnières was the 86th brigade, with the 87th brigade holding the line to the Cambrai road, and the 88th brigade in reserve. A few minutes after the alarm the 16th Middlesex battalion, linking on the right with the wing of the 20th division, reported that the 20th had been driven back. Then strong German forces in front swept in dense waves upon Masnières, advancing on both sides of the Scheldt Canal, and trying to cut off the troops on the north bank by seizing the canal crossings and the suburb of Les Rues Vertes. At the same time another fierce German assault was made upon the Marcoing positions.

Germans who attacked Les Rues Vertes were routed by a band of servants and signallers collected by Captain R. Gee, who joined them up with two companies of the Guernsey battalion, and drove out the invaders. Scarcely had the Germans been thrown out of Les Rues Vertes than a fresh force renewed the attack on both sides. The gap on the right of the defending division invited an encircling movement. Yet this movement was not easily made, for on the broken flank was a group of Britons with Stokes mortars, who continually pounded the copse, where the Germans assembled again and again for the side thrust that might have cut off not only the 29th division but also the larger British force around Bourlon Ridge. After keeping the mortar battery in action until all ammunition was used, the officer in charge threw his mortars into the canal and led a party of infantry, with his own men, in a counter-assault against a new German force in Les Rues Vertes.

At five o'clock Les Rues Vertes was again subjected to a narrower but sustained thrust, which failed, as the enveloping attacks had done, and, by the time night fell, the village was full of German dead and wounded. The Scottish Borderers sallied from Marcoing and attacked the Germans in a network of sunken lanes, while the Inniskillings held them off on the western edge of Masnières, and some of the South Wales Borderers, supporting the 86th brigade, did some magnificent close-

BATTLE OF CAMBRAI

quarter fighting. When the infantry action ceased at nightfall the hostile batteries, that had been shelling the division from three sides all day long, continued to rake the canal-side positions. In the morning of December 1 the assault was resumed, while the hostile guns knocked the last houses to pieces in a bombardment of augmented power. During the night the Germans had thrown a bridge over the Scheldt canal, between Crêvecœur and Masnières, and, under the intensified barrage, a large body of shock troops endeavoured to get across in a rush. They were allowed to crowd the bridge and form a bridgehead.

Abandoning their outpost near Crêvecœur the defending troops gathered in Masnières, while two German aeroplanes brought the hostile barrage crashing on the British line. Over the canal bridge at Les Rues Vertes the storming columns broke into the corner of the salient, and appeared to be closing in overwhelming force upon the wasted wing of the division. As the Germans swarmed over one bridge a platoon of Lancashires counter-charged. Nine separate attacks were beaten off by the 29th division at Masnières in the afternoon and evening of December 1, and other hostile assaults were broken around Marcoing. At night Bonavis Ridge remained in German hands, and the defenders of Masnières were, therefore, ordered to withdraw.

The stand made by the 29th division, after the three divisions south of them had been driven in, was the salvation of the British forces holding the line in the northern and eastern sides of the Cambrai salient. Together with the Guards and the 5th cavalry division, the heroes of Gallipoli enabled the men on and around Bourlon Ridge and along the Canal du Nord to turn a moral defeat into a practical victory.

In the German offensive of November 30 the main attack, directed upon the line from Fontaine-Notre-Dame to Tadpole Copse, was not launched until Gouzeaucourt had been taken. At nine a.m. General von Marwitz endeavoured to smash into the opposite side of the salient, and bring off the capture of all the British men and material between Gouzeaucourt and Havrincourt. There would then have been left such a gap in the original British front between Arras and Cambrai as would have opened the way to a larger enemy manoeuvre. Against the 2nd division, arrayed between Bourlon village and Mœuvres village, the German formations were flung in extraordinary fashion. Upon the 47th London territorial division, holding the

LONDON TERRITORIALS

gas-drenched forest on Bourlon Ridge, the grey waves also burst in tempestuous force. Against the right brigade of the 56th London territorial division in Tadpole Copse, and against its left brigade in the Agache Marsh, the storm also broke, but with rather less fierceness than in the north.

After a short whirlwind bombardment some German infantry guns galloped up to rising ground by Bourlon village, and began to fire point-blank into the 1st King's Royal Rifle corps of the 99th brigade of the 2nd division. One gun fired three shots; the others less. The riflemen would not allow more. Then two German battalions came out of the ruins in full marching order, and in compact lines moved forward as on manoeuvres. The survivors entered the prisoners' cage of the 2nd division. Fresh masses came forward against the 22nd and 23rd Fusiliers and 1st Berkshires, as well as against the riflemen. Seldom had well-skilled soldiers, with rifles, machine-guns, and Stokes guns, such an opportunity of proving the sustained destructive power of their weapons. After destroying the attacking forces and capturing two 5.9 in. howitzers, two field-guns, and a mortar, the victors drove into the Germans' territory and there established an advanced line of posts, giving them a wider field of fire and denying observation to the hostile artillery.

From Mœuvres westward to Tadpole Copse the enveloping German masses thrust at the 168th brigade of the 56th London territorial division. In one fierce succession of attacking waves they reached battalion headquarters of the 8th Middlesex, who were attached to the brigade. The commanding officer, with his staff, held the Germans off with hand-grenades until more troops arrived and regained the trench. Although reduced in strength by recent battles, and severely pressed by larger forces, the men of the 168th and 169th brigades beat off all attacks with dogged courage.

The other fresher division of London territorials, the 47th, had a nightmarish time among the crashing oak and ash trees of that wood of death—Bourlon Ridge. Less racking high-explosive shell was used than in other high-wood battles. Instead, the deep arc of opposing batteries maintained a vast cascade of poisonous gas projectiles. So infected was the air that the men could not remove their masks, the design of Marwitz being to force the Londoners to exhaust either their box-respirators or their powers of endurance.

BATTLE OF CAMBRAI

In the afternoon of November 30 the 1/6th London and the 1/15th Londons (Civil Service Rifles) were forced apart by masses of Germans. The two commanding officers, Lieut.-Col. W. F. Mildren, D.S.O. (1/6th), and Lieut.-Col. W. H. E. Segrave, D.S.O. (1/15th), however, gathered runners, signallers, orderlies, cooks, and battalion staff with a reserve company, and leading a counter-attack, closed the gap. All other attacks were repulsed with heavy loss to the foe.

On the entire northern area of the Cambrai salient the casualties of the 2nd German army were crushing. Long lines of infantry were raked sideways by British machine-gunners, while being shot down in front. British field-gunners brought their batteries up to the crest line and fired directly at short range upon the hostile masses.

French batteries came into action on November 30 in the Cambrai salient. General Pétain promptly placed some of his troops within reach of Sir Julian Byng. On December 1 the struggle fiercely continued on the whole front. The British Guards, effectively helped by the Tank brigade, stormed completely over St. Quentin Ridge and entered Gonnelleu. Large targets were obtained by all the tank crews here, and severe losses inflicted. The tanks also co-operated with the dismounted Indian troopers of the 5th cavalry division in the attack upon Gauche wood. The Indians and the Guards advanced with great determination, but their deadly work was considerably lightened by the assistant tanks, which did much damage.

Beyond the hilly woodland, tanks, Guardsmen, and Indian cavalymen worked down the hollow joining Twenty-two Ravine, towards the rise of ground on which stood Villers Guislain. Moving against heavy, direct artillery fire, three of the landships reached the outskirts of the lost village; but the troops that tried to follow them were held up by machine-guns, and the tanks at last withdrew. By this time General von Marwitz had changed his plan of campaign. He endeavoured to enlarge the ground that had been regained between Lateau wood and Villers Guislain, and his increasing pressure compelled the 29th division to evacuate Masnières.

There then opened to the German commander a way of attack running below Welsh Ridge to La Vacquerie. He had the Bonavis-Masnières road and the adjoining Vacquerie Valley for direct operations, and the Banteux position westward and Villers

HAIG DECIDES

Guislain Ridge southward for cross-firing bombardments and converging movements. On December 2 he opened a series of heavy attacks on Welsh Ridge and La Vacquerie village, while maintaining strong holding actions from Marcoing to Bourlon. On the following day he became more aggressive, and with large reinforcements attacked savagely on all the eastern British flank, from the vicinity of Masnières to La Vacquerie village. He won the village and compelled the British forces to withdraw from the farther bank of the Scheldt canal. Again, on December 5, he made an unsuccessful attempt to storm the Welsh Ridge.

The strength displayed by the German commander convinced the British field-marshal that he would not be able to recover Bonavis Ridge without sustained, severe fighting. On the other hand, the possession of the Bonavis Ridge was practically essential to the security of the Bourlon position. Sir Douglas Haig had therefore to decide whether he would prepare another great offensive movement, or evacuate the endangered ground and withdraw to Flesquières Ridge.

Haig had no doubt of the correct course, and he gave orders for it to be followed. On the night of December 4 the evacuation of positions was begun. The more important enemy field defences were destroyed, and those guns that could not be removed were rendered useless. In the afternoon of December 5 the German forces started to feel their way forward, and although they showed great caution, groups of them were caught in the open by the British artillery. Great skill and courage were called for from the covering troops. In the afternoon of December 6 two companies of the much-tried 1/15th London regiment (Civil Service Rifles) of the 47th division were acting as a covering force by Graincourt. Through a hostile attack farther east, their flank was turned and were cut off. The London territorials, however, broke through the enveloping German line and, after putting many of their foes out of action, arrived in good order on the new British front.

This front, which was completely established by the morning of December 7, ran from a point one and a half miles north-by-east of La Vacquerie, north of Ribecourt and Flesquières to the Nord canal, one and a half miles above Havrincourt. It was generally between two and two and a half miles in advance of the British line of November 19. The troops retained an important section of the Hindenburg system.

BATTLE OF CAMBRAI

The material results of the three weeks' fighting consisted in the gain of 12,000 yards of the former enemy front line from the neighbourhood of La Vacquerie to that of Boursies, together with nearly 11,000 yards of the main Hindenburg line and Hindenburg support line, with the villages of Ribécourt, Mesquières, and Havrincourt. A total of 145 German guns was kept or destroyed, and 11,000 German soldiers were captured during the operations.

Commenting on the operations in his despatches, Sir Douglas Haig said:

In view of the strength of the German forces on the front of my attack, and the success with which secrecy was maintained during our preparations, I had calculated that the enemy's prepared defences would be captured in the first rush. I had good hope that his resisting power behind those defences would then be so enfeebled for a period that we should be able on the same day to establish ourselves quickly and completely on the dominating Bourlon ridge from Fontaine—Notre Dame to Mœuvres, and to secure our right flank along a line including the Bonavis Ridge, Crèvecœur, and Rumilly Fontaine—Notre Dame. Even if this did not prove possible within the first twenty-four hours, a second day would be at our disposal before the enemy's reserves could begin to arrive in any formidable numbers. Meanwhile, with no wire and no prepared defences to hamper them, it was reasonable to hope that masses of cavalry would find it possible to pass through, whose task would be thoroughly to disorganize the enemy's system of command and inter-communication in the whole area between the Canal de l'Escaut, the river Sensée and the Canal du Nord, as well as to the east and north-east of Cambrai.

Sir Douglas Haig further stated that, in his opinion, prospects of his plans regarding subsequent exploitation were good enough to justify the attempt to carry them through. He went on to say:

I am of opinion that on November 20 and 21 we went very near to a success sufficiently complete to bring the realization of our full programme within our power. Although he admitted that no advantage was gained by continuing the fight after November 21, yet he still considered that, as the problem presented itself at the time, the more cautious course would have been difficult to justify. It was, he declared, not a question of the British troops remaining where they stood,

HAIG'S DESPATCH

but of abandoning tactical positions of value, gained with great gallantry, which might well have led to further success.

As regards the fighting on November 30, Sir Douglas Haig said that risks were accepted by the British at some points in order to increase their strength at others. The fresh British reserves had been thrown in on the Bourslon front, where the enemy brought up a total force of seven divisions to three and failed. The field-marshal states that the partial success of the German attack between Masnières and Venhuille might tend to show that the British troops were insufficient, either owing to want of numbers, lack of training, or exhaustion from previous fighting.

The despatch on the Cambrai operations points out that the bold and ambitious plan of the Germans was foiled on the greater part of the front by the splendid defence of the British divisions engaged, and Sir Douglas Haig declared that, although the defence broke down for a time in one area, the recovery made by the weak forces still left and those within immediate reach was worthy of the highest praise. "Numberless instances," he says, "were shown of great gallantry, promptitude, and skill, some few of which have been recounted."

Sir Douglas Haig concluded his despatch with an acknowledgment of the skill and resource displayed by General Byng throughout the operations, and his appreciation of the manner in which they were conducted by him, as well as by his staff and the subordinate commanders. In conclusion, the British commander-in-chief said:

I would point out that the sudden breaking through by our troops of an immense system of defence has had a most inspiring moral effect on the armies I command, and must have a correspondingly depressive influence upon the enemy.

CHAPTER 26

The Capture of Jerusalem

THE arrival of General Allenby in Palestine on June 27, 1917, to take over the command of the Egyptian force from General Murray, and the other changes in personnel which had occurred, were almost coincidental with similar changes in the Turkish command. The position of the British in the east and their successes, particularly in Mesopotamia, had given rise to grave fears among the Central European powers.

Both in Mesopotamia and in Palestine the task before the British commanders was straightforward. General Allenby's instructions were simply to carry on the offensive begun by General Murray and brought to a premature close by the disastrous failures of the first and second battles of Gaza. His immediate objective was to break the Turkish line from Gaza to Beersheba, and to push on to Jerusalem.

On the Turkish side, quite a different state of affairs obtained. The Russian revolution and the consequent collapse of Russia as an effective fighting force, had released the large numbers of Turkish troops, previously maintained in the Caucasus, for service in Palestine or Mesopotamia, and of more importance, the Turkish divisions of picked men, who had been serving under Germany's orders in Galicia and elsewhere.

Britain became the only enemy Turkey was fighting, and Turkey's effective strength against her was at the same time increased. Germany, anxious to relieve the pressure on her western front, encouraged Turkey to prepare a large offensive. Germany's own preparations for an offensive in France, similarly made possible by the release of the troops from the Russian front, did not permit her to offer assistance in men; but everything else in stores, munitions, and money, was lavishly provided. Her two greatest contributions however, were a general and a small body of picked soldiers which became known as the Asia corps, or to the Turks, as Pasha II. The general was Eric von Falkenhayn, who was now appointed to the command of the new Turkish army group F that was eventually known as Yildirim.

A NEW TURKISH ARMY

To co-operate with Yilderim and to provide it with a backbone of troops of superlative quality, the Asia corps was organized. To it were admitted only men of perfect physique, excellently adapted to stiffen an ill-trained army and fit to withstand the trials of service in a tropical climate. In numbers the corps was small, consisting only of three battalions of infantry, but it was so profusely provided with artillery, machine-guns, trench mortars, aircraft, wireless equipment and mechanical transport, that it became a pocket army in itself.

Turkey therefore was well prepared in means to resist the thrusts of the British either in Palestine or Mesopotamia or both, which were shortly to be expected. Her problem was, in which theatre should Yilderim be employed? The controversy which raged around this point was intensified by the quarrel between the two Turkish factions, the Young Turks who were concerned with the creation of a Turkish as opposed to an Islamic empire, and the older and non-patriotic element which put Islam first and Turkey second. The Pan-Turanian movement had received a serious setback when Bagdad was captured by the British, and as Turkish sentiment and German interests coincided in that direction, it was urged that a supreme effort should be made by Yilderim to throw back the British in Mesopotamia, recapture Bagdad and secure a resounding triumph for Turkish arms.

Enver Pasha and Talaat, the two leaders of the Young Turks movement, were ardent advocates of this course. Djemel, the commander of the 4th army in Palestine was, on the other hand, an exponent of Pan-Islamic ideas and wished to see the Moslem rather than a Turkish empire kept together. His insistence upon the necessity for reinforcements in the Palestine area, against the threat of the coming offensive, was all the more urgent in that a swift success in that area by the British might carry them northward far enough to cut the communications of the Turkish army operating in Mesopotamia. But neither Djemel nor Mustapha Kemal, the ablest of all the Turkish commanders, was willing to serve under a German.

The controversy was finally decided by Falkenhayn himself after a visit to the Palestine front. A compromise arrangement was reached whereby Yilderim was split between the two theatres of warfare, two divisions being ordered to Palestine and seven to Aleppo. The Asia corps was held in reserve at Constantinople. Djemel's command was broken up, and he was transferred north

THE CAPTURE OF JERUSALEM

of Jerusalem, Yilderim taking over the control on the southern front. The friction which this occasioned between Turkish and German commanders did no little damage, but the long delay which the squabbles over personal and political prestige had produced, had consequences far more serious. It was not until September 12 that the final decisions were made, and by that time Allenby had almost completed his preparations. His blow fell long before the Turkish reinforcements could arrive.

In spite of the energetic work which had been done by General Murray before his arrival, General Allenby was convinced after making a reconnaissance, that a successful attack on the Turkish position and an effective advance could only be made after a great deal more of intensive preparation and with a force far larger than that which he then commanded. General Murray had asked for five infantry and two cavalry divisions. General Allenby demanded seven infantry and three cavalry divisions. His requirements in artillery were proportionately large, and to keep such a force in the field, he would also require enormous stores, particularly railway and pipe material, in order that he might double the single lines which then served him. Particularly he had to construct a branch line to the east, for he had decided that the attack on the Turkish line could successfully be undertaken only at Beersheba.

Although the strain put upon the War Office by the demands of the Western front, then in the throes of the third battle of Ypres, was terrific, great efforts were made to comply with General Allenby's requests, for the Palestine theatre of war had come to assume a new importance. Troops were drafted from Salonica and elsewhere and his requirements in artillery were very largely satisfied. From the end of June to the end of October, no fighting of any importance disturbed the ominous quiet that had settled over the lines of opposing trenches stretching almost continuously from the sea to Beersheba. But behind the British line at least, feverish activity prevailed. As always, the country presented far more serious obstacles to an advance, than did the Turks, and an attack upon Beersheba presented peculiar obstacles of its own. Apart from the wells in that place itself, the surrounding country was almost devoid of water.

By August 12 the major part of the reinforcements had arrived, and the Palestine army was reorganized into three corps. The Desert Mounted corps, consisting of the Australian and

PREPARATIONS FOR ATTACK

New Zealand Mounted division, the Australian Mounted division, the Yeomanry Mounted division, and the Imperial Camel Corps brigade, was under the command of Lieutenant-General Sir H. G. Chauvel. The 20th corps, consisting of the 10th, 53rd, 60th, and 74th divisions, with four brigades of heavy artillery, was commanded by Lieutenant-General Sir P. W. Chetwode, and the 21st corps, consisting of the 52nd, 54th, and 75th divisions, with three brigades of heavy artillery, was commanded by Lieutenant-General E. S. Bulfin. The total strength of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force was thus very nearly 100,000, but the effective fighting strength was nearer 75,000. Against this force the Turks had 35,000 men in line; the British predominance was roughly two to one in infantry, eight to one in cavalry, and three to two in guns. But this enormous superiority was largely counter-balanced by the nature of the country, which lent itself easily to defence.

Sir Edmund Allenby's preparations for the attack on Beersheba were executed with the greatest secrecy, nearly everything being done at night. False reports and documents were carefully spread and mock preparations threatening Gaza were carried out openly. The Turks were already persuaded that Gaza was the main objective, and many clever ruses confirmed their opinion. The transfer of troops to the east, which despite all precautions could not be entirely concealed, was taken by them to imply a feint attack on Beersheba, and did not seriously perturb them. Little was done to improve the Beersheba defences, and no reinforcements were sent to the garrison, the commander being merely instructed that it was to be held at all costs. The town was well fortified on the west and south west, but the existence of a wide tract of desert to the east persuaded its defenders that little need be done in that direction, and they relied upon the naturally strong position made by the Tell es Sabe on that side of the town for their main defence.

General Allenby's orders were issued on October 22, and the same day the troops of the Desert Column, which with the 20th corps were to conduct the attack on Beersheba, began to move eastward towards Khelasa and Asluj, their concentration points. The general plan of attack on the Turkish line depended very largely upon the speed with which Beersheba could be taken. Its fall was as certain as anything can be certain in war, for its defenders numbered little more than 4,000. But if

THE CAPTURE OF JERUSALEM

they had time to destroy the wells of the place before they left, the subsequent operations, which would consist of rolling up the Turkish line from east to west through Esh Sheria and Atawine, would be impossible. Unless a water supply were found for the large body of troops which would operate along the line of the hills north of Beersheba, it would be impossible to attack from that direction. Rapidity of capture became therefore imperative. Meanwhile, the 21st corps was to deliver an attack upon the first-line defences of the Turks in front of Gaza, after the position had been subjected to an intense bombardment.

The positioning of the Desert corps and the 20th corps to the east of Beersheba was not, however, carried out entirely without opposition. On October 27, by the order of Falkenhayn, the Turks made a strong reconnaissance from the direction of Tel esh Sheria again Karm. An infantry regiment, supported by cavalry, suddenly attacked the outposts of the Yeomanry screening the west to east movement of the British troops. Several of the posts were cut off and some were destroyed; but a stout resistance was offered by the small and isolated bodies of British troops, and the Turks were held off long enough to enable the 53rd division to arrive before the Yeomanry were driven in. The Turks withdrew and the advance proceeded.

Although the attack on Gaza itself was launched before the attack on Beersheba, the latter is logically prior to the capture of Gaza and is more conveniently described first. By October 30 the concentration of the 20th corps and the Desert corps was complete, and by the morning of the next day they had moved to their appointed positions. On the west, facing the Gaza-Beersheba road, a thin line of Yeomanry made contact between the right wing of the 21st corps in front of Gaza and the left wing of the 21st corps that was about to attack the south and south west defences of Beersheba. The object of this attack was to divert the attention of the Turks from the Australian and New Zealand mounted troops which, after having worked round to the east, were to deliver the main and surprise attack on the comparatively undefended side of the town.

As soon as it was light the artillery opened fire, and, after the wire entanglements had been sufficiently cut, the infantry attacked the Turkish position. A thick haze of dust raised by the shells had impaired the sighting of the artillery, but was now useful, as it screened the infantry advance. By 1 p.m.

A VICTORIOUS CHARGE

the whole of the outlying works had been captured. The inner line was still strongly held, but the infantry were carefully scheduled in their movements, as the success of the attack by the mounted troops from the east depended upon the Turks being fully occupied on the west. The attacks were pushed then, slowly but systematically, and it was not until 6 p.m. that the last Turkish line was reached. It was found evacuated, for by that time the Australians had captured the town. They had begun their attack at Tell es Sabe about 10 a.m., but the position was found to be much stronger than had been expected. Very small numbers of the enemy were, however, opposing the British advance, for the great body of Turks was facing the infantry attacks in the south. No reserves were available, and in spite of its stubborn defence the small Turkish garrison was forced yard by yard from its positions. But by 4 p.m. the delay had become serious, and General Chauvel gave orders to Brigadier-General Grant to "take the town before dark."

The 4th and 12th Australian Light Horse were ordered to charge. Advancing at a trot and then at a gallop, they dashed across the open country, broke in upon the Turks, and, after a grim encounter, swept on pell-mell into Beersheba. The suddenness of the attack proved successful. The town was occupied before the disorganized Turks had time to destroy the wells.

With their rear threatened and their base in the hands of their enemy, the Turkish troops opposing the British infantry on the south and west were compelled to fall back hurriedly. By 7 p.m. the leading companies of the 20th corps had reached the town, and the first part of General Allenby's plan of attack had succeeded almost beyond expectations. Over 1,500 prisoners had been taken and the city had fallen intact. The British losses were comparatively light; under 200 casualties were suffered by the Desert Mounted corps, and under 1,150 by the 20th corps. Of the total casualties, over 1,100 were wounded, a great number being walking cases.

Although the wells of Beersheba proved less valuable than had been hoped, lucky discoveries in the neighbourhood and the energetic measures taken for improving the supply made it possible not only for the Desert Mounted and the 20th corps to be maintained at Beersheba, but also for the pursuit of the retreating Turks and the advance westward towards Gaza, to be pressed with vigour. The aspect of the country north of

THE CAPTURE OF JERUSALEM

Beersheba was in striking contrast to the rolling sand dunes on the south and south east. Rugged hills cut by narrow and precipitous valleys made excellent defensive terrain, and severely limited the employment of mounted troops.

Part of the Turkish garrison from Beersheba had retreated northward towards the Hebron road, part had fallen back westward along the line of the Gaza-Beersheba defences, and before an effective flank attack, which would roll up the Turkish position as far as the sea, could be launched against those defences, it was necessary to secure the line of advance of the attackers against any threat from the north. Several days of fierce but scrappy fighting ensued, the result of which was to drive the Turks slowly northward. They were by this time seriously alarmed not only for their left flank, but also for the Hebron road, and the pressure of the British northwards inclined them to the belief that a direct advance from Beersheba through Hebron to Jerusalem was contemplated. Already a wedge had been driven between their armies, and the cutting of communications had resulted in indescribable confusion amongst troops beaten and in retreat. Desperate efforts were made to stem the tide of the British advance ; but although they succeeded in delaying the flanking movement, they could not stop it.

By November 6 the British on the east had succeeded in attracting the major part of the Turkish reserves into the hills to the north of Beersheba ; the result being that only two regiments were left defending the Sheria positions on the Gaza road. An extremely rapid surprise attack delivered without any artillery preparation carried the 74th division right through and over the Turkish defenders, on the extreme left. The 60th division at once followed up the success and forced another section of the Turkish line. By midday the 10th division was also advancing, and since by this time the Turkish left and centre had been driven in completely, the task proved comparatively simple. The Turks were rapidly driven back, and before 4 p.m. were retiring on their next position at Hureira.

This attack in overwhelming numbers had only been made possible by the fighting of the 53rd division to the north. While its three companion divisions were simply swamping the few Turkish defenders of Esh Sheria, in a torrent of men, the 53rd supported by part of the Desert Mounted corps, had flung itself on the Tell Khuweilfe position to the north. Opposed by the

A TERRIBLE BOMBARDMENT

Turkish 19th division, one of the crack formations, its task had been difficult in the extreme. The fighting continued all day, and although at nightfall the British division had made little progress, the Turks still retaining possession of Tell Khuweilfe, and although nearly 1,000 casualties had been sustained, the 53rd had kept the Turkish troops chained in the hills.

The following day the advance was resumed, and while the Desert Mounted corps and the 60th division struck due northward at Huj, the 10th division pushed the attack against Hureira. No steps had been taken to augment the handful of men defending Hureira. They fought with amazing bravery, however, and held up the British for several hours, but their numbers were too few to check the British flanking movements, and before midday the defences were in the hands of the 10th division. Next day, November 8, a detachment moved forward encountering no opposition. On reaching Atawine it came upon the right wing of the 21st corps, which during this period had been attacking Gaza. The Turks had everywhere retired.

To complete the story of the capture of the Gaza-Beersheba line, it is necessary to record the exploits of the 21st corps which, after the departure of the Desert Mounted and the 20th corps, was left facing the Gaza defences alone. On October 27, a hurricane of shells from the British land batteries burst upon the Turkish trenches in front of Gaza; two days later the warships off the coast joined in. For four days the terrible rain continued; the land batteries alone discharged 15,000 rounds, and the ships continued until their ammunition was exhausted. On the 29th, 30th and 31st, gas shells were added to the horrors which the Turks were already enduring.

The dazed Turkish survivors of that bombardment were ill-fitted to make any great defence of their blown-in trenches. By November 3, the 54th division had stormed its way along the sand dunes on the coast to a point north of the town itself, thrust strongly against the positions on the west of the town and captured Umbrella Hill in the south west. The attack had been extremely successful, but had been costly. Nearly 2,700 casualties were suffered by the British from the beginning of the attack until the morning of November 5. In spite of the intensive artillery preparations, the Turks had clung tenaciously to their trenches, which, notwithstanding the damage done by the shells, were found to be much stronger than had been expected.

THE CAPTURE OF JERUSALEM

It will be seen that the positions on the Es Shire ridge and round Ali Muntar, which had been the objectives in the first and second battles of Gaza, had been avoided by General Allenby. The attack was pushed on the west only. But preparations to attack Outpost and Middlesex hills to the south and east of Gaza were in hand, and the 75th division was ordered forward on the evening of the 6th. News had come of the capture of Esh Sheria by the 20th corps, and General Bullen seized the moment for a renewed assault on Gaza. By 1 a.m. the troops were moving forward. But they moved against empty trenches. During the night the Turks had retired, and the city of Gaza which for so many months had stood like a rock in the way of the British advance into Palestine, had fallen.

The first part of General Allenby's offensive had proved a complete success ; the second part was still to be accomplished. Having smashed the Turkish positions at Gaza and Beersheba, and driven the remnants of the defenders reeling northwards, it remained to keep the demoralised enemy on the run, to give him no time in which to reorganize and to drive him through and beyond his next line of defences, which were known to be at the Wadi el Hesi, some miles up the coast.

It was with this purpose in view that the Desert Mounted corps and the 60th division had been despatched towards Huj after the capture of Esh Sheria. Their double object was to harry the retreat of the Turks and to cut off the columns which were withdrawing from Gaza. Acute difficulties of water supply seriously impaired the mobility of the mounted troops, but although they were unable to effect the capture of any large number of the enemy, they drove him steadily northward. In spite of the heavy defeat which they had sustained, the Turks still fought grimly. In particular, their 53rd division which had endured the ordeal of the bombardment in the trenches before Gaza, was hurried across the British line of advance.

Wearied and dazed although they were, these Turkish soldiers responded gallantly to the danger of their situation, and during November 7 hung up the advance of the mounted men for a whole day. The delay proved invaluable, for although they were turned from their positions on the morning of the 8th, they had gained time for the defenders of Gaza to get clear. The coast road was still choked with Turkish infantry and artillery, and the British cavalry was presented with scores

AN ENERGETIC PURSUIT

of opportunities for cutting up demoralised columns. But in modern warfare the operations of cavalry are limited. One machine gunner can defy a whole brigade of cavalry for hours.

In spite of these delays, the pursuit was pushed on energetically. On November 8 the Turkish position at Jemmane fell to a spirited attack by the 1st Australian Light Horse, and the Australian brigades found a welcome water supply. Some of the horses had been without drink for fifty hours and the relief was most opportune. Farther to the left, about one mile south of Huj, an affair of conspicuous gallantry marked the final success of the day. A long column of Turks was seen on the road, and the only flank guard consisted of two batteries of heavy guns supported by machine-gunners, sited on a ridge.

Here was a golden opportunity to cut up the column if only the batteries could be disposed of, and Lieutenant-Colonel Gray-Cheape, commanding the Warwickshire yeomanry, was ordered to charge the guns. Hastily rallying a group of horsemen, Gray-Cheape galloped his men to within striking distance on the east of the batteries. About 130 cavalrymen took part in the final charge, and as they raced towards the batteries they were swept by a withering fire. Less than 60 men dashed in amongst the Austrian gunners, and a fierce conflict ensued. The gunners fought heroically, but the Turkish infantry in support were seized with panic, and the remnants of the British squadron found themselves masters of the field. Most of the Austrian gunners had been killed at their posts, but 100 Turks, 12 guns, and three machine guns fell into the hands of the victors. Troops could not be assembled in time to attack the Turkish column, but the charge of the yeomanry, costly as it had been, gave Huj into the possession of the British.

Continuing the cutting-off movement the Australian and New Zealand division pushed on north east towards the coast. By nightfall they had passed Huleikat and had captured hundreds of prisoners. Everywhere the road was littered with dying mules and horses, abandoned guns and limbers and wounded or exhausted soldiers. In a drive of nearly twenty miles the Australian brigades harried the demoralised Turks. Their retreat was speedily becoming a rout, and with the capture of their Wadi el Hesi defences on November 8, by the victorious 21st corps which had marched steadily up the coast from Gaza, their chances of stemming the British onrush were infinitesimal.

THE CAPTURE OF JERUSALEM

Only the complete exhaustion of the horses, the lack of water and the failure of provisions, prevented the British cavalry from carrying the pursuit to the defences of Jaffa. But the Turkish forces had escaped the net which was flung to catch them, and even though badly beaten, were still an effective fighting force.

By the evening of November 10, the British forces had occupied Ascalon and were hard on the heels of the Turks who were fighting a stubborn rearguard action along the line of the Wadi el Afranj. The key point of the position and the objective at which the British were aiming was Junction Station, some miles to the north, where the railway from Beersheba linked up with the Jaffa-Jerusalem line. Its capture would be of great strategic importance, but even more valuable, it would have the effect of splitting the Turkish forces in two. The Turkish 8th army would be pinned on the coast and the 7th would be confined to the hills around Jerusalem. A union could only be effected well to the north of that city, and if Junction Station were captured, the main objective of the campaign, the capture of the Holy City would be almost realized.

November 11 was spent in concentrating the British troops north of El Majdal, preparatory to the attack on Junction Station, which General Allenby had decided to launch from the south west. But Falkenhayn had reorganized the 26th, 16th, and 3rd Turkish divisions and had railed them up to a position on the right of the British advance, now dangerously extended by the rapidity of the pursuit along the coast. The Australians and the Yeomanry were moving forward up the railway towards Summeil, but no other British formations were very near. Allenby continued his advance on November 12. But while the British troops pushed on up the coast, Falkenhayn's counter-stroke was driving dangerously at the thin line of mounted troops in the east; but the weariness of the Turks and the coolness of the cavalry combined to slow up the attack, and by nightfall the enemy had gained only four miles of ground.

In spite of this counter-attack, Allenby went on with his plan unperturbed. The Turks had worked hard to consolidate their position in front of Junction Station. By November 13, they had organized defences which ran in a rough semi-circle in front of the station, from Aqir in the north, through Qatra and El Mesmiye to Et Tine and Tell es Shafi. Early in the morning, the 52nd and 75th divisions began a combined advance against the south-

A TURKISH REVERSE

west of the Turkish position. So resolutely did the infantry attack that when darkness fell, the Turks had been driven from most of their defences, and advance guards of the 75th had come within sight of the station where indescribable confusion and panic prevailed.

Farther north during the same day the Yeomanry (who had been moved from the right flank to the left) attacked the Turks round Yibna and El Maghar. The object of the attack which was pushed strongly to the east, was to threaten the envelopment of the forces holding up the infantry in the south. With great dash the cavalry had driven in the Turks from their first line and had forced them steadily back. By the afternoon Yibna had been occupied, but further advance eastward was hung up by a strong ridge north of El Maghar, held by the Turks with great determination. The Bucks and the Dorset Yeomanry were ordered to clear it, and after a magnificent charge over open ground the two regiments succeeded in driving the Turks back on Aqir.

The gap created in this way threatened the whole of the Turkish 22nd corps and only the prompt and gallant action of Refet Bey, the Turkish commander in holding the breach with his staff, saved them from serious disaster. At it was, the Turks were everywhere in retreat by nightfall and by 8.30 a.m. on November 14, Junction Station with vast quantities of stores, two trains, rolling-stock and, more precious than all, unlimited supplies of water, had fallen into the hands of the British. The casualties had been heavy, but the loss to the Turks had been terrible. Their 22nd corps was utterly shattered, their loss in prisoners was nearly 1,500, and their casualties were very high. Worst of all, the capture of Junction Station, had isolated their 7th and 8th armies and given the control of the Jaffa-Jerusalem railway to the British. It was the biggest reverse the Turks had suffered since the capture of Beersheba and Gaza.

Falkenhayn's position was getting desperate, and the defence of Jerusalem was becoming increasingly difficult. With the railway now impossible, his easiest route for supplies was the road from the north through Shechem (the modern Nablus) into Jerusalem, towards which, in the south-east, the British, having captured Dhaheriyah, were also advancing by way of Hebron.

There was no pause so far in Allenby's advance. His operations had broken the Turkish army into two separated parts,

THE CAPTURE OF JERUSALEM

which retired north and east respectively. On November 15 his troops—Scots, West Countrymen, and cavalry—marched on up between the railway and the coast, occupied Ramleh and Lydda, and along the shore came within three miles of Jaffa. Lydda, otherwise Ludd, was the reputed birthplace of St. George, the patron saint of England. On that day the heaviest fighting took place at the Abu Shushch ridge, near the ancient Gazer, a few miles south-east of Ramleh, whence had run a branch railway to Jaffa which had been pulled up by the Turks. The ridge was the scene of another magnificent charge of the British Yeomanry. Galloping up a steep slope, heedless of violent machine gun fire, the Home Counties Yeomen stormed the ridge, sabring four hundred of the enemy, and capturing three hundred and sixty men and a gun. The tale of prisoners was ever mounting up. On the 16th Allenby's line was pushed forward a little, and in the evening of the same day the Australians entered Jaffa, which had been evacuated by the Turks.

Jaffa, the seaport of Jerusalem, was the ancient Joppa, from which the prophet Jonah embarked on his wonderful voyage. The town figured often both in the Old and in the New Testament, and had a great place in the story of the Crusades. Before the war it had a population of about 50,000, and was famous for its oranges. A prosperous little town, it had a small rock-girt harbour, but its strategical importance was its chief value. It gave an advanced base which could be provisioned from the sea, while the command of the Jerusalem railway provided an excellent line of communication towards the east. The retreating Turks did not try to destroy the town before the Australians entered it.

The British advance along the Philistine plain, had carried them as far north as the stream the Nahr el Auja. Here they were at a point north of Jerusalem and by striking eastward, could cut the Jerusalem-Nablus road. This was Allenby's plan, partly to avoid damage to the city, which could scarcely be avoided if fighting in its neighbourhood became intense, partly to disorganize the Turks still further. For if the Nablus road were cut while the Turks were still defending Jerusalem, all enemy forces south of that point would be captured.

After spending a few days in reorganizing his forces, which had become slightly dispersed owing to the rapidity with which they had pursued the Turks, and taking measures for the provision of



Captured Turkish train at the platform of the junction where the Beersheba and Gaza lines break off from the Damascus to Jerusalem Railway. British soldiers marching along the permanent way exchange cheering congratulations with the driver and armed guards of the rolling stock.



The illustration shows the Union Jack being saluted when first hoisted from the Town Hall of Jaffa on the occasion of the formal occupation of the town by Sir Edmund Allenby on November 17, 1917. The ancient Joppa, this seaport from early times had a good trade with Tyre and Tarshish.

WITH ALLENBY IN PALESTINE



General view of the hamlet of El Azariyeh, site of the ancient Bethany, on the south-east slope of the Mount of Olives. It was occupied by the British in December, 1917.



View of Bethlehem, David's royal city and the birthplace of Christ. It is now known as Beit Lahm, and is 5 miles south-west of Jerusalem. It was captured by British troops on December 8, 1917.

TWO SACRED SITES IN THE GREAT WAR

A BIBLICAL SCENE

supplies, General Allenby began his attack. The character of the terrain towards the east changed from undulating sandy or cultivated ground to steep foot-hills and rocky mountains, with a general absence of roads. Transport was difficult, but rains, long overdue, fell at this time, and lightened the problem of the water supply, though they made the going heavy and temporarily impossible in some localities. Great pools accumulated in the nullahs, which turned into streams and flooded the surrounding country. Marching into the hills of Judea, Yeomaury and West Country and Scottish soldiers drove the enemy backward over a boulder-strewn region by persistent attacks.

On November 18 the mounted troops, moving through the hills, occupied Beit-Ur-et-Tahia, twelve miles north-west of Jerusalem, and also held Shilta, which lay a short distance north-west of the former place. Beit-Ur-et-Tahia, the Arabic form of Beth Horon the Lower, was on the northern road, which was not much better than a mountain track, from Jaffa to Jerusalem, Beit-Ur-el-Foka, otherwise Upper Beth Horon, being two miles farther to the east. Beth Horon was the scene of Joshua's great battle with the five kings of the Amorites. The only good road was the main road from Jaffa to the Holy City, and by it the infantry advanced on November 19.

Having captured Latron and Amwas on the morning of November 19, the infantry marched along the main Jaffa-Jerusalem road to the Bab el Wad, where they entered a narrow defile which continued for about four miles to Saris. There the road had been blown up in several places by the Turks in their retreat, and the rest of the day was spent in making repairs.

On the 20th, Kuryet el Enab, farther along the road, and only about six miles from Jerusalem, was carried at the point of the bayonet by the Somersets, Wiltshires, and Gurkhas. In all this storied region a particular interest attached to Kuryet el Enab, for it was the Kirjath Jearim of the Bible, the place where the Ark rested for twenty years before it was removed to Jerusalem. It was towards Bire, on the Nablus road, that the cavalry were marching, and on November 20 they were in contact with the enemy four miles west of that village. The village stands on a hill nearly three thousand feet high, about nine miles north of the city. By the afternoon of the next day their advanced parties were within two miles of the road, and an attack was being delivered by other mounted troops on Beitunia, where

THE CAPTURE OF JERUSALEM

there had been heavy fighting on the 20th. Counter-attacked by the Turks in force, they were driven back on Beit-Ur-el-Foka, but fortunately the Turks did not press their advantage.

Meanwhile the 75th division, moving up from Kuryet el Enab, had stormed the Neby Samwil (Prophet Samuel) ridge, one of the highest points in Palestine, the site of the ancient Mizpah, and only about 5,000 yards from the Shechem road. Mizpah was the scene of the covenant of reconciliation between Jacob and Laban. The Turks bombarded the mosque which contained, according to tradition, the tomb of Samuël.

From the top of the ridge the British obtained their first glimpse of the Holy City, and their hopes ran high. Jerusalem seemed almost within an arm's grasp. But the Turks made a great effort to retain it, and more than a fortnight had to elapse before they were compelled to relinquish it.

Falkenbayn's strategy began to become clear. He had preferred to permit the British advance into the hills to continue almost unchecked, and had abandoned, one after another, admirable defensive positions. Only weak rearguards had been pitted against the advancing troops, and although they had fought well, they had been unable to stem the invasion. But the several days delay had permitted Falkenbayn to draw his battered 7th army out of the fight, to reorganize it, and to get it into a strong position defending the west of Jerusalem and the Nablus road. It was clear by the morning of November 22 that the Yeomanry on the north, and the 52nd and 75th divisions farther south had come up against the main defences and the main strength of the Turks. Over the Neby Samwil ridge was to be fought the action which would decide the fate of Jerusalem. The British had become scattered, and their lines were extended. Before further advance could be pushed, delay would be necessary in order to give time for the reserves to be brought up and effective dispositions made.

On November 22 the 75th division was very nearly driven from Neby Samwil. Fierce counter-attacks carried the Turks up to the gates of the mosque, which was practically ruined by heavy shelling. But the Ghurkas, who were holding the position, defended themselves with the greatest gallantry, and although they suffered very heavily, held on until they were reinforced. From Nahr el Auja to Jerusalem the Turks were everywhere exerting pressure. This was confirmed on November

A BRITISH CHECK

23-24, when repeated and gallant assaults by the 75th division on El Jib a little north of Neby Samwil were severely repulsed. "It was evident that a period of preparation and organization would be necessary," said Allenby in his despatch of December 16, "before an attack could be delivered in sufficient strength to drive the enemy from his positions west of the road." The British advance was definitely checked.

Allenby issued orders to consolidate the positions gained, and to wait for reinforcements. He rightly pointed out that, though his final objectives had not been achieved at the time, invaluable results had been obtained. The narrow passes into the hills of Judea had rarely been forced, and had been fatal to many invading armies. As it was, the British had won positions in this difficult country, from which another attack that was likely to be successful, could be delivered. In the first week of December Allenby's reliefs in men, guns, and supplies were well forward. Existing roads and tracks had been greatly improved, and new ones were constructed. The water supply had also been developed. In the meantime the Turks delivered several assaults, but although dangerous in the beginning, the gradual arrival of British reinforcements and the consolidation of the position, soon turned the scale, and the Turks had little ground to show for the attacks they had delivered.

By the end of the first week of December, Allenby was fully ready for the final attack on Jerusalem. His heavy artillery was shelling Beitunia, which covered the enemy's line of retreat from the city by the Shechem road. His airmen, who had been most useful throughout the campaign, were doing good service both in bombing enemy positions and forces and in carrying out observations, to the effectiveness of all of which operations a spell of favourable weather greatly contributed.

On his far right flank, Allenby was moving up. Welsh troops, supported by cavalry, advanced from their positions north of Beersheba, on December 4, and without opposition occupied Hebron, the "City of Abraham, the Friend of God," which lay nineteen miles almost due south of Jerusalem. One of the six Hebrew cities of refuge Hebron was the temporary capital and military base of King David when he was making ready to capture Jerusalem. And now another soldier of a people that was not even in existence in the days of David was about to consummate a similar enterprise. From Hebron, Allenby's

THE CAPTURE OF JERUSALEM

troops marched up the road towards Jerusalem, their aim being to reach the line of Bethlehem-Beit Jala by December 7, and that of Sur Bahir-Sulafa, close to the Holy City on the south, on the following day.

On the 7th, however, the weather broke, and rain fell with hardly any intermission for three days in the Judean hills, which were swathed in mists that rendered air observation and visual signalling impossible. The roads became impassable in some localities, and very difficult in others, thus jeopardising the forwarding of supplies. All this meant a retardation along the whole line from east to west of Allenby's attack, and he arranged to protect his right, in case of its movement south and east of Jerusalem being delayed as turned out to be the case. On the rest of his front, west of the city, his troops assembled in their assigned positions on the night of the 7th, and the first stage of the great assault was begun at dawn next morning, notwithstanding the bad weather, by the Londoners and some dismounted Yeomanry.

The Yeomanry, with their pivot on Neby Samwil, secured their objective early, though their task was extremely arduous. It was to take a system of very strong works in and about the Beit Ikra spur, in face of the concentrated fire of field guns and many machine guns, accurately operated by German and Austrian artillerymen. But the Yeomanry pushed right on through the storm of shells and bullets, took the spur, and captured the village of Beit Hannina, over two hundred prisoners falling into their hands. The Londoners, who were fighting south of the Jaffa road, assailed a series of defences, equally strong by nature and military artifice, which swept Ain Karim and Deir Yesin with its guns. One brigade made a frontal assault, while another turned the enemy's position by mounting up a spur south west of the village of Ain Karim. When they got to the enemy's first trenches they found a battalion of Turks in possession of them, and after sharp fighting, drove it out, and held the ground thus gained. Then the two brigades combined, and together stormed the main line of works, and by seven o'clock in the morning the whole position was captured.

As Allenby's right wing, which had been marching towards Jerusalem by the Hebron road, had been delayed, and was still some distance to the south of the city, it became necessary for the Londoners to throw back their right and form a defensive

IN THE HOLY CITY

flank facing east towards Jerusalem, from the western outskirts of which considerable rifle and artillery fire was being experienced. This hindered the general advance on the west, and in the afternoon Allenby decided to consolidate the line which had been gained and resume the movement next day, when the right wing would be in a position to exert its weight. By nightfall the British line ran from Neby Samwil, to the east of Beit Ikse, through Lifta, to a point about a mile and a half west of the Holy City, whence it was thrown back facing east. All of the enemy's prepared defences west and north west of Jerusalem had been taken, and Allenby's troops were within a short distance of the Shechem-Jerusalem road.

But when the advance was resumed on the following morning it was discovered that the Turks had withdrawn from Jerusalem during the night. The Londoners and the Yeomanry, after driving back rearguards, cut the Shechem road four miles north of the city, and the Welshmen, who had come up, cut the Jericho road, thus isolating Jerusalem. The Welshmen in their march had taken Bethlehem, that little town of infinitely sacred associations being left unharmed. They also occupied the Mount of Olives. Then they stretched out eastward in the direction of the Jericho road, but were held up awhile by fog and by the state of the roads, which the enemy had blown up. When they moved on again they drove the Turks down the Jericho road and joined hands with the Yeomanry from the Shechem road. At noon a parlementaire came out of Jerusalem and surrendered it to General Allenby.

The Holy City was undamaged. As King George phrased it in a message of congratulation, which he immediately despatched to the victorious commander-in-chief on hearing that Jerusalem had been taken: "By skilful dispositions you have preserved intact the Holy Places." Mr. Bonar Law, in announcing the capture to the House of Commons, said that the event had been in some degree delayed in consequence of the great care which had been exercised to avoid damage to sacred places in and round the city. The Turks, too, claimed to have respected Jerusalem, for their communiqué which admitted the loss said that, as the British had succeeded in pushing their attack as far as the outskirts, they transferred their own troops from the west and south of the city to the east of it. The fact, however, stood forth that they had been forced out of Jerusalem after

THE CAPTURE OF JERUSALEM

having been very badly mauled, and that their prestige had received a shattering blow. Precautions were taken at once against disturbances on the transfer of the city from the Turks, a British political officer and a British governor, accompanied by British, French, Italian, and Indian Mohammedan guards, being sent to safeguard all the holy sites of the three faiths.

"A purely military act with a minimum of military display," was a phrase which aptly characterised Allenby's appearance in Jerusalem as the victor. He entered the city officially at noon on December 11, and he entered it on foot, with a few of his staff, the commanders of the French and Italian detachments, and the military attachés of France, Italy, and the United States of America. At the Jaffa Gate he was received by guards representing England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Australia, New Zealand, India, France, and Italy. Near the gate, which the Arabs called "The Friend," was the breach in the walls made for the Kaiser's entry nearly twenty years before. Allenby went in by the gate itself, which tradition reserved for conquerors. No thunderous salutes acclaimed the victor. No flag was hoisted, and none was pulled down. From the steps of the Tower of David, which was standing when Christ was in Jerusalem, a proclamation was read in Arabic, Hebrew, English, French, Italian, Greek, and Russian announcing that the city was placed under martial law, but also stating that the inhabitants were to pursue their lawful occupations without fear of interference.

Thus fell Jerusalem, the most sacred city of the western world. In its long history it has been captured and recaptured no fewer than 34 times. Amongst its great conquerors have been David, Nebuchadnezzar, Alexander, Antiochus the Great, Judas Maccabeus, Pompey, Herod, Titus, Omar, Godfrey of Bouillon and Saladin. With over 3,000 years of recorded history behind it, the city has stood in the heart of the Judæan fortress, as the battle ground of nations.

The capture of the city marks the conclusion of a definite phase in the Palestine campaign. What had been achieved is best summarised by the laconic sentence in Allenby's order of the day, issued on December 15. "In forty days, many strong positions have been captured and the Force has advanced some 60 miles on a front of 30 miles." Over 12,000 of the Turks had been captured and casualties estimated at 25,000 had been

END OF THE CAMPAIGN

inflicted on them. Besides Jerusalem, Jaffa was in the hands of the British, and the Turks were still being pressed back. All this had been achieved, in spite of the terrible nature of the country and the stubborn resistance of a large Turkish force, at a cost to the conquerors of under 19,000 casualties.

But it speedily became apparent that the Turks were busily preparing a large offensive to recapture the city. To consolidate his position and to protect Jaffa and Jerusalem from the Turkish guns which were still near enough to reach them, Allenby, after completing arrangements for the governing of Jerusalem, ordered an advance along his whole front. Considerable success was met with up to December 22, the chief being the forcing of the crossing over the Nahr el Auja. The Turks had everywhere been pushed slowly back, but from Christmas Day onwards their resistance began to stiffen.

Information was by this time steadily pouring in from decoded wireless messages and other sources, of the Turkish intention to make a counter attack. Preparations were therefore quietly put in hand to meet it, and by December 27, all was ready. Early in the morning of that day the attack began with a determined advance by the best of the Turkish troops, their 19th and 53rd divisions, against the Nablus road. But the defenders were too well prepared. Fiercely as the Turks strove to hurl them back, the British clung to their positions. A few yards of ground were lost here and there, but the defence was too sound and the attackers too few, to permit a serious advance.

The result was inevitable; everywhere the Turks were beaten back, and when at last, wearied by their efforts, they paused to reorganize, Allenby flung his men upon them, on the morning of December 28. Everything had been arranged beforehand, and the greatest credit must be given to the Royal Engineers who had toiled with such success to render the means of communication suitable for rapid advance. The result was disastrous for the Turks. Exhausted by their struggles of the day before, they were in little mood to offer even a rearguard defence, and while one or two isolated bodies put up a hopeless resistance, the great majority retreated precipitately.

The end of the year saw the Turks once more retreating. As before, the British pressure was too heavy. But Allenby was not yet ready to push on far. He contented himself with driving the Turks some 12 miles north of Jerusalem.

CHAPTER 27

Activity at Sea

THROUGHOUT the spring and early summer of 1917, while army fought army on land, blockade was matched against blockade on the sea. The Allies pressed Germany with surface ships; Germany harried them with submarines. The advantage held by the Germans in this respect was due to the fact that Great Britain depended so largely on the sea for her supplies of food and raw materials. At this time her imports of food were valued at £419,000,000, and included four-fifths of the wheat consumed in the country. The importance to Britain of being able to import freely was intensified by a failure of the British wheat harvest and the British potato crop.

The Germans therefore considered it to be simply a matter of concentrated submarine effort to starve Britain into surrender. Certainly Germany was not able wholly to feed herself, but she hoped soon to be able to do so, and, owing to the imperfect blockade of her coasts, she was able to import sufficient food and raw material to enable her to carry on.

The opening of the unrestricted U-boat blockade was fixed for February 1, and was preceded by a series of minor German successes. On January 1 the troopship *Ivernia* was sunk in the Mediterranean with the loss of 153 men. On January 9 the old British battleship *Cornwallis* was sunk in the same stretch of water, with, however, the loss of but thirteen men. On January 23 two sharp actions were fought between a number of destroyers on their way to Zeebrugge and British craft in the North Sea. The first of these encounters took place off the Schouwen Bank, thirty miles north of Zeebrugge. A German torpedo struck the British destroyer *Simoon*, damaging her and killing 47 officers and men. As she remained afloat, but could not be towed back to port in the heavy sea running, she had to be sunk by the other vessels in the British detachment. Otherwise the British vessels were untouched.

In the second encounter a number of new and powerful German destroyers, whose leading boat was V 69, met a flotilla

GERMANY AND THE U.S.A.

of British light cruisers and destroyers in the darkness—and about 7 a.m., after five hours of intermittent firing, the combat ended indecisively. V 69 was able to struggle into Dutch waters at Ymuiden, and, as the morning advanced, was brought into harbour, with a man's arm blown off and frozen into her rigging and eight corpses frozen to her deck. It was reported that 80 of her crew of 116 had been killed or wounded.

About this time the Germans issued an announcement that they had proof that allied hospital ships were being misused for the transport of munitions and troops; and in spite of vehement denials by the British Government, Germany began to wage warfare upon shipping without regard to international law or common humanity.

On February 5 diplomatic relations between Germany and the United States were severed. Unless Germany withdrew from the position she had taken up, war was certain, though its declaration might be postponed till the German threat materialised in some overt act. In any case, Germany could no longer use bases on United States territory, whatever she might be able to do in Mexican harbours. With the exception of Brazil and Chile, who took up a firm attitude, much resembling that of the United States—Brazil, despite the importance to her of free traffic by sea, suggesting a combination against Germany—the other Republics of Central and South America made no decided move. In Asia, the Chinese Government broke off relations with Germany on March 14, and seized German shipping in its ports. The number of submarines which Germany had available was put by a German deserter at 1,000. The American ambassador, Mr. Gerard, who had just left Germany, gave it as between 200 and 300 large boats. In fact, the Germans possessed, in February, 1917, just 111 U-boats available for active operations; but immediately the decision was taken to wage unrestricted warfare an intensive programme was undertaken, and soon production was greatly increased.

As a result of their unrestricted submarine campaign the Germans hoped for at least 250,000 tons of shipping to be sunk every week. At first the British losses were grave enough. The earlier victims included the Belgian relief-boat *Lars Kruse*, the passenger liner *Port Adelaide*, and the *White Star* liner *Afric*, which was sunk about February 12. On February 25 the *Cunard* liner *Laconia*, of 18,099 tons, was sunk off the Irish coast, in

ACTIVITY AT SEA

total darkness and without warning. Among the other passengers were two American women who died from exposure. Three days later President Wilson asked for permission to arm American merchantmen; and at this juncture a new British Admiralty board was appointed.

On Sunday, February 25, German destroyers steamed unopposed from Zeebrugge to the British coast and attacked Thanet. There were a few casualties, but in the main the damage was negligible. There now followed a short period during which the Germans concentrated mainly on Zeppelin warfare; but on the morning of March 18 German destroyers again attacked the Kentish coast and sank the British destroyer *Paragon* east of Dover Strait. On the 26th there was a tip-and-run raid on Dunkirk. A similar raid, this time on Lowestoft, took place two days later, and the Germans claimed to have sunk the British armed trawler *Mascot*. Later in the same month one British destroyer struck a mine in the Channel and went down with all the crew except four officers and seventeen men; while another was sunk in collision with the sacrifice of one life. A few days later the destruction of a mine-sweeper "of an old type," with twenty-four of her crew, was announced.

German confidence was increasing, but a reverse was imminent. On the night of April 20, a German destroyer flotilla approaching Calais opened up a fusillade on that port, killing two women, injuring about a dozen other people, and doing considerable damage. Six of the vessels then crossed the Channel and opened fire on Dover, but little damage was done. So far unchallenged, the German flotilla were steaming away when they encountered two British destroyers, the *Swift*, under Commander A. M. Peck; and the *Broke*, under Commander E. R. G. R. Evans, famous as an Antarctic explorer.

It was 12.40 a.m. when the *Swift* sighted the Germans on her port bow, proceeding east at great speed, only six hundred yards away. The Germans opened fire. The *Swift*, which was steaming ahead of the *Broke*, replied at once, and Commander Peck determined to ram the leading German vessel, but missed her. The British vessel was not, however, caught by the second destroyer in the German line. She passed unscathed through the narrow gap between in the line and, turning, fired a torpedo which hit a German destroyer. She then made a fresh attempt to ram the leading German vessel. A second time she fired and

THE SWIFT AND THE BROKE

missed. The German boat then made off into the darkness, the British destroyer in hot pursuit.

As the Swift turned, the Broke discharged a torpedo, which hit the second German destroyer, exploding well. Then the Broke opened fire from every gun that would bear and—after waiting a minute or so to gather speed, as the German boats were stoking vehemently and a dull glare was showing from their funnels—swung round to ram the third German destroyer. The Broke struck her with a great crash full on the side, abreast the after-funnel. For a time the two boats were locked together, every man in each firing at the other at point-blank range, while the undamaged German destroyers also fired their hardest into the Broke.

Midshipman Gyles, who was stationed forward, was struck by a fragment of shrapnel in his right eye and was wounded in his right leg and arm. Stunned by the force of the blows, he was thrown down on the deck. An instant later, recovering himself, he scrambled on to the fore-castle, where of eighteen men who composed the two forward gun-crews only five were left alive. They were aided by Able-Seaman Ingleson, whose gun was out of action; and the six men and Midshipman Gyles loaded and fired both forward guns. While they were thus engaged a number of Germans boarded from the rammed destroyer. There was a hand-to-hand scuffle, in which the Germans were flung overboard or made prisoners.

Three German destroyers still remained in line when the Broke swung clear of the destroyer which she had rammed, and, turning, endeavoured to ram the last German boat in line. She missed that vessel, but struck another German destroyer on the bow with a torpedo, apparently only inflicting slight damage. As all the German flotilla had now taken to flight, she followed them towards Zeebrugge. At this juncture she was hit in the engine-room by a shell which disabled her main turbines. She drifted down towards the destroyer which she had previously rammed, fired four shots, and then discharged a torpedo which hit the German vessel amidships and sent it to the bottom.

In all the war there was no finer example of judgment on the part of the commanders, and courage and steadfastness on the part of the men, than was displayed in this action. There was none of the defensive spirit about Commanders Peck and Evans; yet they did not take extravagant risks. They attacked the

ACTIVITY AT SEA

Germans with such skill as to do their work with the minimum of loss, and, though both the Swift and Broke necessarily suffered in the engagement, important results were secured. The Germans admitted the loss of destroyers G.85 and G.42, both of which were new vessels, built in 1914 or subsequently, and displacing something over 1,000 tons. Though their speed was sufficient to enable them to escape, the German navy had received a severe lesson which warned them that the narrow waters of the Straits could not be invaded with impunity, though the British public was hoping for news that the whole Zeebrugge squadron had been destroyed.

The loss inflicted by the Swift and Broke showed what might have been expected had the British been in equal or superior force to the Germans. In that case all the six German destroyers should have been captured or sunk. In all 10 German officers and 108 men were picked up from the two vessels which were sunk, but of these 30 were reported to have died after being got on board the British ships. They were buried on April 24, when some comment was provoked by the vice-admiral commanding at Dover sending a wreath to the "brave and gallant" enemy, epithets which, after the bombardment of defenceless towns, were by some regarded as misplaced.

The Germans claimed to have sunk the leading British ship, hitting her with a torpedo under the bridge, and to have torpedoed another British destroyer with three funnels. They asserted that they only retired when "other enemy ships appeared," and professed that they were much inferior in force to the British. Special honours were bestowed on the officers and men of the two British vessels.

The Zeebrugge hornets were only scorched and not killed. On the afternoon of April 23 the German destroyers at Zeebrugge once more put to sea, but their movements were at once observed by British reconnoitring aircraft, whereupon three British naval machines, carrying bombs, were despatched to attack them. Five German destroyers were overtaken on a north-easterly course, between Blankenberghe and Zeebrugge, five miles from the coast, at 4.10. The leading British machine at once attacked, dropping 16 bombs, one of which was seen to hit a German destroyer. The other four destroyers scattered to avoid the attack. Although a number of bombs were dropped by the British airmen none of them was seen to register a hit.

RAMSGATE BOMBARDED

On the night of April 24 the German destroyers were again at sea. According to the German report, under the orders of Captain Assmann, they attacked the port and town of Dunkirk. Star shells were fired first of all to light up the place, and then some 350 shells were discharged, not, as the Germans pretended, at the batteries and forts, but into the town. After this bombardment, during which two French destroyers arrived, they attacked these two vessels and sank one with gunfire. They also claimed to have destroyed a patrol vessel, but added that they could not rescue any of the crews of either vessel, owing to the heavy fire from Dunkirk. The German flotilla admitted neither damage nor loss. According to a French report, it withdrew at great speed towards Ostend when French and British patrol vessels arrived.

Two nights later the Germans steamed towards the Kentish coast and heavily bombarded Ramsgate. Over 100 shells were fired, and, though many of the projectiles fell in the country, 21 houses were damaged and two persons were killed and two wounded. This was the third raid carried out by the Zeebrugge flotilla within a week. On the 20th it had bombarded Calais and had lost two destroyers; on the 24th it had bombarded Dunkirk and sunk a French destroyer and a patrol boat; and on the 26th it had shelled Ramsgate and got away without a scratch. The evidence given at the inquests on the victims showed that the shelling of Ramsgate continued for 10 minutes, and that the alarm was given after the attack was over. That same night 28 shells fell in Margate, severely damaging one house, but causing no injury to any human being. The jury invited the coroner to forward to the Admiralty an appeal for greater protection to be given to the district in view of the recurrence of the bombardments.

About this time a new weapon, which had for nearly two years been in the possession of the British navy, was now turned against Great Britain by the Germans. It was announced on May 3 that on the previous day the British steamer Gena had been sunk by a torpedo discharged from a German seaplane off Aldeburgh. Another seaplane concerned in this attack was brought down by gunfire from the Gena, and the crew were made prisoners. The Germans stated that a number of seaplanes attacked enemy merchant ships off the Thames and sank a large steamer of about 3,000 tons. The Gena was in fact, a vessel

ACTIVITY AT SEA

of 2,784 tons, and she was attacked by two seaplanes, one on either side. She fired at and disabled one, but the other, which had alighted on the water, discharged her torpedo and sank her.

Since the German occupation of Zeebrugge in October, 1914, when the British navy left the mole and harbour works intact, immense concrete shelters had been built and the port made a submarine and destroyer base of so formidable a character that it was constantly bombarded from the sea, notably on May 10, under Commodore Tyrwhitt. Acting in combination with British aircraft, which very early that morning bombed the port and succeeded in driving the German destroyers out to sea, a force proceeded towards Zeebrugge. Eleven German destroyers were discovered by the British light craft proceeding southward between the Dutch and British coasts in the North Sea. Chase was at once given to them, but the German boats went off at a great speed under cover of a dense smoke screen. For 80 minutes the pursuit continued, and the Germans were engaged at long range. The British did not draw off until four destroyers had come within range of the Zeebrugge batteries.

On May 12 the vice-admiral in command at Dover carried out what was officially described as a "very heavy bombardment of an important area at Zeebrugge." A number of monitors were employed, with the special maps that had been prepared by the previous air survey, and a strong force of aeroplanes accompanied the warships and observed for their artillery. The fire, according to the Germans, was directed from "a great distance," and the weather was foggy, so that it is doubtful whether any very great result was obtained. The sound could be plainly heard on the British coast from 3 to 8 a.m., and it was also noted in the Netherlands.

During the attack a large number of aerial engagements took place between British and German machines, in which five German aeroplanes, according to the British official account, were destroyed, three of which fell in the sea. It was at first supposed that the attack marked the opening of continued operations against Zeebrugge, but this proved not to be the case. The French press commented with a great deal of force on the policy pursued by the British forces, and the following extract is taken from the Paris journal *Figaro*:

Foresight would have dictated an unceasing renewal of the attacks. The enemy should have been harassed and

SHIPS VERSUS FORTS

allowed no rest. The attacks should have been persisted in until the new naval stronghold had been destroyed. But a contrary view has prevailed. Operations have only been carried out at periodic intervals. The fear of losses paralyses any energetic and continuous action. In war no success is obtained without losses. All that is necessary to know is whether the losses to be expected are worth the result achieved. Who could doubt the capital advantage that would have accrued to the Allies with Zeebrugge annihilated and made unfit to serve as a base for the German fleets? There should be no more of these periodic attacks.

These words expressed the opinion of almost the entire British public, who watched, without being able to understand, the desultory attacks on the German naval base. At the same time, naval force pure and simple has always been unable to attack fortifications with effect. It appears to be one of the few iron laws of war that for ordinary ships to contend with forts involves hopelessly disproportionate risks to the ships. There are several instances of this in naval history. For instance, monitors were tried against forts in the American Civil War, and failed.

The practical comment on the sanguine accounts of the damage inflicted at Zeebrugge which were published in England was the speedy reappearance of the German destroyers at sea a week later. They were sighted off Dunkirk by a patrol of four French destroyers early on May 20, while it was still dark, and were engaged, but they made off at full speed without loss or damage after injuring a French destroyer.

The Germans, throughout the naval war, owed very much to the work of their aircraft scouting over the North Sea. The unfortunate lack of foresight on the part of the British Admiralty had, as has been previously stated, left the British admirals in the position of blind men fencing with an antagonist who had full possession of his sight. The supremacy of the Zeppelins as scouting craft over the North Sea area had been favoured by the policy which failed to attack them resolutely so soon as they put to sea. This state of affairs was, however, beginning to alter, though very slowly, by the late spring of 1917. The Germans had already discovered that airship raids over British soil meant funeral parties for the Zeppelin crews. They were now to find that other perils awaited them in the North Sea. On May 14 a brilliant piece of work was accomplished in destroying a Zeppelin close to her lair.

ACTIVITY AT SEA

The airship in question was the L.22. She was seen from the Dutch coast majestically sailing through the air early in the morning of the 14th at a height of about 4,000 feet, north-east of the island of Terschelling, some 40 to 45 miles from the German island of Borkum. A little later she was seen north-north-west of Terschelling. After that the noise of firing was heard, and observers noted that the airship had suddenly been shrouded by heavy clouds of smoke, from which flashed flame, and over the sea came the sound of a tremendous detonation. A haze near the sea prevented the spectators from learning what became of her, but presently the cloud had gone, and the airship had disappeared also.

That same day the British Admiralty made the curt announcement: "Our naval forces destroyed Zeppelin L.22 in the North Sea this morning." This was the end of the German Zeppelin command of the air over the North Sea, and an event of historic importance. The German Fleet could no longer cruise in safety covered by the reconnaissance of its Zeppelins. That the German Admiralty, however, would make the most determined effort to recover control of the air was to be foreseen, and was a risk against which the British Admiralty was bound to guard with energy, insight, and vigilance.

Throughout these months of stress the German submarine war was carried on with unabated zest and varying result. On March 19 the Alnwick Castle was torpedoed without warning in the Atlantic. The twenty-nine survivors drifted for days without food and water before being picked up by a French steamer. The case of the Alnwick Castle was typical of many others. Attacks on hospital ships were carried out with apparent enjoyment by the German submarine crews. On March 20 the Asturias was torpedoed and sunk. She was steaming with navigation lights burning and the Red Cross sign brilliantly illuminated. Forty-three people were killed and thirty-nine injured. On March 30-31 the hospital ship Gloucester Castle was sunk in mid-Channel, as was the hospital ship Salta on April 10. In the former case there was no loss of life, but in the case of the Salta forty-seven people were drowned.

On the night of April 14, British reprisals took the form of an aeroplane bombardment of Freiburg, in Baden, an important military centre and headquarters of the 29th German artillery brigade, where were large munition works. Three British

CHANGES AT THE ADMIRALTY

machines were lost in the bombardment, which, according to the German reports, resulted in the death of seven women and four men or soldiers, and in injuries to twenty-seven souls. This seemingly had little effect on the German policy, because on April 17 the Germans sank the hospital ship *Lanfranc*, and on the same night the *Donegal* met with a similar fate. With the *Lanfranc* 34 people were drowned, including 15 Germans. In the case of the *Donegal* the losses amounted to 41.

From the point of view of the Allies the turning-point in the battle against the U-Boat menace must have been the declaration of War of the United States of America on April 6. It placed on the side of the Allies a Navy of great strength and with great traditions. Early in May a powerful contingent of American destroyers which had been detached from the American Atlantic fleet arrived in a British port, and the British Atlantic fleet undertook the patrol of the Atlantic. Large British forces were thus set free for work in the North Sea.

It must not be thought, however, that the resulting position of the British Navy was an enviable one. German submarine commanders were continually growing in skill, number and experience, and their weapons were being improved. A state of affairs in which the Germans sank fifty ships a week and nearly a million tons of British shipping a month made the British command of the sea a mockery. The British Admiralty was subjected to severe criticism. It was urged that it had played for safety for too long. A change of policy was demanded.

In the result a department similar to the Ministry of Munitions in the War Office was created. To the post of Controller a civilian, Sir Eric Geddes, was appointed with rank of a vice-admiral. Sir Henry Oliver became an additional member of the Admiralty Board with Rear-Admiral A. L. Duff, who had previously been in charge of the anti-submarine operations, under the respective titles of deputy-chief and assistant-chief of the staff. Sir John Jellicoe, the First Sea Lord, took the additional title of chief of the naval staff.

At the end of May, though the British shipping losses continued to be heavy, Mr. Lloyd George was able to tell the House of Commons on May 25: "We are making substantial progress. During the last three weeks or a month we have dealt more effective blows at the submarines than during any corresponding period of the war."

ACTIVITY AT SEA

At this stage, Britain's fate depended on her ability to increase her ship-building. Before the war, in her best year 1,900,000 tons of shipping had been launched. This had dropped to 542,000 tons by 1916, but in 1917 there was an upward move and 1,163,000 tons were launched. On the other hand, immense new demands were made by the necessity of moving the new American army to Europe. Meanwhile the Germans were completing submarines at the rate of six or seven a month. Germany boasted that she had lost only fifteen submarines in four months, but towards the end of the year Sir Eric Geddes, who was then First Lord of the Admiralty, stated in Parliament that from the beginning of the war between 40 and 50 per cent. had been sunk.

One important problem that faced the British was how to close the Dover Strait against the raiding U-boats. Using the Strait instead of having to cruise round the northern coast of Scotland saved the Germans considerable time and risk. To protect this Strait, however, entailed a great barrage and a powerful force of patrols. Sufficient destroyers not being available, Britain was forced to use a large number of drifters and other small fishing craft. It was therefore resolved to carry out a concentrated attack on the German bases. After an aerial bombardment of Zeebrugge, which was exceedingly successful, a more important naval bombardment was launched on June 5 against the docks at Ostend.

The bombardment was carried out by a considerable force, which fired a large number of rounds at long range. The ships taking part in it were out of sight of the coast, and their fire was controlled by British aircraft. The results were good; photographic reconnaissance showed that some of the German workshops had been damaged. Of the 115 shells sent over, about 20 exploded in the dockyard. A lighter and a U.C. boat were sunk, and three destroyers were damaged, while British vessels sustained no injury, probably because of the efficiency of the aircraft co-operating. The German torpedo craft in the harbour put to sea to escape the shells. They were able to get out because the weather was hazy and the British squadron was at some distance.

The Germans found the British waiting for them in another direction. During the night Commodore Tyrwhitt, who was so

THE WINDSOR CASTLE

constantly in action in the North Sea, had moved out to the Belgian coast with a powerful force of light cruisers and destroyers. His difficulty always was to get the German craft far enough from their bases to be able to reach them. They were fast and wary ; on the slightest sign of a British vessel appearing above the horizon they were apt to retire. On this occasion he sighted six vessels of the S type, destroyers of 555 tons, built shortly before the war, with a speed of $32\frac{1}{2}$ knots, and manned by about 100 officers and men. As usual, they steamed off at their fastest when his racing cruisers came into view, but he was able to get within extreme range of them and to effect several hits on two of them perhaps to damage others. The S20, last in the German line, was sunk, and seven of her crew were picked up in the water by the British. There were no British casualties, and no damage to the British vessels.

The British shipping losses were heavy all through the early summer. On May 26 the hospital ship Windsor Castle, with 600 wounded on board, was wantonly sunk by two torpedoes. Six of the crew perished, but all the wounded were saved; and all on board behaved with magnificent gallantry, the captain in particular, Commander Wilfrid, setting an heroic example.

On July 9 a terrible calamity befell the British navy in the destruction of the Dreadnought battleship Vanguard. She was lying at anchor with the fleet when she suddenly blew up. All on board her perished, a total of 804 officers and men. Her loss fell in the same class of mysteries as that of the minelayer Princess Irene, the battleship Bulwark, and the armoured cruiser Natal, all destroyed by internal explosion. She displaced 19,250 tons, and mounted ten 12 in. guns.

In the North Sea, which was now being slowly closed by minefields, the British navy had left a wide channel free of mines off the Dutch coast, out of deference to Dutch susceptibilities. German shipping, however, made such constant use of this channel that Germany rather than Holland profited by its existence. The Germans laid mines where they listed, in neutral and open waters, without saying a word and without receiving a remonstrance. The British announced to neutrals the exact location of their minefields, and for this received not gratitude, but protests. German traffic between Zeebrugge and Heligoland was systematically conducted through the safe channel, and German merchantmen took to carrying freight from Rotterdam

ACTIVITY AT SEA

and the Rhine ports to Hamburg by it, thus relieving the strain on their worn-out railways.

The British government tardily announced its determination to close this channel by a minefield which would have stretched across the North Sea to a point near the Yorkshire coast. It modified its plans when the Dutch protested with a violence they had never displayed in dealing with the brutal outrages of the German submarines on their own ships. On July 16 Commodore Tyrwhitt struck a sharp blow at the traffic. At 1 a.m. that day a number of German merchantmen left Rotterdam for Heligoland. At 4.30, when they were proceeding comfortably on their course, they sighted a considerable force of British cruisers and destroyers. The British stood in between them and the shore, and immediately hoisted signals to "stop and abandon ship," enforcing them by shots across the bows of the German vessels.

The German ships, however, disregarded the order. Two vessels made for the Dutch coast and reached it near Bergen, but in so doing were badly damaged by the British fire. Four others were cut off and captured by the British destroyers, which brought them away under their own steam, two of them with their German crews on board. Several shells from the British flotillas unfortunately reached the coast, but the attack was delivered by the British at a distance of four miles from it, and therefore outside territorial waters, which only extend three miles from the coast. Dutch war vessels arrived as the action was over and as the British were steaming off, leaving the two German ships which had stranded, one of them badly on fire. The damaged vessel was subsequently floated and after repairs was again fit for sea.

A cry of rage went up from Germany at this skilful and successful attack, and the Dutch government, under German pressure, protested strongly on the theory that the British had violated Dutch territorial waters. The fact, however, was that the action had taken place four miles from the coast, as we have seen. In any case, the use by one belligerent of those territorial waters as a corridor was a flagrant violation of the essence of neutrality, and ought certainly to have been stopped at the outset, not to have been tolerated for three years. The Germans had the less right to complain, because they themselves showed not the slightest respect for neutral waters. Twenty cases in

NON COMBATANTS KILLED

which they had made submarine attacks within the territorial waters of Spain between April and July, 1917, were mentioned by the British foreign office. And there were other cases.

Down to June 30, as was officially stated in the House of Commons, 9,748 non-combatants, of whom 3,828 were passengers—many of them women and children—had been killed by the Germans in British merchant ships. Cases in which submarines fired upon unarmed crews in boats, after the ship had been sunk, multiplied fast. Eleven were recorded by the International Conference of Merchant Seamen in 1917. In four instances the crews of neutral ships were thus treated, and no satisfaction was given by Germany. Moreover, lists of 14 Norwegian and 28 Swedish ships which had been sunk "without trace," in accordance with a telegram sent by Count Luxburg to the German government, were drawn up and published. On July 31 the steamship *Belgian Prince* was sunk and most of her crew of forty-one were murdered and the rest subjected to unspeakable humiliation.

At short intervals the British carried out reconnaissances in the Bight of Heligoland, where the mine-fields—British as well as German—were constantly increasing. On August 16 a number of British light craft scouting in these waters sighted a German destroyer and attacked her. She fled, and though she was hit repeatedly and seen to be on fire, she escaped in misty weather through the German mine-fields.

Another brush took place on September 1, when a British light force detected 13 or 14 German mine sweepers, mostly of the armed trawler type, off the coast of Jutland, and attacked them with such effect that four ran for the Danish coast and beached themselves there, two of them in flames. A few days later, possibly as a reply to this, a German submarine appeared off Scarborough in daylight on September 4, when large numbers of people were on the parade. At 6.55 p.m. she opened an erratic fire on the town with two of her guns, from a range of four miles, and continued her fire for ten minutes. Three persons were killed, and a girl was wounded, while some material damage was inflicted. The submarine escaped by submerging when British vessels hurried to the spot on hearing the firing.

On September 10, a German submarine bearing the number U 293 (which was a camouflage, as at that date Germany had certainly not completed 293 submarines) arrived off Cadiz making

ACTIVITY AT SEA

signals of distress, and claiming she was short of lubricating oil and had damaged her engines. She was towed into port by a Spanish torpedo-boat; portions of her machinery were supposed to have been removed, and her store of oil and her torpedoes were placed ashore. The commander gave his word of honour to remain in port, and repairs were executed by Spanish workmen. A month later the value of the German officer's promise was illustrated when, on October 6, this vessel suddenly made good its escape. The Spanish government directed that all the officials concerned should be tried by court-martial, but it took no effective steps to secure the return of the submarine, which resumed its attacks on allied shipping.

On November 2, British light forces sank the German armed steamer *Maria*, off Sweden, together with ten small patrol craft. The British sailors rescued sixty-four Germans from the water before retiring without loss. The day after this encounter the Germans made the first publicly recorded use of a boat steered by electricity and carrying a heavy charge of explosive. This craft was controlled by an aeroplane which reported its movements to the shore station. It had little practical effect, however, for when used against a British cruiser patrolling the Flanders coast it was detected and destroyed.

A more important affair occurred in the Bight of Heligoland on November 17. According to the German account, six large vessels of the battleship or battle-cruiser type were engaged on the British side, in addition to numerous cruisers and destroyers. The British report made no mention of these large ships, but said that the British forces, shortly before 8 a.m., sighted four light cruisers on a northerly course, accompanied by destroyers and mine sweepers. The mine sweepers dashed off north-west, but did not all escape, as one was sunk by gun fire from a British destroyer, and a lieutenant and five men of her crew were rescued. The account continued:

The enemy light cruisers and destroyers turned off towards Heligoland, and were pursued by our advanced forces through the mine-fields. A running engagement took place under a heavy smoke-screen until four enemy battleships and battle-cruisers were sighted. Our advanced forces broke off the engagement and turned back to meet their supports outside the mine-field. Owing to the presence of mine-fields it was necessary for our vessels to keep to the line taken by the

VICTIMS OF THE SUBMARINE

enemy ships, and consequently this area was too restricted for the supporting ships to manœuvre in. The enemy did not follow our vessels outside the mine-fields.

The report concluded with the statements that one enemy cruiser was seen to be on fire, a heavy explosion was observed in another, and a third cruiser dropped behind, evidently damaged, but that "the destruction of these ships was prevented by the presence of the enemy's large vessels and by the proximity of Heligoland." The British and German reports differed, as did the two accounts of the battle of Jutland, but the definite fact remained that no German warship of any importance was destroyed. The handling of the British light cruisers and destroyers was, however, daring and skilful, and they did their utmost to bring off a great stroke, such as the destruction of four German Dreadnoughts would have been, but this proved to be impossible.

Before the year closed, the German submarines claimed several more victims. On December 18, after three days of comparative inactivity on the part of the U-boats, the s.s. Riversdale was torpedoed off Prawle Point, S. Devon, and a short time afterwards the s.s. Vinovia suffered the same fate. These two casualties occurred within a period of two hours, and, although vessels immediately went out to hunt for the enemy, no trace of her was found.

On December 19 the French vessel S. André, on a voyage from Havre to Oran, was struck and had to be abandoned. On the same day the Belgian steamer Prince Charles de Belgique was attacked by a submerged submarine, eight miles west of the Lizard whilst on her way to Havre from Cardiff. The torpedo missed her by a few feet, and a British seaplane, which happened to be near at the time, sighted the submarine and endeavoured to destroy it with bombs, but without success.

Meanwhile the submarine which had sunk the S. André was located off the coast of Devon, but although it was attacked it immediately submerged and succeeded in getting away. Before the day was over two more ships were sunk. The first of these was the Warsaw, which was followed soon afterwards by the steamer Eveline, sunk near the Start. The list of casualties was added to on December 22 by the sinking, off the Lizard Point, of the steamer Mabel Baird; but once again the submarine responsible got away unharmed.

ACTIVITY AT SEA

It must not be imagined that the British navy was content to stand by without doing anything to combat this menace. Destroyers and patrol vessels were constantly on their guard. Vessels equipped with hydrophones were constantly listening for the sounds of U-boats charging their engines, but in spite of the utmost vigilance on the part of the British vessels the submarines continued their work of destruction. The patrols were faced with a very difficult task. They were hunting an invisible foe, a foe which moved and operated in the green depths of the sea, which, in order to strike was only obliged to expose the tip of its periscope. That being so, they were extremely hard to locate, and even when they were, they were able to dive and take refuge until their attackers had drawn off. Depth charges and other devices were used against them, but it was only on rare occasions that these hit their target.

In 1917 the German submarine menace reached its zenith, but the British convoy system, described in another chapter of this volume, made it possible for shipping to ply in comparative safety even in the danger zones. It was not, however, until 1918 that any real headway was made in ridding the seas of this peril.

Mention has been made of changes made at the Admiralty during the year, and there are others to be recorded. In July Sir Eric Geddes, who had for a short time occupied the new post of controller, was appointed first lord in succession to Sir Edward Carson. In August Sir Rosslyn Wemyss replaced Sir Charles Burney as second sea lord, being also made chief of the operations division. Finally, on December 26, Sir Rosslyn became first sea lord and chief of the naval staff in succession to Sir John Jellicoe, whose services were rewarded with a peerage. Sir Herbert L. Heath then became second sea lord, Rear-Admiral Lionel Halsey third sea lord, and Rear-Admiral H. H. D. Totbill fourth sea lord. The other professional members of the board of admiralty were Rear-Admiral Sydney R. Fremantle, Vice-Admiral Sir Alexander L. Duff, and Rear-Admiral G. P. W. Hope.

CHAPTER 28

Aerial War and the Great Air Raids

THE Great War revealed no more remarkable phase than that of the struggle for air supremacy which was waged between England and Germany during 1917. Early in the year it was known that the Germans intended by the spring of 1918 to maintain a total of 3,500 machines at their front. This would have required a steady output of 1,350 machines a month, or 16,200 a year. In the first six months of 1917 the Allies on the western front claimed to have brought down or destroyed 1,401 German machines and 52 German kite balloons, while the Germans claimed to have destroyed 955 allied machines and 45 kite balloons. The German Staff had the advantage of being seconded by the perfect discipline and patriotism of the German workers, whereas British airmen were killed in obsolescent machines whilst production was delayed by labour troubles.

In Great Britain, too, a new authority had to be created to decide whether the Royal Naval Air Service (R.N.A.S.), or the Royal Flying Corps (R.F.C.), should have the prior right to machines. The Air Board, established in 1916, was reorganized and placed under Lord Cowdray. It was, however, primarily a department to provide aeroplanes, and for its materials and labour it had to go to priority boards, which decided whether at any particular moment shells, or standardised steamships, or destroyers, or mines, or aircraft were the more essential. For its engines it depended on the Ministry of Munitions. Where the Admiralty, the War Office, the Ministry of Munitions, and the Air Board might be involved, progress was slower than in Germany, where both branches of the air services were practically one. General von Höppner resigned his command in the field in order to concentrate solely on aerial warfare, and by combining most of his battle squadrons for action on one critical sector was able to sweep the air with destructive effect on the French front on the Aisne or the British front around Arras.

AERIAL WAR AND THE AIR RAIDS

In the early months of the year Britain carried the air war into German territory; but despite the personal skill and courage of the British aces the experiment was a costly one. From 56 in January, British casualties among airmen rose to 119 in February and to 152 in March, while on one single day in April 117 casualties were reported. German superiority in equipment turned the scale. Naturally, the Germans took swift advantage of the slow machines of their opponents. Keeping their main force hidden in the clouds, they would send out two or three machines in order to lure half a dozen British aeroplanes to the appointed place of destruction. When this place was reached, from 20 to 30 German machines would envelop the small British squadron, cutting it off from its own lines, and, if possible, leading it over batteries of German anti-aircraft guns. After the guns had done what work they could, the formation would close for action, using from four to five machines against every British machine.

Actually April had been a very black period for the R.F.C. and the situation had been extremely grave. The German scout pilots, who showed great skill in handling their craft, were aggressive and seldom hesitated to attack the British machines even when greatly outnumbered. The fact that they were equipped with very fine aeroplanes in the Albatross D III single-seater and the Halberstadt gave them confidence, and the frequent successes which came to them in combats encouraged them to further efforts and daring. On the other hand, the scout machines of the British squadrons were at that time definitely outclassed. The little D.H.2 which had done well was obsolete; it was too slow and its armament of a single Lewis gun was inferior to the twin synchronized machine guns of the German scouts, which gave a double volume of fire.

The British pilots, with inferior machines, became easy victims and casualties were high. Between April 4 and April 8 alone the Germans accounted for 75 British aeroplanes. In addition to losses of men and machines in this way, the number of casualties was further increased by flying accidents caused by lack of experience on the part of new pilots. The training and supply of new flying men was at this time being carried on with almost frenzied haste, and many an officer who had survived his instructional period in England met his death accidentally when overseas simply because his "flying hours" were few.

THE BRISTOL FIGHTER

At this time the German ace, Baron von Richthofen, and his squadron of picked pilots were showing themselves to be the most formidable of fighting airmen. It was he who met and fought with Captain W. Leeke Robinson on April 5. The latter, who had received the Victoria Cross for destroying a Zeppelin in England, was a flight-commander in No. 48 squadron, and at the time when he met Richthofen he was leading a formation of six Bristol Fighters. The German was flying with five other machines—all Albatros single-seaters. The engagement was a short one and the result was disastrous to the British, four out of the six Bristols being shot down, Leeke Robinson's amongst them. He was uninjured and was taken prisoner, but the privations told on his health, and though he was returned to England after the armistice he died in December, 1918.

The apparent superiority of the German machines over the British in this air fight was disappointing to the R.F.C., as it was the first time the Bristol Fighter had been flown on active service over the lines. Reports beforehand had led headquarters and the sorely-tried squadrons to believe that this new type of craft would enable them to break the power of the German air force; instead it seemed to be as easy a prey as the old F.E. and other machines.

Subsequent events showed that their failure in their first engagement was due mainly to the fact that the pilots who flew them had had insufficient experience with them, and could not therefore utilise them to the best advantage. Fortunately this factor was altered as time went on, and ultimately the Bristol Fighter was found to be an aeroplane of fine qualities which did much to regain the position of superiority which the R.F.C. assumed during the months that followed.

Richthofen quickly followed his success over the new Bristol Fighters by another exploit two days later. Flying in the Arras area with four other Albatros scouts, he met a flight of six British machines of No. 60 squadron. The latter were of the French Nieuport type; though quickly manœuvrable, their rotary engines had not the power of those of the Albatros and their single Lewis gun put their pilots at a disadvantage in a fighting engagement.

Consequently, when Richthofen met them over the German lines, they were soon in difficulties and only one pilot succeeded in returning to his aerodrome; all the others were shot down.

AERIAL WAR AND THE AIR RAIDS

Canadian-British divisions were then endeavouring to develop the advantages they had won on Vinny Ridge by making a grand thrust into Lens. Had the German gunners been blinded by the destruction of their spotting aeroplanes, and had all British reconnaissance machines been fully protected by their battle-planes, General Horne might have been able to smother the enemy batteries and break a path into the tunnelled mining city.

General von Hoppner, however, by his mastery in the air, saved Lens, and enabled it to be converted into a vast underground concentration place, equal to tunnelled Arras, for opening a grand surprise offensive. After stopping the British advance between Lens and Quéant, the German air controller turned to the Aisne and Champagne front when General Nivelle tried to break through to Laon, on April 17; and there helped to diminish the effective strength of the heavy guns which the French commander-in-chief had accumulated.

The day on which Richthofen won his greatest success over Douai was also memorable as the date of the last British raid into German territory made for some months. Under Lieutenant-Colonel Charles E. H. Rathborne, wing-commander in the R.N.A.S., British naval airmen combined with a French flying force in a destructive bombardment of Freiburg. Two daylight attacks were made. Large buildings were shattered, and a feeling of terror spread along the Rhine. Wealthy Rhinelanders who were able to do so moved into Switzerland, while the business and working populations clamoured either for complete protection or for a treaty with France and Great Britain for the abolition of all air raids beyond the immediate fighting-fronts. It was an opportunity for pursuing with the utmost vigour the policy of reprisal raids which had been generally advocated since the opening of enemy attacks upon non-combatants. But no further British raid on veritable German territory took place for many months.

In the absence of machines which could equal those of the German fighting squadrons it was decided by R.F.C. headquarters that the only possible means of checking their predominance in the air was by attacking their aerodromes, and a campaign of night bombing was introduced for this purpose. This work was allotted to squadrons 10, 27, 55 and 100, and during April a number of raids were carried out. Douai, where Richthofen's squadron was stationed, was subjected to much

THE ZEPPELINS ACTIVE

bombing and hangars containing aircraft were demolished; other enemy aerodromes at Mouveaux, Provin and Wervicq were also attacked. But while these raids undoubtedly disorganized the preparations of the German squadrons and harassed the personnel for a time, the results were not decisive. Moreover, the British bombing planes did not carry out their work without great difficulty, and a considerable number of machines were shot down.

In May the tide began to turn, however. The men of the R.F.C., who had been fighting under tremendous strain, with daily losses at the hands of their superior equipped and numerous opponents, were gradually regaining the power that they had lost; the new scout machines of the S.E.5 type, which had been so badly needed, were at last despatched in quantities, and with their arrival in France the British pilots were able to meet the Germans on equal terms.

Although by the end of 1916 the Germans had suffered severe losses to their Zeppelin fleet while engaged on raids over England, they continued to use their lighter-than-air craft in their raid campaign in the first half of the New Year of 1917. These raids were largely abortive. The first visit, which took place on February 16, was made by the L.Z.107 when she passed over Deal at about 2 a.m. and turned seawards again over Ramsgate. For some reason no bombs were dropped, and, as she arrived without warning, the defences had no opportunity of opening fire on her. In the next raid, which came a month later, the Germans used five airships—the L.35, L.39, L.40, L.41, and L.42—but a change in the weather conditions greatly reduced their effectiveness; strong winds arose and clouds made visibility so bad that they never reached London. They cruised about over Kent and Sussex where 79 bombs were dropped, but these caused an infinitesimal amount of damage. There followed on May 23 another attempt to raid England. Six Zeppelins were employed but again their efforts met with little result. Many British aeroplanes went up to intercept them but owing to clouds and bad visibility they were not successful in engaging the raiding craft.

By this time the German Command had realized that new methods would have to be employed if their aerial bombardments of Britain were to be worth while; and in the later raids the Germans launched a new type of aeroplane.

AERIAL WAR AND THE AIR RAIDS

the Gotha, which derived its name from the place where it was built. A machine of this type was shot down by Captain Guynemer in February, and fell in the French lines. It was a giant biplane, though smaller than the monster British Handley-Page. The span was 77 feet and the length 40 feet; the height was 12 feet. By way of comparison, a standard British aeroplane before the war measured 36 feet in span and 29 feet in length, with a single engine of 80 horse-power. The Gotha had two engines, each of the Mercédès type, with six cylinders developing 260 horse-power, of the type used in super-Zeppelins. They were placed on either side of the body and drove "pusher" propellers (behind and not in front of the aeroplane). There were two pairs of wheels, placed abreast of one another, one under each engine.

The Gotha normally seated three men—an observer or gunner in front in the centre line, with a clear field of view or fire; behind, or abaft, him was the pilot, seated somewhat to the left, leaving a passage from the front to the rear of the body; and behind him was yet another gunner. Three machine-guns were commonly mounted. One in front was placed on a turntable, and could fire forward, above, below, and on either side of the machine. A second, at the very rear, could fire on either side, and almost vertically upward and downward. A third, mounted close to the floor of the body, near the stern, could fire downwards or obliquely, and directly astern through a tunnel which was one of the new features of the machine.

In the body of the Gotha machine there was accommodation for fourteen bombs which, if of 60 lb. weight, would mean a load of 840 lb. The speed was probably about 80 miles an hour with full load at a great height, and 90 or 100 miles an hour without a load of bombs. There was no sign of armour in the machine captured, but it is possible that some of the fighting machines were fitted with it. Nor was there anything special except fine workmanship about the engines, though the ease with which they maintained a high speed at great altitudes was surprising. The machines commonly flew at 12,000 to 15,000 feet, where only the most powerful anti-aircraft guns could reach them.

These large, fast, heavily-armed machines were drilled to act together. They moved in regular formation in all their raids, manœuvring as would a squadron of battleships or a flotilla of destroyers. The arrangement was generally, but not always,

FOLKESTONE BOMBED

triangular, with the leader at the apex of the triangle, high up, and the machines at the base flying at a greater altitude than those in front. In this order the German airmen could support one another, best beat off attacks, bring the largest volume of fire to bear, and crush isolated antagonists.

The effectiveness of the Gotha was demonstrated in the terrible raid on Folkestone on Friday, May 25. The blow was struck with staggering surprise at about six o'clock in the evening. Suddenly there was the sound of aeroplanes, apparently coming from London. No warning had been given locally and the people thought the planes were British. There were 16 of them. One, flying very high up, was followed by five others in line abreast; behind were four or five machines in line, and a small group brought up the rear. Approaching Folkestone, the first group swung north, the second to the south and the third kept straight on.

The streets were crowded and everybody was admiring the neat manoeuvring of the aircraft. Suddenly the raiders dropped their bombs and, with a roar of violent explosion, clouds of smoke and sheets of flame rose, while buildings collapsed and the inhabitants ran screaming towards shelter. The invaders had crossed the coast in Essex, at a point about 100 miles from Zeebrugge, at least 45 minutes before they reached Folkestone, and then headed for Kent, dropping a few bombs at various places as they passed. The attack on Folkestone lasted from eight to ten minutes.

At Shorncliffe, where a large number of Canadian soldiers were in camp, they dropped a number of projectiles resulting in considerable casualties and doing much damage. Then the Germans passed out to sea under the fire of the British anti-aircraft artillery, and disappeared. The casualties officially reported were 95 killed and 192 injured, of whom 70 were women and 42 were children. In all 43 bombs were dropped. They were of four kinds—shrapnel, arranged to burst just overhead; 60 lb. shells of a type similar to the smaller bombs dropped by Zeppelins, with delay-action fuses, designed to penetrate buildings and explode after reaching the ground; incendiary bombs; and another type with highly sensitive fuse, designed to explode on merely touching the roof.

On June 5, 18 German aeroplanes left the Belgian coast and flew towards south Essex. They were attacked by four

AERIAL WAR AND THE AIR RAIDS

British machines, which were, however, too weak to stem the attack. Eleven bombs were dropped in south Essex, but the main attack was levelled against the British naval base at Sheerness, on which, after a sharp encounter with a contingent of British machines, about forty bombs were dropped. The total casualties in this raid amounted to 13 killed and 34 injured.

On this occasion the anti-aircraft batteries succeeded in hitting one of the Gothas and the machine came down out of control and fell in the river. Two of the crew were picked up, but one died later from his injuries.

On the morning of June 13, about 16 German machines were sighted off the North Foreland. They dropped a few bombs in Thanet, and then steered up the Thames, passing the Nore at 11 a.m. About half-way to London the raiders divided into two or three parties. The day was a brilliant one, with a strong sun, but there was much light cloud, and the raiders screened themselves behind it.

At 13,000 feet the raiders came in perfect formation, and having dropped a few bombs in the East End, concentrated their attack on the City. Seventy-two bombs fell in an area of about a mile radius, doing an enormous amount of damage. Liverpool Street Station was struck as was a County Council school, and the total of killed and wounded was 594—the highest for one individual aerial bombardment experienced during the whole of the War.

Three days later, four naval Zeppelins attempted an attack, and while two of them turned back without actually crossing the coastline another, the L.42, dropped many bombs on Ramsgate destroying an ammunition store, which was blown up, and setting fire to a number of buildings. Three people were killed and 16 injured. The other airship—the L.48—had come in at a point near Orfordness and, after taking a course over Wickham Market and Woodbridge, dropped bombs near Martlesham. This was at about 2 a.m. and in addition to much firing from anti-aircraft guns the raiding craft was being sought by a number of aeroplanes. Eventually Second-Lieutenant L. P. Watkins who was up at the time located the airship, aided by search-lights, and immediately attacked it, firing several rounds into the stern. Suddenly flames appeared, and from a height of 13,000 feet the L.48 fell a burning mass into a field at Holly Tree farm, Theberton. Miraculously, three of the crew survived.



DRAMATIC SURRENDER OF JERUSALEM. General Allenby entered Jerusalem on December 11 1917 (see Frontispiece), an event that resounded throughout the Christian and Mahomedan worlds. The town had surrendered two days earlier to a small British advanced force in command of a sergeant. the mayor (seen with walking stick) coming out under the white flag.



Canadian War Records

"Time's up! Over you go!" A striking photograph of a Canadian battalion going "over the top" to new triumphs. During 1917 Canadian troops captured Vimy Ridge, Hill 70, and Passchendaele Ridge.



British Official Photograph

"We carried out a raid this morning." A well-known phrase from the official communiques is vividly pictured here. An officer is leading his men to the attack under heavy shell fire.

TWO PHASES OF WAR'S STARK REALITY



Topical

Women served the cause in civilian life in many useful ways. This one drove a commercial van.



Imperial War Museum

Another activity was as uniformed fire-fighters. Thus many men were released for service at the front.

WAYS IN WHICH WOMEN SERVED AT HOME



BRITAIN'S UNRIVALLED OUTPUT OF SHELLS When the British troops were forced in the early days of the war to withstand the brunt of the German attacks, they suffered unnecessarily from lack of shells. Not until Lloyd George was appointed to the new Ministry of Munitions in 1915 was adequate organization begun; yet by January, 1917, British factories were supplying shells to the Allies' armies in addition to her own.

A RAID ON LONDON

The ease with which the Germans reached London, the ineffective character of the measures taken to protect the city, the absence of warning, and the failure to intercept the raiders on their retreat were the subject of the severest criticism in Parliament. In reply to the plea that British air forces were constantly bombing German shell-dumps and aerodromes, it was pointed out that this bombing was done in Belgium and Northern France: that the German aircraft factories and munition works were left untouched; and that the people of Germany were permitted—so far as the British air forces were concerned—to enjoy entire freedom from menace.

There were three more raids in July, one on the 7th, the second raid on London within a month, resulting in a heavy casualty list, 57 people being killed and 193 injured. No fewer than 24 machines were employed in this attack, and following the tactics which the Germans had used before, two machines broke from the formation and proceeded to bomb Margate while the remainder went on towards London which was approached from the north-west. On this occasion 95 aeroplanes from various R.F.C. and R.N.A.S. home defence squadrons went up to drive off the Gothas, but lack of organization and co-operation with the ground forces prevented the pilots from effectively engaging the raiders. Indeed, while the British airmen suffered not a little from the anti-aircraft fire, the Germans appeared to remain unharmed. It transpired that during the raid two R.F.C. pilots had been killed and two wounded, while one Gotha, suffering from engine trouble, was shot down by Lieutenant Grace, of Number 50 Home Defence squadron.

The apparent immunity of the German machines during these attacks compelled the authorities at home to take further measures in combating the menace, and therefore the strength of the Home Defence squadrons was increased by bringing number 46 fighter squadron from France and establishing it at Sutton's Farm. In addition to this, three new squadrons were formed. In spite of these additions, however, the difficulty of preventing the raids and of punishing the raiders still remained. On July 22, Harwich was attacked by 16 Gothas; and, although no fewer than 121 machines were in the air ready to engage them, no pilot or observer saw the German machines. At the same time a number of the British aeroplanes were damaged by anti-aircraft fire. The raid which took place at about eight o'clock

AERIAL WAR AND THE AIR RAIDS

in the morning resulted in a casualty list of 13 killed and 26 injured. In all, 55 bombs were dropped.

While the efforts of the Home Defence squadrons were of no avail in this raid, No. 48 squadron in Belgium were more fortunate in attacking the Gothas on their return. When five of them were sighted off Ostend, Captain R. Baker with his observer Lieutenant G. R. Spencer dived on them from 16,000 feet and succeeded in sending one Gotha down out of control, when it fell into the sea. About this time, Brigadier-General Brancker had been appointed Deputy Director-General of Military Aeronautics, Colonel Charlton had been made Director of Air Organization, and the King honoured the Royal Flying Corps by becoming its Colonel-in-Chief. If the Briton at home was having a bad time, British airmen were slowly but surely approaching supremacy in the western front. British losses were 61 fewer in May than in April, French losses were 16 more, and German losses were 73 more. Of enemy machines brought down, 243 were destroyed by the British and 199 by the French.

In the preparations for the action on the Messines-Wytschaete Ridge on June 7, Sir Hugh Trenchard made a splendid effort. By June 3 the German aerial losses were double those of the British. Then, on June 4, 18 enemy machines were destroyed against the reported loss of five British aeroplanes. On June 5, 16 hostile aeroplanes were brought down, while only seven British aeroplanes were missing. June 6 was the day of the grand contest. General von Hoppner massed all his available chaser squadrons upon the 2nd British army under Sir Herbert Plumer. He employed five battle wings, some of more than 30 machines. As the entire German organization of chaser squadrons then numbered 480 machines—some being used to protect German territory, while others operated along the French front and quiet British and Belgian sectors—the large formations that tried to hold dominion of the air between Lille and Ypres were the utmost measure of Germany's fighting aerial strength.

At the end of the day six British machines were missing, but the German battle wings were dispersed with the loss of at least 18 machines. Then, on June 7, when the ridge rocked with artificial earthquakes and smoked and smouldered under rolling hurricanes of shell, the German battle wing made a last desperate attempt to blind Sir Herbert Plumer's forces. Twenty

AERIAL ACTIVITY IN JUNE

enemy machines were destroyed and 14 British machines were missing; but the British loss was light in comparison with the results obtained.

The sky was cleared of flying Germans, so that infantry and artillery were excellently served by British pilots and observers. The hostile infantry was swept by aerial machine-gun fire unparalleled in warfare, and the German rear organization, to a depth of many miles, was seriously damaged. Aerodromes were blown up, trains were wrecked, ammunition stores were exploded, and reinforcements pursued and scattered. There remained some gallant German pilots who succeeded in worrying some of the Australian gunners in the later action below the eastern slopes of the Messines Ridge; but, in a general way, the battle in the air at the end of the first week in June ended in a sweeping British victory for the new service.

In the third week in June there was a remarkable reduction in British aerial losses. On some days no machines were missing, on others only one or two; while the number of German aeroplanes crashed or sent down out of control often amounted to ten or fifteen. Through the rest of the month the effects of the great British victory told on all operations along the western front. The destruction of the German battle wings compelled the German air chief to weaken his chaser squadrons guarding German territory; and, profiting by this situation, French airmen extended their raids as far as Essen in the first week of July and obtained predominance on the Aisne front and around Verdun.

This was a period of gigantic effort in all aerial work. In Great Britain the methods of the new Air Board began to tell. A speedier system of training was adopted. Considerable supplies of new British machines of a superior type arrived on the western front in time to counter another great and sustained offensive movement by General von Höppner. The United States Congress voted £128,000,000 for aviation purposes. There was a considerable amount of delay in the execution of the American programme, yet the tremendous scale upon which the United States planned its preparations served to stimulate the other warring nations in organizing aerial warfare; and when the 1st French army was ranged alongside the 5th British army, with the best French pilots operating with the enlarging forces of the British Empire, another stage was reached in the employment of aerial power.

AERIAL WAR AND THE AIR RAIDS

During August, Sir Hugh Trenchard developed another form of air offensive. As aerial infantry the British airmen had attacked trenches in the Somme with great effect. Now, as cavalry, they swooped into the enemy's country, bombing marching German columns, camps, and aerodromes. By day, British raids were far more numerous than those of Germany, and though the Germans tried to emulate the British tactics by night, the not infrequent night raids organized by Sir Hugh Trenchard were more effective. In September, 274 machines were destroyed by the British forces; 139 were crashed, 122 were sent down out of control, and 13 were shot down from the ground.

When the struggle for Passchendaele Ridge opened on July 31, British superiority was most marked. Almost immediately after Passchendaele was won, there was an apparent change in the conditions. While German airmen seemed to increase in number and aggressiveness, British pilots appeared once more to be hard pressed and reduced in strength. This was not actually so. Sir Hugh Trenchard had shifted the point of the British aerial offensive in preparation for Haig's attack on Cambrai.

In the operations that began on November 21, a fine new air force made it first fighting appearance. Australia had been building up an aerial fleet, and its first squadrons had already done splendid work in Mesopotamia and Palestine. Canada had given many excellent men to the Royal Flying Corps, and won—in the person of Major W. Avery Bishop—the championship of the air. As in naval matters, so in aerial policy, the Dominion contributed in an immediate way to the main fighting strength of the Empire by allowing its men and material to enter the British battle organization. South Africa and New Zealand also sent many fine pilots directly into the British flying force. Australia, however, was moved, largely by geographical considerations, to organize independent forces on sea and in the air, and her distinct flying corps, represented in the Cambrai battle by a purely Australian squadron commanded by one of the earliest Australian airmen, made a glorious start by winning in one day's fighting an extraordinary number of decorations.

By the end of November, the Germans had planned a new form of warfare to escape from the disadvantages imposed upon them. They made their concentrations at night, and kept their main striking force at some distance from their lines. As soon as the mist cleared, British pilots met the hostile battle wings

ATTACKS IN THE DARKNESS

and contact forces, and in a long struggle reasserted their superior power, so that at the end of the year (by which time the Air Board was merged in an Air Ministry and the military and naval wings were amalgamated into a single Royal Air Force) the British force was in a much better position than it had been at the close of the Somme campaign.

The British flyers were now being equipped with excellent aeroplanes, and the systematic attack upon German territory which had begun in the autumn was carried on well into 1918. Between October, 1917, and March, 1918, there were 38 British raids into Germany, with a loss of only 10 machines. The great dye works at Baden were wrecked, and such towns at Mannheim, Stuttgart, Freiburg, Mayence, Cologne and Düsseldorf suffered severely.

Reverting to the German offensive in Britain we find that after August 22, the practice of daylight raids was abandoned and the attacks were made once more under cover of darkness. Previous to this date there had been one other raid, on August 12, when nine Gothas were used in bombing Southend, resulting in 32 dead and 46 injured. At the same time one machine attacked Margate, wounding a woman and wrecking a building. Of the nine machines participating in this raid, one was shot down. Flying a Sopwith "Pup" single-seater, Flight Sub-Lieutenant H. S. Kerby attacked this machine when he saw it break away from the formation and drove it down to the sea. The Gotha sank and its occupants were drowned.

The raid on August 22 was carried out over Kent by 10 machines of the Gotha type. News was received of their approach some time beforehand, and when they arrived they were met by 16 British machines. In addition, the anti-aircraft guns were particularly active, and in the engagement which ensued two German machines fell from gunfire, while Flight Sub-Lieutenant J. Drake vanquished another at a high altitude over Dover.

The growing menace of the aeroplane raids by night and day on London had become so acute that the authorities had ordered a complete reconstruction of the system of defences, and for this purpose a combined command, known as the London Air Defence Area, had been handed over to Major-General E. B. Ashmore. Previously this officer had been in command of the artillery of the 29th division in Flanders. All the elements of defence both

AERIAL WAR AND THE AIR RAIDS

on the ground and in the air were to be controlled by General Ashmore, and he quickly set about the problem of London's defence.

In former attacks it had been clear that lack of co-operation between defending aeroplanes and the anti-aircraft guns had resulted in much confusion. So a fixed line was defined which divided the two areas of activity—that where the aeroplanes were to patrol and engage the raiders and that where the anti-aircraft guns should fire. The principle underlying General Ashmore's scheme was that a barrier line of guns twenty miles out and to the east of London should break up the raiding formations first; then before it could re-form, the British pilots patrolling outside the zone of fire would attack the scattered hostile machines. It was largely owing to this arrangement that the raids on August 12 and 22 were confined only to the coast.

For some time night raids by aeroplanes had been anticipated, and with the frustration of the German attempts on August 12 and 22 to reach London in the daylight, the probability of attacks under cover of darkness became even more likely. This belief was confirmed when two German machines came over Dover on the night of September 2 at about 11 o'clock and dropped 14 bombs. Their raid was a brief one, but their missiles killed an officer and injured six other people, while several houses were badly damaged. This raid was followed by another on the following night, when a formation of Gothas, estimated at ten in number, came over the North Foreland and flew up the Medway. Their approach was swift, and before the necessary warnings and "take-cover" precautions could be made, two 100 lb. bombs crashed on to the drill hall of the naval barracks at Chatham, where hundreds of naval ratings were housed. One hundred and thirty of these men were killed and 88 badly wounded. On the same night Sheerness, Margate, and St. Peters were bombed, resulting in six more casualties.

Meanwhile, 16 British machines were in the air seeking the Gothas, but they met with no success. The ineffectiveness of the defence organizations on occasions of this and previous aerial attacks renewed much public apprehension and ill-feeling towards those in authority, and the people ignorant of the schemes afoot for combating the menace, still imagined that nothing was being done.

IMPROVED DEFENCES

Actually, the night of September 3 marked an important step forward in the development of aerial defence methods. Before this date it had been held that night flying was only possible with large, slow machines, and that the single-seater fighter, because of its sensitive controls and high speed, was totally unsuitable for the difficult work of flying in darkness. The prevalence of this view was one of the reasons why the German machines raided with such immunity; the slow two-seater aeroplanes of the home defence squadrons could not climb sufficiently fast to intercept the Gothas, nor were they nimble enough in combat.

On September 3, this fallacy was exposed when Major M. Green, Captain C. J. Q. Brand and Lieutenant C. C. Banks went up in Sopwith Camel single-seater machines and flew for 40 minutes, afterwards landing without difficulty. Major-General Ashmore, in his book "Air Defence," describes this experiment on the part of Major Green and his companions as "the most important event in the history of air defence." It showed that the use of the fast single-seater was practicable at night, and therefore, with their ability to climb and manœuvre very quickly, their pilots could be expected to reach and engage the German machines as they made their approach. It seemed that with proper organization and co-operation with the defence arrangements on the ground, the scout machines would prove to be the solution in overcoming the German offensive against England.

On September 4 the raiders came in full force—estimated at 26 machines. Of these, 10 penetrated the anti-aircraft barrage and reached London, where they dropped a large number of bombs. Four were aimed at Charing Cross station, but missing it, fell close by. One 112 lb. projectile struck the pavement near Cleopatra's needle on the Embankment and damaged the base of the obelisk. The same bomb wrecked a tramcar and killed some of the passengers. A second bomb dropped outside the entrance of the Charing Cross hospital, a third in Victoria Embankment Gardens, and the fourth on the Little Theatre. While London was being thus bombarded, Dover and Margate were being attacked likewise by the Gothas which had been beaten off by the anti-aircraft fire. Comparatively speaking the loss of life due to this raid was small, with 19 deaths in all.

The weather during the course of the weeks that followed was well suited for the Germans in their continuance of these night attacks, and on September 24, when the harvest moon was at

AERIAL WAR AND THE AIR RAIDS

its first quarter, they utilised both their Gothas and their Zeppelins. The former came in seven separate formations and the number of machines was about 20. As usual the Gothas came in over Kent and Essex. The Zeppelins, 10 in number, approached Flamboro' Head, but only five crossed the coastline.

One went as far north as Rotherham, apparently to attack the collieries and ironworks; but low clouds and the tremendous height at which she was flying—estimated at about 16,000 feet—made the attempt abortive. Another of the fleet attacked Hull, and the remainder cruised about seeking targets. Poor visibility thwarted their efforts, and the damage done, wherever they dropped bombs, was insignificant. While these five airships were groping round over a wide area, aeroplanes from various squadrons were patrolling to meet them. One officer, Lieutenant W. W. Cook, of No. 76 squadron, was in the air for nearly five hours, endeavouring to locate the raiders. After spying one on two occasions and losing it again in the darkness, he ultimately observed it once more, making for the North Sea. Pursuing it for something like 60 miles, he once more lost sight of it and was just able to reach land before his petrol ran short.

In the meantime the Gothas were making for London, but of the nine which passed the coastal barrage only three actually gained the Metropolis. About 30 bombs were dropped by this trio, the worst damage being done by a 112-pr. in Southampton Row. Here, outside the Bedford Hotel, 14 people lost their lives and 50 others were injured. Damage was done also at Deptford and Poplar, and a bomb fell in the Thames near the Houses of Parliament. Most of the Gothas, which were kept off by the barrage at the coast, retreated, dropping bombs in the sea.

On the next night conditions were again favourable for the Germans' campaign, and 10 machines crossed the Channel. But again only three got within the precincts of London; nine people killed and 23 injured was the result, the quarters which suffered most being Bermondsey and Camberwell. After two nights, when the weather prevented a continuance of the raids, 20 Gothas made an attempt once again; apparently most of them got off their course owing to bad visibility, and in consequence Londoners had another respite, as no hostile machine passed the outer anti-aircraft barrier. On the following night, four Gothas reached the capital and did considerable damage to Waterloo

NOTES DURING A RAID

Station and to buildings at Notting Hill. Fourteen people were killed and 87 injured. One raiding machine fell in flames off Dover after being struck by anti-aircraft shells. Home defence pilots reported that the German machines were flying at about 14,000 feet on this occasion. In the next raid, on the following night, eight machines got as far as London, but as they dropped very few bombs the casualties were light, though three bombs did a good deal of damage to the railway in the busy area of West Ham.

The last attack of this series of raids, in which the Germans had shown a great persistence, was carried out on October 1, when 18 Gothas were used. It was the same story again; a few reached London and dropped bombs, buildings were damaged and people killed and wounded, whilst those raiders which were diverted from London bombed without apparent discrimination sundry areas in Kent. Some of the machines were so far off their course that they missed London altogether and passed through as far as Buckinghamshire.

Thereafter there was a lull in the aerial bombardment of London and its environs until October 31, when 24 bombers came in from the sea and passed over Essex and Kent. They were immediately assailed with a fierce barrage which turned many of them away. The few that succeeded in getting through dropped bombs on the docks and the riverside, inflicting death on 10 people and injuring 22.

One of the most notable of the October raids was the last big-scale attack carried out by Zeppelins, thirteen in number. This raid did considerable damage, but one of the airships was forced down near Bourbon-les-Bains and captured. This was the only Zeppelin captured complete during the Great War.

The following notes taken in Central London while it was in progress, will illustrate the methods and conditions of a typical air-raid:

First warning, 6.35 p.m.; whistles from police to take cover, 6.50; first gun, 6.55, followed by five detonations, all heavy and probably all from largish guns, but one may have been a bomb. Then distant firing only. At 7.5 distant firing after a lull; heavy detonation; sharp firing at 7.9; guns ceased, 7.11. Vigorous firing at 7.15; large fire reported near King's Cross. Fire Brigade turned out in the midst of the gun fire. Fresh burst of heavy firing at 7.20; 7.25, two very heavy bangs,

AERIAL WAR AND THE AIR RAIDS

probably bombs; sound of machine-guns; violent fire from guns near. Lull, and then distant firing at 7.30; noise of a bomb at 7.33; reports that Woolwich and North-Eastern London are being bombed; 7.35, bomb fell; hum of aeroplanes plainly heard; machine gun fire overhead; then a lull; at 8 very sharp firing; 8.5, heavy explosions; 8.6, very loud explosion; heavy and rapid firing; bomb shook the building, not far off, at 8.10. Lull, and distant firing at 8.14. Lull till 9, when distant firing, drawing near at 9.5, and then receding. All clear at 9.35.

By this time, although the aerial defence system was far from being really a success, it was regarded as being sufficiently aggressive by the Germans to warrant the use of machines of better performance than the Gothas possessed. They wanted more speed and greater climbing and load-carrying capacity. To this end they later employed huge "Giant" machines which were designed to carry bombs of 6 cwt. With this type of machine supported by a number of Gothas, the raid campaign was resumed on December 6. This attack lasted for four hours, during which time 391 incendiary and 30 high-explosive bombs were dropped on London. In spite of this, only three people were killed and 15 injured, whilst the damage was accounted small. One Gotha was hit and landed at Canterbury, its crew surrendering to a special constable. Another bomber landed with a smashed propeller at Rochford, in Essex, and a third fell into the sea.

With the end of the year now fast approaching, the Germans made two more attacks, one on December 16 and the other on December 22. In the former some 20 Gothas were used with one Giant, and it was this new machine which reached London, where its crew released its 6 cwt. bomb. It fell in Eaton Square and damaged 22 houses but caused no casualties, although elsewhere 13 people were killed and over 80 injured by other bombs. The last attempt was a minor affair directed at Margate by a Gotha. At about 6 p.m. this machine arrived over the coast flying west. Suddenly it turned and, circling round, landed in a field. The pilot immediately set fire to his craft and surrendered to the police. It transpired that the raiding bomber's engines had failed and he was forced to land.

The artillery protecting London and the great towns was considerably strengthened as the war progressed. There were many fixed guns and a large number on swiftly moving lorries. The main defence, however, was in the extraordinary courage

SOME NOTABLE AIRMEN

and devotion to duty shown by the British air forces organized to attack and hamper the enemy. Towards the close of the war over two hundred aeroplanes were stationed at aerodromes in strategic positions.

Throughout the trying times which had been experienced during the long period of persistent aerial attack, General Ashmore and his staff were endeavouring with all the means in their power to grapple with the problem which was presented; and by the end of 1917 the results were hopeful, if not decisive or convincing. The proof was to come in the New Year.

Few phases of the Great War provided more examples of devoted courage than the air war of 1917. Both the Allies and Germany produced air aces of superlative chivalry and skill. Germany can look with pride at such brilliant men as Lieutenant Bohme, Lieutenant Wissemann, Lieutenant Voss, who was credited with having brought down 50 British planes, Captain Baron von Tutschek, and, perhaps the most outstanding, Baron von Richthofen, who was killed in action after having claimed no less than 60 victims.

On the British side the country may well honour the daring aviators who fought so nobly during this period. Such men as Captain Albert Ball, Major W. Avery Bishop, Captain A. M. Wilkinson, and Second Lieutenant W. G. Salmon, did invaluable work in making Britain's air supremacy permanent and many others who could be named are not unworthy of such company. Ball's deeds were especially notable. During his short fighting career he brought down over 40 foemen. He met his death some time after May 7, 1917, when he flew up and was never seen again. He was awarded the M.C. and D.S.O. with bar, and after his death the V.C. He and the other English airmen were readily supported by the brilliant French aces, outstanding among whom were Captain Guynemer, Second Lieutenant René Fonck, and Sub-Lieutenant Nungesser. Fonck and Nungesser survived the war, but the latter met his death when trying to fly the Atlantic Ocean in May, 1927.

CHAPTER 29

Problems of Finance and Trade

IN the early days of the Great War it was freely prophesied by bankers and financiers that the struggle must be short, for the simple reason that no nation, however rich, could stand the financial burden which a prolonged spell of warfare on the modern scale would create. But here, as elsewhere, the experts were utterly at fault. No nation left the battle line because of lack of funds, and there is no reason to suppose that the money could not have been provided to carry the war into 1919 or even into 1920 and beyond, if other circumstances had not ended it at an earlier date.

The first step towards financing the war was taken on Wednesday, August 5, 1914, when Mr. Asquith asked the House of Commons for a vote of credit for £100,000,000. This proceeding, however, had nothing to do with finding the money: it merely authorized the government to spend it. The spending began at the rate of about £1,000,000 a day, and, for the time being, this was provided by issuing treasury bills. In November the House of Commons sanctioned a further vote of credit for £225,000,000. The money was voted without hesitation.

On November 17 the country was given some idea of the financial position. The cost of the war between August 4, when it began, and March 31, 1915, when the financial year ended—a period of eight months—the chancellor of the exchequer, Mr. Lloyd George, estimated at £328,443,000, and in addition he thought he should lose £11,128,000 of the revenue on which he had reckoned. Consequently, he had to find an extra sum of £339,571,000. A certain amount was raised by taxation. As from December 1, 1914, the income-tax was doubled. This meant that for the year under consideration—April 1, 1914, to March 31, 1915—everyone would pay one-third more, and the demand notes were made out on those lines. The yield was expected to be £12,500,000 for the current year and £44,750,000 in a full year. In these figures the super-tax, which was also doubled, was included. Other increased taxes were the duties on

A LARGE LOAN

beer and tea. On beer an extra 17s. 3d. was charged on every barrel, this working out at a halfpenny on the half-pint, and on tea the duty was raised from 5d. to 8d. a pound. Thus an extra £3,000,000 was raised for the expenses of the current year.

The sum of £15,500,000 was all that could be raised by fresh taxation, and so in one way or another £324,000,000 had to be borrowed; £2,750,000 was taken from the money—the sinking fund—which is devoted to the repayment of the national debt, for it was obviously rather silly to be paying off debt with one hand and borrowing more with the other; it was robbing Peter to pay Paul with a vengeance. The balance must obviously be raised by a loan.

It was decided that the new loan should be for £350,000,000, and that the rate of interest should be $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. For £100 of it investors were only asked to pay £95, so that actually the interest worked out at more than $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The usual advertisements were issued in the newspapers; the banks, insurance companies, and other financial institutions were asked to help; and, when the subscription lists were closed, the amount required had been obtained. A moment's reflection will show that the loan did not bring in £350,000,000 in cash, but 3,500,000 times £95, or £332,500,000. With this sum the government could pay off the existing treasury bills and carry on the war, they hoped, until the end of March. On March 1 the House of Commons authorized the government to spend another £250,000,000.

The budget statement for 1915 was made on May 4 by Mr. Lloyd George. Dealing with the year which had just ended, the chancellor said that the revenue had produced about £6,000,000 more than he anticipated, for it had reached £226,694,000. Unfortunately, the expenditure had also exceeded his estimate, having amounted to £560,474,000. Consequently, the amount added to the national debt during the year was £333,780,000, or practically the amount raised by the loan in November. This had been spent, and more borrowing was inevitable.

Big as were the figures of the year 1914-15, those for the year 1915-16 were larger still. The cost of the war, said Mr. George, had now grown to £2,100,000 a day, and although he did not then propose any additional taxation, he hinted broadly that if the war continued something more must be obtained in this way. When would the war end? The uncertainty on this

FINANCE AND TRADE

point made it difficult for the chancellor to present his estimates for the coming year, and so he took the unusual course of presenting two. In one he assumed that the war would be over by the end of September, in the other that it would last a full year more—that is, to March 31, 1916.

In either case the revenue would not be seriously affected, and this Mr. George estimated at £270,332,000, of which £103,000,000 was to be drawn from the payers of income tax. This was £43,638,000 more than was raised by taxation in the previous year. The difficulty was with the expenditure. If the war ended by September this would, the chancellor thought, amount to £786,678,000, but if it continued through the financial year it would reach £1,132,654,000. If the war ended in September we had to borrow £516,346,000; if it continued until March the country must borrow £862,322,000.

With that Mr. George sat down, and the question of financing the war was given a rest until June. On June 15, 1915, Mr. Asquith asked for another vote of credit for £250,000,000, and in his speech he made some remarks on the financial position. He showed that the daily expenditure on the war had grown to £2,660,000, half a million more than Mr. George's estimate, and he added that "as our financial obligations to our Allies would not grow lighter, the total expenditure would be not much under £3,000,000 a day, and possibly might be more." He said that on June 14 the government had £56,000,000 in hand. About the details very little was known, but something could be gleaned from Mr. Asquith's figures. During April, May, and June, 1915, the army was costing rather more than £1,600,000 a day, the navy just about £500,000 a day, and about £500,000 a day was being spent in other ways.

A loan of great magnitude was clearly impending, and particulars of it were announced before the end of June. These revealed several novel and interesting features. In the first place no definite sum was asked for. The treasury had power to borrow up to £900,000,000, but it was stated that they would be satisfied with £600,000,000 or thereabouts. The interest payable was $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. As usual, the money could be paid all at once or in instalments between July 10 and October 26, and the first half year's dividend was due on December 1, 1915. Holders of Consols and of the $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. war loan issued in November, 1914, were to be allowed to convert their

NO LIMITED LIABILITY

holdings into the new loan. If the investor held the $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. war loan he must pay another £5 for every £100, and it then became a $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. stock, but this was allowed only on the condition that he doubled his holding. It was a bait to get more money out of him. Similarly, Consols were to be exchanged at the price of 66 2-3 for every £100 of the $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. stock. Every £75 invested in Consols could be changed into £50 of the new loan, but here again only on the condition that another £50 was taken up. This had to be done before October 30, 1915, and it was expected that £250,000,000 of Consols would be exchanged.

This "great national appeal to every class for a great national purpose," was a great success. On July 13, 1915, Mr. R. McKenna, who had succeeded Mr. Lloyd George as chancellor of the exchequer, announced the figures. Through the Bank of England 550,000 persons had applied for £570,000,000. This, of course, included all the big subscriptions, such as £21,000,000 each from Lloyd's and the London, City and Midland Banks, and enormous sums from the Prudential and other insurance corporations. Business men, however, all over the country, hastened to put their surplus funds into the loan, and among the earliest of these was the Amalgamated Press, Ltd., with £25,000. This sum of £570,000,000 did not include converted securities. It represented "new money," and established a record as being "far and away beyond any amount ever subscribed in the world's history."

It was impossible for us, as Mr. Lloyd George said, to conduct this war on limited liability principles, and we had already lent £10,000,000 to Belgium, and a smaller sum to Serbia. In February, 1915, the finance ministers of the three powers of the Entente met in Paris and agreed to unite their resources, and in June a similar arrangement was made with Italy. This did not mean, it was said, a joint loan, but it might mean a still more serious demand on the financial resources of Britain. The financial arrangements also provided for assistance to the Dominions, and in February £30,000,000 had been set aside for this purpose. This was a wise precaution, as it prevented the Dominions from making their own demands on the money market.

On July 20, 1915, Mr. Asquith asked for a vote of credit for £150,000,000. It was the third in the current financial year, and it brought the total amount voted for the cost of the war,

FINANCE AND TRADE

then not quite a year old, to £1,012,000,000. He estimated that it would carry the struggle on until the end of September. September came, and with it an unpleasant surprise for the country's taxpayers. The House of Commons met on the 14th, and on the next day Mr. Asquith asked it for a further vote of £250,000,000, the seventh since the outbreak of the war. In his speech he stated that from April 1 to June 30 the struggle had cost Britain £2,700,000 a day, from July 1 to July 17 £3,000,000 a day, and from July 18 to September 11 over £3,500,000 a day. Advances to Allies were responsible for most of the increase: the army was spending more; but the navy a little less.

A few days later Mr. McKenna made a distinct innovation in national finance. Hitherto one budget a year had been deemed sufficient, and the taxpayer could at least be sure of a year's interval before new burdens were put upon him. But so rapidly was the cost of the war mounting up, so quickly were the proceeds of the big loan being exhausted, so distant seemed the prospect of peace, that the coalition ministry then in power decided to impose new taxation forthwith, not to wait until the end of the financial year, six months later.

In one direction this supplementary budget, itself a novelty, introduced a novel idea into national finance; but in others, and especially with regard to the income tax, it followed precedent, and that precedent just the line of least resistance. The novelty was the excess profits duty. From all sides there came stories, exaggerated perhaps but by no means wholly imaginary, of persons making huge fortunes from the possession of ships, the manufacture of munitions of war, the sale of necessary articles of food, and in other ways; and the chancellor of the exchequer could certainly rely upon the support of public opinion when he proposed that these fortunate persons should pay over to him 50 per cent. of their excess profits. Roughly speaking, excess profits were defined as those made in excess of the profits, as shown by the income tax returns, made in the financial year 1913-14. The chancellor counted on £6,000,000 from this new duty for the current financial year, but thereafter on a much greater sum. The returns were soon to show that he had here tapped a very productive source of revenue.

The income tax was raised, not as usual by so many pennies in the pound, but by 40 per cent., and the new scale came into

MORE INCOME TAX

operation for the financial half-year beginning October 1. In practice it meant that 20 per cent., the half-year's proportion of 40, was added to every man's assessment. If he had originally been charged £21, he was now charged £25 4s. To produce still more from this fertile soil, the limit of exemption from the tax was reduced from £160 to £130, and a corresponding reduction made in the amounts allowed as abatements. Farmers were asked in future to pay tax on their full rent, not on one-third of it as before, unless they preferred to be taxed, as other traders were, on their actual profits.

The somewhat complex rates of super-tax, really an additional income tax, were revised, the highest being increased from 2s. 8d. in the pound to 3s. 6d., although they were not paid on quite the whole income, but only on its excess over £2,500. The other changes affected indirect taxation. The duty on sugar was raised from 1s. 10d. to 9s. 4d. a cwt.; tea, tobacco, cocoa, and coffee were to pay 50 per cent. more. Users of motor spirit and patent medicines were asked for contributions, and so were the purchasers of motor-cars, motor-cycles, cinema films, and one or two other things when imported. The public was asked to pay more for its postages, telegrams, and telephones.

The result of these changes was to add, so the authorities estimated, another £107,000,000 a year to the national revenue, but of that sum only £33,000,000 would be collected during the year 1915-16. However, certain taxes were producing more than was forecast in the earlier budget, and so the total revenue for the year could be put at £305,000,000. So far so good; but on the other side were an estimated expenditure of £1,590,000,000, an estimated deficit of £1,285,000,000, and a net national debt of £2,200,000,000.

No increase of taxation, however severe, could meet such an outlay, and further borrowing was soon necessary. First of all a little was obtained from the United States. To that country both Great Britain and France owed a good deal of money, and this liability was very detrimental to the rate of exchange, which was then moving steadily against the European countries. Accordingly, a loan for 500,000,000 dollars at 5 per cent. was arranged, the two countries borrowing the money jointly. But this £100,000,000, of which Britain only got a part, was merely a drop in the ocean, so fast was the cost of the war increasing. On November 11—and the story is still only in 1915—Mr.

FINANCE AND TRADE

Asquith asked the House of Commons to vote a further £400,000,000, and on that occasion he mentioned £5,000,000, not £3,500,000, as the daily average of expenditure. That sum enabled the government to conduct the war until February, 1916, and on the 21st of that month the prime minister was again asking for more. £120,000,000 was required to take the country on to the end of the financial year, when £1,782,000,000 would have been asked for, and presumably spent.

Mr. Asquith did not, however, stop there. To begin the next financial year he asked for another £300,000,000, the two votes together making a total of £420,000,000, and on this occasion he went somewhat fully into the financial position. In this review the most satisfactory feature was the fact that the daily rate of expenditure had fallen somewhat below the estimate of £5,000,000. Moreover, the expenditure included the sum of £161,900,000 lent to Britain's Allies and her Dominions, and the daily expenditure on the fighting services really worked out at only £3,000,000.

The time for a new budget was then fast approaching, and on April 4, 1916, this was presented by Mr. McKenna to the House of Commons. For the year just closed the revenue had reached the unprecedented figure of £337,000,000, the largest item in which was the income tax, which had produced £128,000,000—more than sufficient to meet the whole of the national expenditure had this remained as it was before the Boer war. But instead of the £117,000,000 of 1898-99, the nation had spent £1,599,000,000, four-fifths of which amount had been added to the national debt.

Turning to the coming year (1916-17), the chancellor dealt only in estimates. The expenditure he placed at £1,825,000,000, all of which save £225,000,000 was directly required for the prosecution of the war, and something approaching £100,000,000 of the balance for the interest on the debt incurred since August, 1914. He proposed further additions to taxation. Another screw was given to the income tax. It was to be 5s. in the pound on large incomes—those exceeding £2,000 unearned and £2,500 earned—a year, and was to descend by graduated stages to 2s. 3d. in the pound, its lowest rate. The excess profits' duty, which had so far only yielded a paltry £140,000, but was expected to produce £75,000,000 in 1916-17, was raised from 50 to 60 per cent.; amusements were taxed, visitors to theatres, cinemas, race

THE DAILY COST

meetings, football matches, etc., being called upon to contribute something to the revenue through their entrance tickets; and the duties on sugar, coffee, and cocoa were increased. A new tax was placed upon matches, mineral waters, cider, and perry. With these additions he expected to receive from revenue £502,000,000, which, if it materialised, would leave £1,323,000,000 to be provided by borrowing.

The chancellor then dealt with even more stupendous figures. He said that, assuming the war to last so long, by March 31, 1917, Britain's national debt would stand at £3,440,000,000. Of this, £800,000,000 would doubtless be recovered, for it had been lent, so the net debt would be £2,640,000,000. The charge for interest on this debt, together with a reasonable provision for its gradual extinction, would absorb £145,000,000 a year, or about the total amount of the annual national expenditure between the end of the Boer war in 1902 and the outbreak of extravagance in 1909. The same idea can be expressed in a more homely way. Dividing the debt equally among the population, on March 31, 1917, every man, woman, and child in the United Kingdom would owe £75, and so every household of six would owe £450, in most cases more than the value of the house in which they lived.

A few days later Mr. Asquith asked for another £300,000,000. He then estimated the daily cost of the war at £4,750,000, although a careful calculation showed that during the previous 50 days it had been £70,000 a day in excess of that figure. The increase was due to the greater financial assistance rendered to Britain's Allies and her Dominions. Another vote of credit, one for the unprecedented sum of £450,000,000 carried on the war until October, when the prime minister called for a further £300,000,000. He then informed the public that the war was costing a little over £5,000,000 a day. There had been, since the previous estimate, no increase in the amount spent on the navy, and a slight decrease in that spent on the army; but a great deal more had gone on munitions. This was the thirteenth vote of credit asked for by Mr. Asquith's government. Before the end of the year that government had fallen, and one headed by Mr. Lloyd George had taken its place. In this Mr. Bonar Law was chancellor of the exchequer.

As finance minister Mr. Law made his bow to Parliament on December 14. He wanted £400,000,000, and, according to

FINANCE AND TRADE

figures which he then gave, it was none too much. During the previous 63 days the daily rate of expenditure had been £5,710,000; before that period—i.e., before the middle of October—it had been £5,070,000 only. The total expenditure since the beginning of the war had been £3,852,000,000, or—though he did not say so—close upon £100 for every man, woman, and child throughout Great Britain.

It is now full time to deal with a very pertinent question. How was all this money being found? It was all very well for the House of Commons to vote it, but that was the beginning, not the end, of the story. The great loan of July, 1915, had produced, roughly, £600,000,000, but that sum was spent before the end of that year. Taxation had been increased, but even if the most sanguine estimates of the revenue were reached it would not provide quite £2,000,000 a day, and at the close of 1916 nearly £6,000,000 a day was needed. There was a gap for the financial authorities to bridge of something between £3,000,000 and £4,000,000 a day, nearer the latter than the former figure.

During 1916 the bulk of this money was raised by the sale of treasury bills and exchequer bonds. Treasury bills are simply promises by the state to pay the amount named on each at the end of a certain period, usually three, six, nine, or twelve months. They are a form of security intended almost entirely for bankers, and financial houses with large sums of money to invest for short periods; they make little appeal to the general public, for whom they are unsuited. Exchequer bonds made a much wider appeal. They were issued for longer periods, usually three or five years, and were bought by private investors.

Money was borrowed from the public at both 4 per cent. and 5 per cent. An income tax of 5s. in the pound makes a serious inroad upon incomes derived from investments, for it means that a 5 per cent. security only yields actually $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Recognising this, the government offered to investors a 4 per cent. security free of income tax—i.e., one of which the full £4 of interest was received by the owner. That relieved him, not only of an income tax of 5s. in the pound, but of the payment of any increase in the tax. Investors in this particular security could view with indifference an additional 1s. or 2s. 6d. on the income tax. They could rely upon a clear 4 per cent. On the other hand, should the income tax be reduced, these persons would obtain no benefit. It was a sporting offer to the public.

SUBSCRIPTIONS RECEIVED

Persons putting their money into the 5 per cent. loan could not claim these advantages, but their tastes were not forgotten; £100 of stock was offered to them for £95, so that their rate of interest worked out at a fraction over $\frac{5}{5}$ per cent.; and moreover, when the loan was repaid, as arranged, between 1929 and 1947, they would receive a full £100 for each £95 invested. They were liable to the ordinary income tax, and allowing for this at 5s. in the pound, it was calculated that they would receive $\frac{4}{4}$ 2s. 3d. per cent. on their money. Persons with small incomes who paid a lower rate of tax, or no tax at all, would receive more.

Even with regard to income tax, however, something was done for the investor in the 5 per cent. loan. The tax was not to be deducted from the interest when paid over to him. He was liable to it, but the "small man" would be freed from the undoubted annoyance of having to claim the return of over-deducted tax from the income tax commissioners and of waiting some months until he got it. Finally, holders of exchequer bonds and of treasury bills were allowed on favourable terms to exchange those forms of security into the new loans.

The lists opened on January 12 and remained open until February 16, 1917. Within those five weeks £850,301,000 was applied for and allotted, £30,715,000 of this being in the form of small applications made through the Post Office. No less than 5,289,000 persons contributed to it, a figure which may be compared with the 550,000 who participated in the loan of 1915. Its success was due partly to the help of the banks. These institutions did not, as was the case in 1915, take up large blocks of stock themselves; instead, they lent the money to their customers, taking up the loan for them. It is uncertain how much was lent in this way, but the total must have been considerable, although it was quickly reduced as clients repaid the advances. The annual report of the London City and Midland Bank for 1917 gave some figures which showed the extent to which that particular institution, the largest of the ordinary banks, helped the loan. Its clients applied for £86,000,000 and converted £7,000,000 of treasury bills, making a total subscription of £93,000,000. For the purpose of taking up the loan the bank advanced to them £26,813,000, which sum by the end of 1917 had been reduced to £12,645,539.

FINANCE AND TRADE

Figures about this loan were soon made public, the most authoritative being those given to the House of Commons by Mr. Bonar Law on May 3 when introducing his budget. The 5 per cent. loan, including converted treasury bills, amounted to £966,048,000, and the 4 per cent. one, also including bills converted, to £22,658,000. In addition £821,005,000 of the 4½ per cent. loan was turned into the 5 per cent. security, and £282,792,000 of exchequer bonds was likewise transferred. A few holders of this loan and of the bonds transferred into the 4 per cent. loan, £28,726,000 being the amount of these transactions. Some of the money obtained—the new money, to use the jargon of the market—was used to repay other borrowings. In the first five weeks of the year £200,000,000 of treasury bills was liquidated, and in three months, including the conversions already mentioned, the amount outstanding was reduced from £1,148,500,000 to £464,000,000.

There was no difficulty in spending the rest of the money. On February 12 Mr. Bonar Law asked the House of Commons for £550,000,000, and a month or so later (March 15) for £60,000,000. The latter was the more alarming of the two. The February vote was for £200,000,000 to carry on the war until March 31, and the balance of £350,000,000 to open the new financial year with ample credits. The March vote showed that the £200,000,000 was insufficient; in other words, not only was the rate of expenditure rising, it was rising faster than the authorities had expected. In February the daily rate was £5,790,000, against £4,520,000 in the earlier part of the financial year. Small wonder that the expenditure for the year then drawing to a close would be something like £350,000,000 more than the estimates, or that the national debt on March 31, 1917, would be between £3,800,000,000 and £3,900,000,000, an increase of over £3,000,000,000 since the war started.

So matters stood about the time that the budget for 1917-18 was introduced. The only changes in taxation then proposed were the increase in the excess profits duty from 60 to 80 per cent., and certain increases in the taxes on tobacco and amusements. With these additions the chancellor estimated his revenue for the year then in front of him at £638,600,000. The expenditure was estimated at £2,290,381,000, of which £1,975,000,000 was for the cost of the war, and another £211,500,000 for interest on debt.

TWO VOTES OF CREDIT

Mr. Law did not on this occasion go very far into the larger question of Britain's total liabilities, but he did state that during the war the country had spent already—he spoke on May 2, 1917—£4,318,000,000. Of this vast sum revenue had contributed £1,137,000,000, or 26 per cent., and so £3,181,000,000 remained added to the national debt, which, with the pre-war figure, then stood at £3,854,000,000. The chancellor's estimate for the year 1917-18 was that the struggle would add another £1,652,000,000 to that figure, making it £5,506,000,000 on March 31, 1918.

On May 9 Mr. Law asked for £500,000,000, the largest request ever made in a single vote, for the £550,000,000 of February 12 was in reality two votes, one for 1916-17 and the other for 1917-18. He then stated that the daily expenditure for the past five weeks had been at the high average of £7,450,000, although loans to Allies and Dominions, just then being made on an extended scale, reduced the net, or real, expenditure of the country to £5,600,000 a day. The next vote of credit, the largest until then required, was for £650,000,000 and was asked for on July 24. A longer period—112 days, or 16 weeks—was then taken by the chancellor of the exchequer to illustrate his case, and in that time the country had spent £6,795,000 a day. During that time £155,000,000 more than the budget estimate had been spent, £63,500,000 of this being accounted for by larger loans, and £91,500,000 by the greater cost of the Army (£64,500,000), of munitions of war (£12,000,000), and by larger expenditure on food (£15,000,000).

On October 30 came another of these periodical statements, the occasion being the need for a further £400,000,000. The expenditure for ten weeks, or 70 days, analysed, showed a daily average of £6,414,000, while the increase for the financial year was £222,500,000 over the budget estimate. The national debt had risen to £5,000,000,000, of which £1,260,000,000 would, the chancellor hoped, be recovered from the Allies and Dominions. A new consideration, and a favourable one, was brought into the account, and this was the fact that £74,500,000 of the increased outgoings had gone on buying raw materials, foodstuffs, and ships. When these were sold this sum would be recovered.

Finally, as far as 1917 was concerned, on December 12, Mr. Law asked for £550,000,000. The average daily expenditure for sixty-three days up to December 1, he explained, was £6,794,000, or an excess over the Budget estimate of £1,383,000. Taking a

FINANCE AND TRADE

wider survey, he showed that the average daily expenditure for the first thirty-five weeks of the financial year was £6,686,000, or an excess over the Budget estimate of £1,275,000. As, however, recoverable expenditure during this period amounted to £225,000,000, the real excess over the estimate was only £350,000 a day.

With this the House of Commons had voted, in 21 votes of credit, the enormous sum of £6,242,000,000 for carrying on the Great War. According to figures given in *The Statist*, the actual war bill to January 5, 1918, was £5,645,000,000, of which £805,000,000, or just over 14 per cent., had been raised by revenue, leaving a national debt on that date of £4,840,000,000, or adding, as we must, the pre-war debt, one of, in round figures, £5,500,000,000, of which perhaps £1,800,000,000 was recoverable. The assumption, however, was probably open to the criticism that it took too favourable a view of the position in Russia. As some slight set-off against the steady rise in expenditure, it was pleasant to know that between April 1 and December 31, 1917, the revenue produced £65,000,000 more than the authorities at the treasury had estimated.

It is not easy, nor is it at all necessary to our story, to make a comparison between the finances of Britain and those of Germany. The conditions were so utterly dissimilar. The position, however, was examined with great thoroughness by Sir E. H. Holden, Bart., in his annual address to the shareholders of the London City and Midland Bank on January 29, 1918. His detailed explanation showed how the Reichsbank increased enormously the supply of credit and paper money in Germany without a corresponding addition to its stock of gold, and this proceeding rendered any exact comparison with conditions in Great Britain impossible. He gave the figures for Germany's seven loans, totalling altogether £3,647,000,000, and added:

The amount of the floating debt, consisting for the most part of Treasury Bills, at the present time—(i.e., January, 1918)—may be estimated at about £1,450,000,000, so that the total borrowings of Germany since the outbreak of the war appear to be about £5,100,000,000, against total cash borrowings in the case of this country of about £4,900,000,000.

Although Great Britain had borrowed, by the end of 1917, no less than £4,850,000,000 for carrying on the war, that struggle was by no means over. On the contrary, some thought it

A DIFFICULT EQUATION

was only just beginning, while British folk were agreed that, cost what it might, the nation was bound to see it through. It was costing, as we have already seen, some £7,000,000 a day, or nearly £2,600,000,000 a year, and it might easily cost more. Indeed, if the past were any guide, it was fairly certain that this would be the case; £2,000,000 a day might come from revenue, but even the heavier taxation, foreshadowed late in 1917 by the chancellor, could hardly add £500,000 a day to that sum. In the most favourable circumstances Mr. Law, or his successor, must reckon on borrowing £5,000,000 a day as long as the war lasted.

The length of this period was the *x* in the difficult equation which the financial advisers to the Government had to solve. Certainly, viewing the position as it was at Christmas, 1917, two years more was none too long if the grim task before the Allies was to be fulfilled; it seemed to many that three years was little enough for its full accomplishment, especially when it was realised that 1918 would be far advanced before America could pull her full weight in the allied boat. This being so, a prudent financier would make his arrangements on the assumption that three years more were needed to see it through, and that in each of those years he would have to borrow at least £2,200,000,000. Taxation, if it could be further increased, might possibly save him from adding much to that figure as the months wore on, but the position was undoubtedly grave, and it was made graver by the many demands, not small ones either, by various classes of the community for more money from the national purse, in the shape of wages, pensions, or allowances of other kinds.

For many of them doubtless a case could be made out, but as inevitably as day follows night, did one demand bring forth another. In fact, the requests for increased remuneration made by all classes of workers during the Great War were the most perfect, and at the same time the most dangerous, example of the principle of the vicious circle that this generation has known.

A few figures will illustrate this point. In 1915 no less than 3,470,000 people received increases of wages amounting to £677,700 a week, or something like £35,000,000 a year. In 1916 a somewhat similar number of workers received £595,000 a week, or £30,000,000 a year. This total of £65,000,000 is not perhaps very much when compared with the figures mentioned as the cost of the war, but in eleven months of 1917 over 4,330,000

FINANCE AND TRADE

persons received increases amounting to £1,507,500 a week, or £80,000,000 for the year. £145,000,000 of increased wages is something, but there is more to come. The official return from which the above figures are taken says that "these statistics are exclusive of changes affecting seamen, railway servants, agricultural labourers, policemen, government employees, domestic servants, shop assistants, and clerks."

This list embraces quite a considerable section of the community, and everyone knows that they, too, received during the war period, and especially in 1917, substantial additions to their incomes. On January 29, 1918, Mr. Herbert Samuel said in Parliament, and no one contradicted him, that railway workers had received an additional £10,000,000 a year, and civil servants £3,000,000. The £20,000,000 given yearly to the miners and the £40,000,000 to the munition workers, mentioned also by him, are doubtless included in the return already quoted, but the £72,000,000 a year added to the pay of soldiers and sailors is not, nor are the millions paid as separation allowances.

Apart from these classes, agricultural labourers were guaranteed a minimum wage of 25s. a week, increases of pay were given to the police, while clerks, as the reports of the banks and other big institutions showed, did not come off badly. Public officials all over the country shared in the increased wages and salaries; for instance, it was said in February, 1918, that in Liverpool the rates were to be increased by 1s. 6d. in the pound, of which 6d. would go in bonuses to employees, and about the same time the London County Council adopted a most generous bonus scheme. Farmers and certain classes of small capitalists also increased their incomes considerably during the war.

In fact, the most succinct way of putting the matter would be to say that in 1917 and 1918, except persons with fixed incomes from investments, the owners of house property, and certain classes of professional men—architects, for instance—the whole community was in receipt of bigger incomes. Moreover, millions of women and girls who before the war were living in the homes of their parents, and had command only of small sums of money, were in 1918 receiving salaries and wages which they themselves in 1913 would have regarded as impossible to earn. No computation of the gross total of these increased incomes can be at all reliable, but enough has been said to show that the £145,000,000 recorded by the Board of Trade must be

THE WAR SAVINGS COMMITTEE

multiplied by more than one or two. The money deposited in the banks was additional proof of this prosperity. On December 31, 1917, it was calculated that the twelve large joint-stock banks held £1,130,000,000 of other people's money, and that of this about £207,500,000 had been added during the year.

The British government decided that something should be done to induce the classes who had benefited in this way to lend their savings for the prosecution of the war. A committee, appointed in 1915, by Mr. R. McKenna, the chancellor of the exchequer, recommended the appointment of two national committees. These were later united as the National War Savings Committee, the objects of which were: (1) To stimulate the sentiment and urge the need for economy; (2) to promote the formation of war savings associations; (3) to secure for the nation through these associations a certain amount of the money required for the prosecution of the war.

The same committee recommended the issue of war savings deposits, or certificates as they soon came to be called. For each one 15s. 6d. should be paid, and at the end of five years one pound should be returned to the investor. This meant compound interest at the rate of just over $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., and, moreover, another advantage, freedom from income tax. The suggestion was made that these certificates should be limited to persons with incomes of £300 a year and under; but afterwards a limit less liable to abuse was introduced. No person was allowed to hold more than 500 of them. These certificates were first issued on February 22, 1916. Similar issues followed on kindred lines in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, India, and other parts of the Empire.

The next problem was how to get these certificates into the hands of the people, and for this end "the organization on the extensive scale of voluntary savings associations" was recommended. As a preliminary step, the national committee set to work to cover the whole of England and Wales with a network of local committees, and in this matter it received valuable assistance from inspectors and other officials of the Board of Education, men whose professional duties had made them familiar with the special conditions of the various districts. Gradually these committees were established. They were of three kinds. For every county there was a county committee; in cities boroughs, and urban districts with over 20,000 inhabit-

FINANCE AND TRADE

ants there was a local central committee; and in towns and districts with less than 20,000 people there was a local committee. The work of the county committees was to supervise the doings of the local, but not the local central committees, within their areas.

The encouragement and supervision of war savings associations were not, however, the main work of the national committee. The committee on war loans for the small investor, called, for the sake of brevity, the Montagu Committee—the Hon. E. S. Montagu, M.P., was the chairman—recommended that exchequer bonds should be issued in small amounts, £5 and multiples of £5, and sold through the Post Office. The national committee undertook to push this sale and during 1916 bonds to the value of £44,000,000 were sold in this way.

The report of the committee, which appeared in 1917, gave a good idea of its manifold activities for the year down to March 1, 1917. Under its auspices no less than 1,100 local committees and over 26,500 war savings associations had been formed; of the latter 10,000 came into existence in January and February, 1917, the fruits evidently of the vigorous campaign in support of the war loan. The associations had between two and three million members, "drawn probably in the main from among those who had not previously saved, and who had been induced to do so by a system of collective saving." From the outbreak of war to the end of 1916 small investors had lent over £118,000,000 to the State. During 1916 an average of £1,600,000 a week was received from them.

Something about the size and the nature of the 26,500 associations should be of interest. They were formed in connexion with social groups, such as churches, schools, and friendly societies, and among the employees of mines, railways, munition works, factories, warehouses, and shops. There were also associations in both the navy and the army. The membership varied in number from as few as 10 to as many as 10,000. Perhaps the most hopeful part of all this work was that done in the schools. Examples of this work are multifarious, but room may be found for one or two taken from the periodical called War Savings for January, 1918. In Walsall, with 17,000 children, there were 37 school associations which, with a membership of 6,397, had subscribed £15,035. A school at Nuneaton had passed the £1,000 mark, and was on the way to £2,000. One at Wigan had done

THE SAVINGS MOVEMENT

the same, and one at Ashford in Kent had a thermometer to record progress, the various classrooms competing for the first place. A village school in Hampshire, away from the high wages of munition areas, raised over £400 in a year.

The National Committee had many lines of attack. Its publicity campaign included regular advertising in the newspapers, the supply of information to editors all over the country, and the display of posters on hoardings and public places generally. It issued a monthly journal, War Savings, and supplied a variety of leaflets, explaining its aims, to local committees and the general public. A department was devoted to making arrangements for speakers and providing lecturers with lantern slides, while a group of itinerant organizers addressed meetings and in other ways promoted enthusiasm. Over 1,000,000 paper bags were sold to local tradesmen, one side of the bag being pictorial and the other practically a leaflet.

In conclusion, a few figures may be useful in summarising the work done to the end of 1917. There were then in existence 1,623 committees and 37,840 associations, of which 12,000 were in connection with schools. During the year small investors had put £183,000,000 into government securities, £66,800,000 of which had gone to purchase war savings certificates. Altogether since the fateful August 4, 1914, no less than £256,500,000 had been subscribed to meet the cost of the war. Of the new national war bonds, £10,700,000 had been sold through the Post Office, and £196,800,000 through the Bank of England.

The savings which served so well the needs of the state came from the high wages to which reference has already been made, and these high wages in their turn were largely the result of lavish expenditure on munitions of war. This put a great deal of money into circulation, as is seen by the totals issued by the Bankers' Clearing House for 1917. Like other figures, the value of these can be exaggerated, but they are perhaps the best available indication of the amount of money in circulation in the country. The year's total of the clearings was the record figure of £19,121,196,000, or £3,846,150,000 in excess of the figure for the previous year (1916).

In spite of the submarine menace and restrictions on seaborne trade due to war conditions, overseas commerce was surprisingly good. Imports went up from £851,000,000 in 1915 and

FINANCE AND TRADE

£948,000,000 in 1916 to £1,065,000,000 in 1917. Exports rose from £384,000,000 in 1915 and £506,000,000 in 1916 to £528,000,000 in 1917, although its re-exports, in which there was a decline, were included, the figures were less favourable. Any satisfaction, however, which might be obtained from these figures was tempered by the fact that the country's adverse balance of trade rose to £470,000,000. In 1916 it was £344,000,000 and in 1914 it was only £170,000,000. This pointed to the probability that Great Britain was adding greatly to her liabilities abroad, or alternatively was reducing the total of her investments overseas.

The course of the bank rate is another trade barometer, although, specially in time of war, it is not an infallible one. The year opened with the bank rate at 6 per cent., but on January 18, a week after the issue of the war loan prospectus, it was reduced to 5½ per cent., and on April 5 it was further reduced to 5 per cent., at which level it remained for the rest of the year. This high rate was due to the demand for money, especially for the large loans raised to finance the war. But the banks, although their deposits had been greatly depleted by subscriptions to the war loans, kept their deposit rates at 4 per cent., instead of reducing them to 3½ per cent., or 1½ per cent. below bank rate, as had been their custom in the past.

Quite apart from the money paid out to workers in the munition factories, home trade was helped by the restrictions placed by the Government on the import of luxuries into the country. This was done with the twofold purpose of reducing Britain's payments to foreign nations and releasing the cargo space of her merchant ships for more vital services. It had the third result, less desirable from the point of view of the governing authorities, of increasing the demand for labour at home. This action, together with the complete cessation of imports from Germany and other enemy countries, provided opportunities for British manufacturers in certain industries. A few instances of this may be given.

What was done in the case of so simple an article as a doll may serve as an illustration of what was accomplished in other directions. In the doll trade it was found that the various parts of an ordinary child's doll were made by a great number of different firms. The china arms and heads were not made in the United Kingdom but the potters took the matter up with vigour. Their first efforts were crude and ugly, but

THE DYEING INDUSTRY

by the end of three years dolls' heads far surpassing anything that had previously been imported from Germany were being produced in the British potteries. Birmingham made the balanced eyes which made the doll appear to sleep; Yorkshire supplied the wigs for the heads, and so on.

The glass trade presented greater difficulties, since the skilled hands did not exist. The Government urged British firms to train lads in the art of glass blowing, and in less than three years even the extremely difficult art of making glass for chemical laboratory work had been mastered in British factories by the aid of British labour. The problem of obtaining supplies of optical glass was attacked with vigour. The Government rendered active assistance in establishing this industry, and excellent optical glass was produced in large quantities before the country had been at war three years. Great strides were made in the pottery trades. Poreclain for electrical fittings was, before the war, an enemy product; its manufacture in Great Britain was soon accomplished. Even the fine chemical ware used in laboratories was available from British sources before the end of the third year of the war.

The dyes industry presented, perhaps, the greatest difficulties of all. No one unacquainted with modern science could appreciate the enormous obstacles to be overcome. Germany with her thousands of trained chemists had been patiently building up this industry, while, in every other part of the world, the business was neglected. The making of synthetic dyes from coal tar products is closely allied to the production of trinitro-toluene and other high explosives used for the first time in the Great War. By monopolising the dye business, Germany had secured an enormous advantage in being in a position to turn out great quantities of high explosives. The German dyemakers had ensured themselves the monopoly by undertaking to supply certain lines, at a rate which left a comfortable profit, to the British firms which formerly made them, and by entering into contracts with the large British gas undertakings to take the whole of their by-products.

The position was so serious that the Government, which had created a high explosives branch at the War Office, with Lord Moulton at its head, requested him to look into the matter. Lord Moulton saw that the weakness of the chemical trade, including the dye trade, in the United Kingdom was the multi-

FINANCE AND TRADE

plicity of small firms. He saw that it would be necessary to create a corporation with a large capital, if the thousand and one scientific difficulties in the way of making dyes were to be overcome. He addressed the great textile firms in Manchester, with a view to inducing them in their own interest to provide capital for the creation of a dye business in Britain.

Money was not the difficulty. The great staple trades of the country were ready to provide any sums that were required, but the Government would not give any guarantee that the business would be protected from the Germans at the close of the war; and ultimately, rather than give this assurance, the Government created a company and advanced to it public money on debenture security. The company, British Dyes, Ltd., had other advantages as against its competitors in that firms that subscribed to the capital had the first call upon the output, and this was the inducement that led the wealthy textile manufacturers to invest, since, unless they did so, they could not be sure of getting from the corporation supplies of dyes that were vital to their business. But at the end of three years of war, although British Dyes, Ltd., had erected a large number of buildings, the problem had not been overcome. The brightest fast dyes were still not made in the United Kingdom. In June, 1917, a dye commissioner was appointed by the Government and the obstacles in the way of this desirable end were overcome.

The spelter industry affords another illustration. Before 1914 the supplies of zinc ores were in Australia, and these ores were turned into concentrates in Germany, a German firm having a contract with the Australian producers under which it was entitled to take their output. Since zinc was urgently needed in the United Kingdom the question arose whether such a contract could be enforced in time of war, but it was actually upheld in the British courts. However, the Australian prime minister held up such legal embarrassments to ridicule, and ultimately the matter was put right.

The shortage of cotton became extremely serious. Instead of 4d. or 5d. a pound, by June, 1917, there were dealings in cotton for immediate supply at 19½d. a pound. The shortage of the world's cotton crop would probably have been felt had there been no war, since before hostilities there was already evidence of a shortage of supplies owing to increased demand. The cotton spinners of Lancashire, however, were slow to realise the



This fine photograph shows a British fighting aeroplane starting out to engage German machines during a battle on the West Front. The air arm rendered splendid services in co-operation with the military in all the great offensives.



The fiery end of a German aeroplane brought down by British airmen behind their lines. By the end of 1917 the British had established ascendancy in the air.

TRIUMPHS OF THE BRITISH AIR ARM



BEGINNING OF A BOMBING EXPLOIT. This illustration shows giant British biplanes, Handley Page bomb carriers, setting forth to bomb the enemy lines and towns. These machines were the prototype of the no less powerful German Gotha machine. It was in 1916 that the Germans first began to use Gotha aeroplanes for raiding.



BRITAIN'S DEFENCE AGAINST AIR ATTACKS. In view of the increasing enemy air raids on Great Britain, energetic steps were taken to combat them. The illustration shows a powerful anti-aircraft gun at a coast town. As the war proceeded the number of these guns was increased and mobile trolley guns were brought into use.



Imperial War Museum

THE HOME FRONT FEELS THE TOUCH OF WAR. While the artillery battles on the western front were achieving nothing beyond the proof of their own grim futility, war methods were insensibly becoming more subtle, involving the civilian populations. Air raids, designed to break their nerve, became more frequent. Here is seen the damage done to the top floor of the G.P.O. by a 15-kilo bomb dropped in the aeroplane raid on London of July 7, 1917.

WOOL AND LEATHER

extreme danger of their position, although American spinners were using an ever-increasing amount of American cotton, and it was evident that without the American supplies there was insufficient cotton in the world to supply the looms of the Lancashire mills.

There was a danger, too, that with the increasing shortage of food in the world the cotton planters would be induced to plant more food and less cotton, and so the shortage would become even more marked. In June, 1917, the British Government stepped in, and the Lancashire manufacturers, who had been totally opposed to any kind of Government interference, were glad in their extremity to welcome state assistance in allotting fairly among the spinners such supplies of cotton as were available.

The difficulty in the wool industry was equally serious. The enormous demand for woollen clothing for the army led to such a shortage of wool that, in the spring of 1917, the Government commandeered all wool and put most of the factories under state control, so that the amount of wool available for making garments for the civilian population was comparatively small.

A similar state of things took place in the leather trade. Enormous quantities of leather used for harness and boots and other requirements led to a shortage of all kinds, and as the war went on boots became increasingly expensive, and various substitutes for making soles were brought out with varying degrees of success.

Side by side, however, with an extraordinary productivity in certain branches of industry, there was a shortage of foodstuffs in the country, and this led the Government to introduce a lower quality of flour, which was made compulsory. Everything possible was done to decrease the demand for wheat flour, in order to eke out the stocks and the imports. The price of wheat went up until, in the first half of 1917, the Government was able to make an arrangement with the United States, under which the crops of North America became available for this country at a lower price than would have been paid had it been left to the unrestricted competition of the market.

The food shortage was accentuated by the restrictions upon the use of merchant shipping. For example, merchants were

FINANCE AND TRADE

not allowed to import tea from China because the Indian supply was nearer, and therefore shipping tonnage was saved by bringing necessary supplies from the nearer point. The same reason led to the prohibition of the soya bean trade. Soya beans are extremely nutritious, but their shipment from Manchuria was held to be wasteful of shipping.

Efforts were made to stimulate the production of food in Great Britain. The month of January, 1917, saw the formation of the Food Production Department as a separate branch of the Board of Agriculture. Its function was tersely expressed in word taken for its telegraphic address "Growmore." Its first controller was Sir Arthur H. Lee, afterwards Viscount Lee of Fareham, and his instructions were to increase the food growing capacity of Great Britain to its maximum capacity; in other words, to add some 3,000,000 acres to the land so employed.

Although, owing to the near approach of the time for ploughing and sowing, the opportunities before the department, at least, as far as the year 1917 was concerned, were very limited, a considerable amount of work was done. The acreage due to yield crops for the harvest of the current year was brought up to 11,351,000, or 363,000 more than in the year in which the war began and about 300,000 more than in the previous year (1917).

This rapid stimulation of British food growing was not secured without measures that, in times of peace, would have been regarded as revolutionary and would almost certainly have been resented. As it was possible that opposition might be offered by landlords and farmers, an order in council gave the department the powers vested in the Board of Agriculture for controlling the farming industry. A later order, dated March 15, 1917, gave more extensive powers to the Board of Agriculture acting through the department, and to the executive committees set up in the various counties. These executive committees were appointed by the war agricultural committees, which had been set up at an earlier stage in the war, and consisted of not fewer than four and more than seven members.

The order made it legal for the Board or for any of the county executive committees:

To enter and take possession of any land which in their opinion was not being so cultivated as to increase as far as practicable the food supply of the country, and to do all things necessary to cultivate it or to adapt it for cultivation.

FOOD PRODUCTION ORDERS

To achieve this purpose any buildings on the land or convenient to it might be entered and seized.

To take possession of any machinery, implements or plant, or any farm produce, stock or animals required for the cultivation of the land.

To seize any land or unoccupied premises to provide housing accommodation for workers.

To use any water or motive power.

To order any landholder to cultivate his land in such a manner as the Board might think fit.

To terminate forthwith the tenancy of any holder or land which in the opinion of the Board was not being cultivated so as to increase, as far as possible, the food supply of the country. (This power was vested only in the Board of Agriculture, but was exercised by them on the recommendation of any county executive committee).

After seizure of any land to arrange for its cultivation by any other person.

To nullify clauses in any lease or agreement between tenant and landlord that placed restrictions on additional cultivation.

To recover from any person who resumed possession of land occupied and cultivated by another at the Board's direction, the cost of such cultivation.

To inspect any land, buildings or farm and their methods and means and adaptability for increasing the food supplies of the country.

The effect of these powers was to place the agricultural industry of Great Britain as directly under the control of the state as was the shipping industry or the engineering industry. Armed with these powers, the Board of Agriculture, the food production department, and the county committees determined what additional land should be ploughed and by what means it should be ploughed; they determined what crops should be grown, and even forbade the growing of crops which either did not contribute to the nation's food supply, or were not the most suitable food contribution that could be made in the circumstances. In other cases they gave definite orders as to how crops should be grown, what manure should be used, and what additional fertilisers supplied.

CHAPTER 30

V.C. Heroes of the War (IV)

DURING the fourth year of the war—August 4, 1917, to August 4, 1918—the Victoria Cross was won one hundred and sixty-eight times; but as Captain N. G. Chavasse had already won it in the previous year, the official total is one hundred and sixty-seven, for in the official list a name can only appear once—the second award being a bar to the existing cross. Nine crosses were awarded to the navy; four were won by airmen. Thirty-two were awarded to men of the overseas dominions—eleven to Australians, eighteen to Canadians, two to New Zealanders, and one to a South African. Of the remaining one hundred and twenty-two, six were won by the artillery, two by the cavalry, two by Indian soldiers, two by the Engineers, two by the R.A.M.C., three by the Machine Gun corps, two by the Tank corps, one by the Army Service corps, and one by a chaplain. Of the remainder, eight fell to the Guards, and the rest to the line.

Three regiments head the roll with five each to their credit—the Lancashire Fusiliers, the London regiment, and the Royal Fusiliers. The Rifle brigade, the Royal Lancaster, and the Worcester carried off four each. The Notts and Derby won three. Two crosses were awarded to men of each of the following twenty-one regiments: King's Royal Rifles, Warwicks, Yorkshires, West Yorkshires, Gloucesters, Northampton's, Hampshires, West Ridings, Manchesters, North Staffordshires, Durham Light Infantry, and, Yorkshire Light Infantry, as well as to the Border and Middlesex regiments among English units; the Scottish were, the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, Seaforth Highlanders, Black Watch, Highland Light Infantry, and King's Own Scottish Borderers; and the remaining two were the Inniskilling and Welch Fusiliers. Twenty-one other regiments added one each to their battle honours.

A few words of explanation are necessary. As a man cannot be enumerated twice, some rule must be applied to determine the exact section in which to place a V.C. For example, Captain Bishop was a member of the Canadian cavalry, but as his

CAPTAIN GORDON CAMPBELL

V.C. was won while he was serving as an airman, he is included among the air heroes. Again, Captain Bishop, Lieutenants Flowerdew and Strachan, and Lance-Dafadar Gobind Singh might have been added to the cavalry. But for greater clearness Flowerdew and Strachan are included with their countrymen the Canadians, and Gobind Singh and his comrade Rifleman Rana Karanbahadur are described as representatives of the Indian army. Finally, Second-Lieutenant Clement Robertson was officially described as of the Royal West Surreys (S.R.). He is included here with the Tank corps, for he gained his distinction when serving with that unit.

The first naval V.C., won by Skipper Joseph Watt, R.N.R., was awarded for gallantry when the allied drifters in the strait of Otranto were attacked by Austrian light cruisers on May 15, 1917. Ordered to stop and abandon his drifter, the Gowan Lea, he replied by ordering full speed ahead and calling upon his crew to fight to a finish. The cruiser was engaged, but after one round had been fired a shot disabled the drifter's gun. The overwhelming fire from the cruiser killed many of the crew. Watt still refused to surrender, but encouraged his men to repair the gun and continue the fight. The cruiser, convinced that the drifter would sink, moved on, and Watt took the Gowan Lea alongside the Floandi, and assisted to remove the dead and wounded.

On November 3, 1917, three V.C.'s were awarded to seamen for bravery in action with enemy submarines. Two of the recipients were Lieutenant C. G. Bonner, D.S.C., R.N.R., and Petty-Officer E. Pitcher. On August 8, 1917, H.M.S. Dunraven, under Captain Gordon Campbell, V.C., sighted a German submarine. The British ship was disguised as a merchantman, and fulfilling her rôle, allowed the enemy to come close and sent out signals of distress. As arranged, some of the crew, apparently panic-stricken, left the vessel, but a terrible explosion killed some of those who remained on board. The survivors, however, kept to their task of deceiving the Germans until the submarine was near enough to be torpedoed. They did this amid constant explosions of cordite and shells, with a fire burning furiously and with the submarine firing steadily. At last, when the Dunraven was almost a wreck, destroyers arrived and rescued the crew. Among those who assisted Campbell in this most perilous work were Bonner and Pitcher, both of whom received the Victoria Cross.

V.C. HEROES OF THE WAR (IV)

The third V.C. was posthumously granted to Skipper T. Crisp, R.N.R. On an August afternoon the smack Nelson was attacked by a submarine. Crisp was below packing fish; one man was cleaning the deck. Coming up, Crisp saw an object on the horizon, examined it closely, and sang out: "Clear for action. Submarine!" Scarcely had he uttered the words when a shot fell about a hundred yards away. Others followed, and the fourth went through the port bow just below the waterline. The skipper was hit by a shell which took off both his legs. Most of his crew were killed or injured; but refusing to haul down the flag, he gave the order: "Throw the confidential books overboard, and me after them!" He was too badly wounded to be moved, and the survivors left him. A quarter of an hour afterwards the Nelson went down.

The cross was granted to Ordinary Seaman John Henry Carless for an act of conspicuous bravery in the action in the Heligoland Bight on November 17, 1917. Carless was mortally wounded, but went on serving the gun at which he was acting as rammer, and helping to clear away the other casualties. He collapsed once, but got up, cheered on the gun's new crew, fell down again, and died. "He not only set a very inspiring and memorable example," said the official account, "but he also, while mortally wounded, continued to do effective work against the King's enemies."

The four remaining naval heroes were awarded the cross on July 24, 1918, for services against Zeebrugge and Ostend on the night of April 22-23. In all, six crosses were given for these feats—two to the Royal Marine forces, whose deeds are described later. The storming of Zeebrugge and the operations against Ostend are dealt with in a later chapter, so that it is only necessary to indicate briefly the part taken by the four V.C.'s. Commander (later Captain) Alfred Francis Blakeney Carpenter was in command of the Vindictive. He set a magnificent example to all by his calm composure when navigating mined waters, supervising the landing, walking round the deck directing operations, and encouraging the men, although his ship was under a murderous fire throughout. He was selected by his officer colleagues to receive the cross. Lieutenant Richard Douglas Sandford, R.N., was in command of submarine C3, and skilfully placed that vessel between the piles of the viaduct before lighting his fuse and abandoning her.

CROSSES FOR AIRMEN

Lieutenant Percy Thompson Dean, R.N.V.R., was in command of the motor launch 282, and handled her in a magnificent manner when embarking the officers and men from the blockships. He followed them in, and closed Intrepid and Iphigenia under a constant and deadly fire, taking off over one hundred officers and men. Able-Seaman Albert Edward McKenzie belonged to B company of the storming-party. He landed on the Mole with his machine gun and used his gun to the greatest advantage, accounting for several of the enemy running from a shelter to a destroyer alongside the Mole. Severely wounded, he died in the following November, but was selected by the men of the Vindictive and other boats to receive the cross.

Four airmen received the cross in the fourth year of the war, as compared with five in the third. Captain William Avery Bishop, D.S.O., M.C., Canadian cavalry and R.F.C., ranks with Captains Ball and McCudden as among the most brilliant airmen produced by the war, and the particular deed for which he was awarded the honour stands high in aerial heroism. He was working independently, and flew first of all to an enemy aerodrome near Cambrai. Finding it empty, he flew to another, twelve miles the other side of the line. He attacked seven machines from about fifty feet, and a mechanic, who was starting one of the engines, was seen to fall. One of the enemy machines got off the ground, but Bishop fired fifteen rounds into it at close range and it crashed. He then sent down a second machine, but two more rose from the aerodrome, one of which he engaged at the height of 1,000 feet. This machine crashed three hundred yards from the aerodrome, after which he emptied a drum of ammunition into the fourth.

Lieutenant James Byford McCudden, D.S.O., M.C., M.M., was awarded the V.C. on March 30, 1918. His record was probably unique. Starting as a private in the R.F.C., he had accompanied that arm of the British expeditionary force to France in August, 1914. He went through the retreat from Mons and shared in practically every important battle, so that he could justly claim an unusual wealth of practical experience. The official announcement of McCudden's V.C. award gave a number of instances of his "conspicuous bravery, exceptional perseverance, keenness, and very high devotion to duty." At that time he had accounted for fifty-four enemy aeroplanes. "While in his present squadron he has participated

V.C. HEROES OF THE WAR (IV)

in seventy-eight offensive patrols, and in nearly every case has been the leader. On at least thirty other occasions, while with the same squadron, he has crossed the line alone, either in pursuit or in quest of enemy aeroplanes." Then followed a number of typical examples of particularly fine work. On January 30, 1918, single-handed, he attacked five enemy scouts, as a result of which two were destroyed. The official account closed with a tribute to his "utmost gallantry and skill," and said that McCudden, by the great service which he had rendered to his country, was deserving of the very highest honour.

The award of the cross to Lieutenant Alan Jerrard and Second-Lieutenant Alan Arnett McLeod, both of the Royal Air Force, was announced on May 2, 1918. Jerrard attacked five enemy aeroplanes and shot one down in flames. He then proceeded to attack an aerodrome from a height of only fifty feet, engaged single-handed some nineteen machines and destroyed one. While attacked by a large number of the enemy, Jerrard observed that one of the pilots of his patrol was in difficulties. He went to his assistance and destroyed another machine. He was continually attacked, and only retreated when ordered to do so by his patrol leader. Although wounded, he turned repeatedly and attacked the pursuing machines until he was overwhelmed by numbers and driven to the ground.

While flying with his observer attacking hostile formations, McLeod was assailed at a height of 5,000 feet by eight enemy triplanes. By skilful manœuvring he enabled his observer to fire bursts at each machine in turn, three of them being thus shot down. By this time McLeod had received five wounds and his machine was set on fire. Nothing daunted, he climbed out on to the left bottom plane where, controlling his machine from the fuselage side and side-slipping steeply, he kept the flames to one side and enabled the observer to continue firing until the ground was reached. The observer had been wounded six times when the machine crashed in No Man's Land, and McLeod, notwithstanding his own wounds, dragged him away from the burning wreckage. He was again wounded by a bomb, but succeeded in placing his companion in safety before falling from exhaustion.

Canada carried off eighteen crosses, or, if we include Captain Bishop, nineteen. First in point of time were Sergeant Frederick Hobson and Private Harry Brown, of the infantry. Unhappily, both were killed in winning the distinction. On August 15,

LENS AND HILL 60

1917, Hobson rescued a Lewis gun that was buried by a shell, and, though not a gunner, got it into action against the enemy north-west of Lens. Then the gun jammed. Realizing the importance of the post the enemy was endeavouring to capture, Hobson, though wounded, rushed forward and with bayonet and clubbed rifle held them back until he was killed.

Brown's bravery was equally marked. On a critical occasion at Hill 70, near Loos, it was of the utmost importance to get a message to headquarters, and he and one other were sent with it with orders to deliver it "at all costs." The other messenger was killed and Brown had his arm shattered, but he pushed on through an intense barrage until he arrived at the support lines. He was so exhausted that he fell down the dug-out steps, but retained consciousness long enough to discharge his mission with the words: "Important message." He died a few hours later on August 16.

In November, 1917, in a list of nine V.C.'s, three went to Canada. Captain (acting Major) Okill Massey Learmouth, M.C., when his company was surprised, charged and personally disposed of the attackers east of Loos on August 18th, 1917. Later on he carried out a tremendous fight with the advancing enemy. Although under intense barrage fire and mortally wounded, he stood on the parapet of the trench, bombed the enemy continuously, and directed the defence in such a manner as to infuse a spirit of the utmost resistance into his men.

Company Sergeant-Major Robert Hanna showed conspicuous bravery at Lens when, on August 21, 1917, his attacking company met with most severe resistance and all the officers had become casualties. He led a party of men against a strong point, rushed through the wire, bayoneted three of the enemy, killed a fourth, and finally captured the position and silenced the machine gun. But for his daring action the attack would not have succeeded.

Equally brave, though somewhat different in character, was the V.C. deed of Private Michael James O'Rourke at Hill 60. For three days and nights this stretcher-bearer worked unceasingly at bringing in the wounded. He was under intense fire, and on several occasions was knocked down and partially buried by shells. Seeing a comrade, who had been blinded, stumbling about in front of the British trench, in full view of the enemy who were sniping at him, O'Rourke jumped out of his trench

V.C. HEROES OF THE WAR (IV)

and brought the man back. On other occasions he succoured wounded men, richly deserving the official tribute to his "magnificent courage and devotion."

Acting Corporal Filip Konowal took an active share in directing the difficult task of "mopping up" cellars, craters, and machine gun emplacements at Lens. In one cellar he bayoneted three Germans and attacked single-handed seven others in a crater, killing them all. On reaching the objective, Konowal rushed a machine gun emplacement and brought the gun back to his own lines. The next day he again attacked single-handed another gun emplacement, killed three of the crew, and destroyed the gun and emplacement with explosives.

Two Canadian officers were awarded the cross on December 18, 1917—Lieutenants Robert Shankland, of the infantry, who performed his deed of valour at Passchendaele on October 26, 1917, and Henry Strachan, M.C., of the cavalry. The latter was a member of the Fort Garry Horse, which took part in a magnificent charge at the battle of Cambrai, November, 1917. Having gained a position, he rallied the remainder of his own platoon and men of other companies, disposed them to command the ground in front, and inflicted heavy casualties on the retreating enemy. Later, he dispersed a counter-attack, and then personally communicated to battalion headquarters a valuable report about the position.

Strachan took command of the squadron of his regiment when the leader, as they approached the enemy's front line at a gallop, was killed. He led the men through the enemy line of machine gun posts, and then in the charge on the enemy battery. All the gunners were killed and the battery silenced. Strachan rallied his men and fought his way back at night through the enemy's line, bringing all the unwounded men safely in, together with fifteen prisoners.

On January 11, 1918, a list of eighteen V.C.'s contained seven Canadian names. Captain (acting Major) George Randolph Pearkes, M.C., of the Mounted Rifles, led his men to the capture and consolidation of considerably more than the objectives allotted to him in an attack near Passchendaele. He took and held a strong point which constituted a danger, and, although wounded, maintained his objective with a small number of men. The official report stated that "his appreciation of the situation throughout and the reports rendered by him were invaluable to

CANADIAN VALOUR

his commanding officer in making dispositions of troops to hold the position captured."

Lieutenant (acting Captain) Christopher Patrick John O'Kelly, M.C., of the infantry, when the enemy position on the crest of a hill south-west of Passchendaele had been stormed, personally organized and led a series of attacks against pill boxes, his company alone capturing six of them. Later, under his leadership, his men repelled a strong counter-attack and during the night captured a hostile raiding party. In the same sector Sergeant George Harry Mullin, M.M., single-handed captured a pill box. He rushed the sniper's post in front, destroyed the garrison with bombs, and, crawling into the top of the pill box, shot the machine gunners. He then rushed to another entrance and compelled the garrison of ten to surrender. Corporal Colin Barron rushed three machine guns single-handed, killed four of the crew, and captured the remainder. He then turned one of the captured guns on the retreating enemy, and his dash and determination enabled the advance to be continued.

Private Thomas William Holmes, of the Mounted Rifles, was another pill box hero, for, among other daring deeds, he threw bombs into the entrance of one of these forts, causing the nineteen occupants to surrender. Private Cecil John Kinross, of the infantry, won his cross for an attack on an enemy machine gun that was holding up the advance. He killed the crew of six and destroyed the gun. His example and courage enabled a further advance of three hundred yards to be made, and a highly important position to be established. Very similar was the deed performed by Private James Peter Robertson. Carrying a captured machine gun, he led his platoon to the final objective and, selecting an excellent position, got the gun into action on the retreating enemy. During an attack, Lieutenant Hugh Mackenzie, D.C.M., of the Canadian Machine Gun corps, saw that the men were hesitating before a nest of enemy machine guns, which on commanding ground called Meetscheele Spur was causing severe casualties. He handed over command of his section of machine guns to an N.C.O., rallied the infantry, organized an attack, and captured the strong point. He was killed while leading a frontal attack on a pill box.

Lieutenant Gordon Muriel Flowerdew, of the cavalry, won his cross when in command of a squadron detailed for special

V.C. HEROES OF THE WAR (IV)

service north east of Bois de Morevil, France. On reaching the first objective he saw two lines of the enemy, each about sixty strong, with machine guns in the centre and on the flanks. Realizing the critical nature of the operation, he ordered one troop to dismount and carry out a special movement, while he led the remaining three troops to the charge. The squadron, less one troop, passed over both lines, killed many of the enemy, and wheeling about galloped at them again. The enemy broke and retired. Flowerdew was dangerously wounded in both legs. The last V.C. gained by Canada in the fourth year, fell to Lieutenant George Burdon McKean. In the Gavrelle sector, finding his party in the communication trench held up at a block by intense fire, he ran into the open, leaped over the block, and landed on top of the enemy. While he was still lying on the ground, a German rushed at him with a bayonet, but McKean shot him. It was owing to his heroism that the enemy's position was captured.

Eleven crosses went to the Australians, the first being awarded to Second-Lieutenant Frederick Birks, who rushed a strong point which was holding up the advance at Glencorse wood, east of Ypres. He organized a small party and attacked another strong point which was occupied by twenty-five of the enemy, of whom many were killed and the others captured. He was killed at his post while endeavouring to extricate some of his men who had been buried by a shell.

Five Australian V.C.'s were gazetted on November, 26, 1917, of whom Sergeant John James Dwyer, of the Machine Gun Corps, comes first. At Zonnebeke he rushed his machine gun forward in advance of a captured position in order to obtain a more commanding site. While so doing he noticed an enemy machine gun firing on the troops on the right flank. Unhesitatingly he dashed with his gun to within thirty yards of the enemy gun and fired point-blank at it, putting it out of action and killing the crew. Dwyer rendered equally valuable service on the following day. On another occasion his gun was blown up by shell fire, but he went through the enemy barrage to head quarters, and brought back another.

Another Australian non-commissioned officer to win the cross was Sergeant Lewis McGee, who led his platoon to the final objective east of Ypres. When they were stopped by machine gun fire from a pill box, he rushed the post single-handed.

IN POLYGON WOOD

He reorganized the remnants of his platoon, and was foremost in the remainder of the advance. Lance-Corporal Walter Peeler rushed a shell-hole, again near Ypres, where Germans were sniping the first wave of assault, accounted for nine of them, and cleared the way for the advance. During subsequent operations he located and killed the gunner of a machine gun position and disposed of ten of the enemy who had been dislodged by a bomb from a shelter.

Private Patrick Bugden led small parties to attack pill boxes, successfully silenced the machine guns with bombs, and captured the garrisons at Polygon Wood. On no fewer than five occasions he rescued wounded men under intense fire. Private Reginald Roy Inwood, also at Polygon Wood, during the advance to the second objective, moved forward alone through the barrage to an enemy strong post and captured it, together with nine prisoners. During the evening he volunteered for a special all-night patrol, and by his coolness and judgment obtained and sent back very valuable information. Later he located a troublesome machine gun and, going out alone, captured it. Another machine gun exploit was performed by Captain Clarence Smith Jeffries, at Passchendaele who rushed a concrete emplacement, capturing four machine guns and thirty-five prisoners. He then led his company forward under heavy artillery barrage to the objective. Later, he captured two machine guns and thirty more prisoners. He was killed during the attack, but it was entirely due to his great bravery that the centre was not held up for a long period.

Sergeant Stanley Robert McDougall's prompt action saved the line and enabled the enemy's advance to be stopped at Dernancourt, France. The first German wave broke the line, but he at once charged the second wave, single-handed, with rifle and bayonet, killed seven, and captured a machine gun. This he turned on to the enemy, thus causing many casualties and checking the advance. A particularly daring deed won the V.C. for Lieutenant Percy Valentine Storkey, who had been wounded twice. When, after emerging from a wood, the enemy trench line was encountered, Storkey found himself with six men in the Bois de Hangard, France. Moving forward, he noticed that a large enemy party was holding up the advance of the troops to the right. He decided to attack this group from the flank and rear, and while going forward was joined by another officer and

V.C. HEROES OF THE WAR (IV)

four men. The two small bodies charged the position with fixed bayonets from two directions, drove the enemy out, killed or wounded thirty, and captured three officers and fifty men with a machine gun.

One other officer and one man complete the Australian tale. They were Lieutenant Clifford William King Sadlier and Sergeant William Ruthven. Sadlier led his bombing section against a strong enemy machine gun post at Villers Bretonneux, France, which was holding up the advance, killed the crews, and captured two of the guns. By this time his party were all casualties, but alone he attacked a third gun, killing the crew of four and taking the gun. His conduct was the means of clearing the flank and allowing the battalion to move forward. Ruthven showed amazing initiative in action at Ville-sur-Ancres. When his company commander had been severely wounded he assumed command of a portion of the assault, took charge of the company headquarters, and rallied the section in his vicinity. As the leading wave approached its objective it was subjected to heavy fire from a machine gun. Ruthven sprang out, threw a bomb which landed beside the post, and rushed the position. He then reorganized the men and established a point in the second objective. Soon he observed enemy movements on a sunken road near by. Without hesitation, and armed only with a revolver, he went over the open alone and rushed the position. Single-handed he "mopped up" this post and captured the garrison, thirty-two strong. The official account of these exploits referred to Ruthven's "magnificent courage and determination, his fine fighting spirit, his remarkable courage, and his dashing action."

New Zealand's two heroes in the fourth year were Corporal Leslie William Andrew and Private Henry James Nicholas. Andrew attacked and captured a machine gun under circumstances of very great danger at La Basse Ville, France, and also reduced a machine gun post which was holding up the advance. Nicholas, one of a Lewis gun section at Poldenknock, had orders to form a defensive flank to the right of the advance, which was subsequently checked by heavy rifle fire from a strong point. He rushed forward alone, shot the officer in command, and overcame the remainder of the garrison of sixteen.

South Africa's V.C. was Lance-Corporal William Henry Hewitt, who attacked a pill box with his section east of Ypres, and tried to rush the doorway. The garrison proved very

FIVE ARTILLERYMEN

stubborn, and he was severely wounded. Nevertheless, he proceeded to the loophole where, in his attempts to put a bomb into it, he was again wounded. Undeterred, however, he managed to throw a bomb inside and forced the occupants to surrender.

Lance-Dafadar Gobind Singh, of the cavalry, was one of the two Indians who won the cross. He showed great bravery in thrice volunteering to carry messages between the battalion and brigade headquarters, a distance of one and a half miles over open ground. He succeeded each time in delivering his message, although on both occasions his horse was shot. Rifleman Rana Karanbahadur, of the Gurkha Rifles, proved as brave as his countryman. During an attack at El Keir he, with a few other men, succeeded in creeping forward with a Lewis gun to engage a machine gun that had caused severe casualties. No. 1 of the Lewis gun opened fire and was shot immediately. Karanbahadur at once pushed the dead man off the gun, and, in spite of the bombs thrown at him and heavy fire from both flanks, opened fire and knocked out the machine gun crew; then, switching his fire on to the bombers and riflemen in front, he silenced their fire also. His work throughout the day was characterised as magnificent.

Five members of the artillery were included in the fourth year's list of Victoria Crosses. Among awards published on February 14, 1918, were two members of the Royal Field Artillery. Lieutenant Samuel Thomas Dickson Wallace won the cross for amazing bravery while in command of a section at Gonnelieu. When his battery was reduced by casualties to five men, and was attacked on the right flank and in the rear, he maintained the fire of the guns by swinging the trails round close together, the men running and loading from gun to gun. Thus he not only covered other batteries, but also materially assisted some small infantry detachments to maintain their position against great odds. He was in action for eight hours, firing the whole time, and when compelled to withdraw, took with him the essential gun parts and all the wounded.

Sergeant Cyril Edward Gourley, M.M., kept a gun in action practically throughout the day at Little Priel farm, east of Ephey, although the enemy had almost surrounded his section of howitzers. When the Germans advanced, he pulled his gun out of the pit and engaged a machine gun at 500 yards, knocking it out with a direct hit. Gunner Charles Edwin Stone,

V.C. HEROES OF THE WAR (IV)

M.M., after working hard at his gun for six hours under heavy gas and shell fire at Caponne farm, went to the rear section with an order which he delivered. At dusk he helped to capture a machine gun and four prisoners—a gallant act, which undoubtedly saved the detachment serving the guns.

Lieutenant (acting Captain) Eric Stuart Dougall, M.C., R.F.A., maintained his battery in action under heavy gas and shell fire at Messines, finding that he could not clear the crest owing to the withdrawal of the British line, he ran his guns on to the top of the ridge. By this time the infantry had been pressed back in line with the guns, but this resourceful officer assumed command of the situation and rallied and organized the men. With them he formed a line in front of his battery, and, although exposed to both rifle and machine gun fire, fearlessly walked about as though on parade. He inspired the infantry with his assurance that "so long as you stick to your trenches I will keep my guns here." By this means the line was maintained throughout the day, thereby delaying the enemy's advance for over twelve hours and eventually averting a serious breach. He was killed four days later while directing the fire of his battery.

Sergeant Norman Augustus Finch, Royal Marine Artillery, was one of the heroes of Zeebrugge. He was second in command of the pom-poms and Lewis guns in the foretop of the *Vindictive*. When it was difficult to locate the enemy's guns, which were causing heavy damage, those in the foretop kept up a continuous fire, changing rapidly from one target to another and thus keeping the enemy's fire down. Then, when all in the top except Finch had been killed or disabled, and he had been severely wounded, he got his Lewis gun into action and kept up a continuous fire, harassing the enemy on the Mole, until the foretop received another direct hit and the remainder of the armament was completely put out of action. He was selected by the 4th Battalion Royal Marines to receive the V.C.

During the fourth year, the war on the Western front was still at deadlock, and consequently the cavalry had few chances; but, nevertheless, in one way or another, five members of this arm won the cross. The deeds of three of these—two Canadians and an Indian—have been recorded; the remaining two are Major Alexander Malius Lafone, of the Yeomanry, and Private George William Clare, of the Lancers. Lafone received his

DEEDS OF THE GUARDSMEN

cross for bravery, leadership, and self-sacrifice when holding a position at Beersheba, Palestine, for over seven hours against vastly superior forces. When all his men save three had been hit and his trench was full of wounded, he ordered those who could walk to move to a trench slightly in the rear, and from his own position he maintained an heroic resistance. When finally surrounded by the enemy he stepped into the open and continued the fight until mortally wounded. Clare was a stretcher-bearer, who showed wonderful heroism in dressing and conducting wounded over the open to the dressing-station at Bourlon Wood. At one period he went to a detached post under heavy fire, dressed all the cases, and manned the post single-handed till a relief was sent. Later he warned every company post of an impending gas attack, the whole time under fire, and was himself killed by a shell.

Eight Guardsmen carried off the soldier's highest honour. First in point of date were Sergeant Robert Bye, of the Welsh, and Private Thomas Witham, of the Coldstream Guards. Bye rushed a block-house on the Yser canal, put the garrison out of action and took charge of a party detailed to clear up a line of block-houses which had been passed. Witham performed a bold action in working his way from shell hole to shell hole through the barrage, to rush a machine gun which was enfilading a battalion on the right. He was able to capture the gun, together with an officer and two others.

Private Thomas Woodcock, Irish Guards, a former Wigan collier, was one of a post at Ney Copse, north of Broenbeck, commanded by Lance-Sergeant Moyney, and, in defending it, both won the cross. It had held out for ninety-six hours, when it was attacked from all sides in overwhelming numbers and its garrison forced to retire. Woodcock covered the retirement with a Lewis gun, and then crossed the river; but, hearing cries for help from behind him, he returned. Wading into the stream amid a shower of bombs, he rescued a comrade, and carried him across the open ground in broad daylight, regardless of bullets. He was killed in action on March 27, 1918. As for Moyney, he, with Woodcock, covered the retirement of his party across the stream, and did not himself cross till the whole of his force had gained the farther bank. It was due to his endurance, skill, and devotion that his entire force was brought safely out of action.

V.C. HEROES OF THE WAR (IV)

Lance-Sergeant John Harold Rhodes, Grenadier Guards, when in charge of a Lewis gun section near Houthulst forest, east of Ypres, went single-handed through his own barrage and effected an entry into a pill box, capturing nine of the enemy and securing valuable information. Sergeant John McAulay, D.C.M., Scots Guards, assumed command of his company at Fontaine Notre Dame, France, when all his officers had become casualties, and successfully held and consolidated the objective gained, in addition to repulsing a counter-attack. He carried his company commander who was mortally wounded, into safety, under very heavy fire, being twice knocked down by the concussion of bursting shells.

Lieutenant (acting Captain) George Henry Tatham Paton, M.C., Grenadier Guards, fearlessly exposed himself at Gonne-lieu in order to readjust the line, by walking up and down within fifty yards of the enemy under a withering fire. When the enemy had broken through on his left, he mounted the parapet and, with a few men forced them once more to withdraw. He was mortally wounded, but saved the left flank.

Lieutenant (acting Captain) Thomas Tannatt Pryce, M.C., of the Grenadier Guards, was the first member of the Stock Exchange to win the cross in the war. He led two platoons to the capture of a village, and the next day was occupying a position near Vieux Berquin with a handful of men when he was almost surrounded. He was attacked four times, but each time beat off the enemy. The latter then brought up three guns to within three hundred yards and knocked in his trench; so Pryce called on his men to fight to the last. With him leading, they left their trench and drove back the enemy, and he was last seen engaged in a fierce hand-to-hand struggle with overwhelming numbers. With forty odd men he defied an enemy battalion for over ten hours, and "stopped the advance through the British line."

Two members of the Royal Engineers are among the list of heroes: Lieutenant-Colonel (temporary Brigadier-General) Clifford Coffin, D.S.O., and temporary Second-Lieutenant Cecil Leonard Knox. Of Coffin it is interesting to note that he was fifty-four years old at the time, and was probably the only officer in the British army up to that date (September, 1917) who had received the V.C. while holding general's rank. When his command was held up while attacking at Westhoek, and

A DOUBLE HONOUR

was establishing itself along a forward shell-hole line, he went forward and inspected the front posts, showing an utter disregard of personal danger, giving advice generally, and cheering the men by his presence. His splendid example "saved the situation," said the official report. Knox was entrusted with the task of demolishing twelve bridges at Tugny, all of which he successfully destroyed. In the case of one steel girder bridge the time-fuse failed to act. Without hesitation he ran to it under heavy fire and, when the enemy were actually on the bridge, tore away the time-fuse and lit the instantaneous one.

The first member of the Royal Army Medical corps to receive a V.C. in the fourth year was temporary Captain Harold Ackroyd, M.C., M.D., attached to the Berkshire regiment. Utterly regardless of danger, he worked continuously for many hours at Ypres tending the wounded and saving the lives of officers and men. His duties took him under heavy fire, and on one occasion he carried a wounded officer to a place of safety, regardless of shells and bullets. Later he was killed in action. Captain John Fox Russell, M.C., displayed most conspicuous bravery at Tel-el-Khuweilfeh, Palestine, until he was killed. He repeatedly went out to attend to the wounded under continuous fire from snipers and machine guns, and, in many cases, where no other means were at hand, carried them in himself.

The third medical V.C. of the fourth year is perhaps the most notable of all. Captain Noel Godfrey Chavasse, a twin son of the Bishop of Liverpool, earned the coveted cross in the third year, and on September 15, 1917, it was announced that he had been awarded a bar thereto—a most unusual distinction. In the official report of his second honour it was stated that, though most severely wounded early in the action at Wielletje, Captain Chavasse bravely refused to leave his post, and for two days not only continued to perform his duties but, in addition, went out repeatedly under heavy fire to search for and attend to the wounded who were lying out. "By his extraordinary energy and inspiring example," it continued, "he was instrumental in rescuing many wounded who would have otherwise undoubtedly succumbed under the weather conditions." He subsequently died of wounds.

Many infantry soldiers were granted the Victoria Cross for conspicuous bravery and skill with machine guns: but in the fourth year mention was made of a separate Machine Gun

V.C. HEROES OF THE WAR (IV)

corps, and three members of this won the cross. In a long list of V.C. awards published on November 27, 1917, appeared the name of Lance-Corporal Harold Mugford, Machine Gun corps. Under heavy fire at Monchy-le-Preux, he succeeded in getting his machine-gun into a forward and exposed position, where he dealt very effectively with the enemy, who was massing for a counter-attack. He was ordered to a new position, and, although wounded, refused to go to the dressing-station, but continued on duty with his gun, inflicting severe loss on the enemy. His valour and initiative were instrumental in breaking up an impending counter-attack.

Private Herbert George Columbine took over the command of a gun, and in an isolated position at Hervilly Wood, with no wire in front, continued firing from 9 a.m. till 1 p.m. During this time wave after wave of the Germans failed to get up to him ; but when he was attacked by an aeroplane they gained a footing in the trench on either side. The position was then untenable, so Columbine ordered the two remaining men to get away, and, though bombed from either side, kept his gun in action and inflicted " tremendous losses " on the enemy. He was eventually killed by a bomb.

One of London's many V.C. heroes was Lance-Corporal Arthur Henry Cross, a Camberwell man. Entering the 21st London, he was later transferred to the Machine Gun corps. He volunteered to make a reconnaissance of the position of two machine guns, which had been captured by the Germans at Ervillers. Advancing single-handed to the enemy trench, armed only with his revolver, he forced seven of them to surrender and carry the machine guns, with their tripods and ammunition, to the British lines. He then handed over his prisoners and collected ~~teams~~ for his guns, which he brought into action with exceptional dash and skill. " It is impossible," was the official phrasing, " to speak too highly of the extreme gallantry, initiative, and dash displayed by this N.C.O."

Two members of the Tank corps received the Victoria Cross, these being Second-Lieutenant Clement Robertson, formerly Royal West Surrey regiment, then temporary Lieutenant (acting Captain) Tank corps, and temporary Lieutenant (acting Captain) Richard William Leslie Wain. Robertson led his landships to attack at Ypres under heavy fire of all kinds, over ground which had been heavily ploughed by shells. Knowing

A GALLANT CHAPLAIN

the risk of the tanks missing the way, he continued to lead them on foot, guiding them towards their objective, although he must have known that his action would inevitably cost him his life, as it did a few minutes later. Near Marcoing, Wain was in a tank which became disabled by a direct hit close to a strong point that was holding up the attack. He and one man, both seriously wounded, were the only survivors. Though bleeding profusely, he refused the attention of stretcher-bearers, rushed from behind the tank with a Lewis gun and captured the strong point, taking about half the garrison prisoners. He then fired at the retreating enemy until he received a fatal wound.

Private Richard George Masters won the cross for the Army Service corps. When communications were cut off near Bethune and the wounded could not be evacuated, he volunteered to get through an almost impassable road, and after great difficulty succeeded. He made journey after journey while it was being swept by shell fire and bombed by an aeroplane.

Captain Edward Bamford, D.S.O., Royal Marine Light Infantry, was one of the heroes of Zeebrugge. He landed on the Mole from the *Vindictive* with a storming force, and displayed the greatest initiative, setting a magnificent example to his men. He first established a strong point and, when satisfied that it was secure, led an assault on a battery with the utmost coolness. Bamford was selected by his fellow officers to receive the cross.

The third chaplain to win the V.C. in the war, the Rev. Theodore Bayley Hardy, D.S.O., M.C., attached Lincolnshire regiment, was over fifty years old at the time. He distinguished himself by bravery near Bucquoy, and east of Gommecourt, France. The vicar of Hutton Roof, Kirkby Lonsdale, he joined the forces as a chaplain in August, 1916. An infantry patrol had gone out to attack a post in the ruins of a village. Hearing the firing, Hardy followed the patrol, and about 400 yards beyond the British front line of posts found an officer dangerously wounded. He remained with him until he was able to get assistance to bring him in. On a second occasion, when an enemy shell exploded in the middle of the British posts, he at once made his way to the spot, despite heavy shelling, and set to work to extricate the buried men. During October, 1918, the chaplain was killed.

The story of the V.C. deeds of the 93 members of regiments of the line is most conveniently begun with the Lancashire

V.C. HEROES OF THE WAR (IV)

Fusiliers, which won five of these distinctions in the fourth year. Captain (temporary Lieutenant-Colonel) Bertram Best-Dunkley saw that the leading waves of an attack at Wieltje, had become disorganized by reason of heavy fire. He dashed forward, rallied the men, and led them to the assault of the positions, continuing to lead his battalion until all their objectives had been gained. Later, when the British positions were threatened, he collected the staff of battalion headquarters and beat off the advancing enemy. He died afterwards, of his wounds. Sergeant Joseph Lister assaulted a pill box which was holding up an advance east of Ypres. He called to the occupants to surrender, which they did—all but one man, whom he shot dead. Pushing on, he compelled about a hundred Germans sheltering in shell-holes farther to the rear to surrender.

Second-Lieutenant Bernard Matthew Cassidy was in command of a company at Arras, and was given orders that he must hold on to his position to the last. The enemy came on in overwhelming numbers, but Cassidy continually rallied his men under a terrific bombardment. His company was eventually surrounded, but he still fought on until killed. Second-Lieutenant John Schofield climbed out on the parapet under machine gun fire at Givenchy, and by his fearless demeanour forced the enemy, one hundred and twenty-three in number, to surrender. He was killed a few minutes later. The fifth hero of the Lancashire Fusiliers was Lance-Corporal Joel Halliwell, a native of Middleton. He gained his cross for "magnificent conduct" at Muscourt. Having captured a stray enemy horse, Halliwell rode out under heavy fire and rescued a wounded man from No Man's Land. He repeated this performance several times and succeeded in rescuing one officer and nine other ranks.

In chronological order the first of the five V.C. heroes of the London regiment, was Sergeant Alfred Joseph Knight. In the Alberta section, Ypres, when his platoon was attacking an enemy strong point, he rushed through the British barrage, bayoneted the enemy gunners, and, single-handed, captured the position. Later twelve of the enemy with a machine gun were encountered in a shell-hole, when Knight again rushed forward by himself, bayoneted two, and shot a third.

Lieutenant-Colonel Arthur Drummond Borton, D.S.O., showed splendid leadership at Sheria, Palestine. He deployed his battalion for attack across unknown country in darkness, and at

LONDONERS AGAIN

dawn led his companies against a strongly-held position. When the leading waves were checked by a withering fire, he showed an utter contempt of danger, reorganized his command, and leading his men forward, captured the position.

Two more Londoners were decorated on February 28, 1918: Corporal Charles William Train and Rifleman (Lance-Corporal) John Alexander Christie. A soldier in the London Scottish, Train earned his V.C. for remarkable bravery under heavy fire in Palestine. His company being held up by two machine guns, Train, on his own initiative, engaged the enemy with rifle-grenades and put some of the team out of action. Christie gained his distinction in helping to capture one of the hills before Jerusalem. At a critical time in the darkness and confusion he filled his pockets with bombs. Quite alone he got out of his trench, and running forward in the open, rained bombs on the Turkish trenches. The fifth member of the London regiment was Private R. E. Cruickshank, of the London Scottish. In Egypt his platoon came under heavy fire. A runner sent back for support was wounded and a volunteer to take a second message was called for. Cruickshank responded and rushed up the slope, but was hit and rolled back into the wady bottom. The same thing happened after his wounds had been dressed, but he rushed a third time up the slope and fell badly wounded.

Sergeant John Molyneux won the first of the five crosses that fell to the Royal Fusiliers. East of Langemarck, he cleared the enemy from a trench in front of a house and proceeded to the latter, where he engaged in a desperate hand-to-hand fight. With assistance the enemy was beaten and nearly thirty prisoners were captured. His initiative and dash prevented a slight check from becoming a serious block in the advance.

Lieutenant (temporary Captain) Robert Gee, M.C., won the Victoria Cross at Masniene and Les Rues Vertes. He was captured when a strong enemy force pierced the British line, but had no intention of accepting his fate. Killing one of his captors with his spiked stick, he succeeded in escaping. He then organized a party of the brigade staff with which, closely followed and supported by two companies of infantry, he attacked the enemy. Finding that an enemy machine gun was still in action, he rushed out with a revolver in each hand and followed by one man, captured the gun, killing eight of the crew.

V.C. HEROES OF THE WAR (IV)

Two more officers of this regiment appeared in the list of V.C.'s dated February 14, 1918. Captain (temporary Lieutenant-Colonel) Neville Bowes Elliott-Cooper, D.S.O., M.C., hearing that the enemy had broken through the line east of La Vacsuerie, near Cambrai, mounted the parapet of his dug-out, and dashed forward, calling upon the reserve company and details of battalion headquarters to follow. Absolutely unarmed, he made straight for the advancing enemy, and the men under his direction forced them back six hundred yards. He himself was severely wounded. Lieutenant (acting Captain) Walter Napleton Stone was ordered to withdraw his company in the Cambrai sector, leaving a rearguard to cover the operation. He stood on the parapet under a tremendous bombardment, observing the enemy, and continued to report valuable information until the telephone wire was cut by his orders. The rearguard was eventually surrounded, and Stone was seen fighting until shot through the head.

The fifth member of the Royal Fusiliers was Lance-Corporal Charles Graham Robertson, M.M. Realizing that he was being cut off, he sent back two men to get reinforcements, and remained at his post west of Polderhosk chateau, with only one man, firing his Lewis gun and killing large numbers of the enemy. No reinforcements came up, so he withdrew with his companion, to a point about ten yards farther back, where he successfully held his position. After further deeds of valour, Robertson managed to crawl back, bringing his gun with him.

Of the three regiments with four crosses to their credit the Royal Lancaster is noted first. The award to Corporal (Lance-Sergeant) Tom Fletcher Mayson was announced on September 15, 1917, and he was one of many who gained the cross by putting out of action a machine gun. His act of valour was performed near Wieltje. In addition he pursued the team to a dug-out, into which he followed them and disposed of them with his bayonet. Later, when clearing up a strong point, he again tackled a machine gun single-handed. Near Poelcapelle, Private Albert Halton, after an objective had been reached, rushed forward about 300 yards under heavy fire and captured a machine gun and its crew. He then went out again and brought in about twelve prisoners.

On June 29, 1918, Second-Lieutenant Joseph Henry Collin and Lance-Corporal James Hewitson were announced as having

FOUR RIFLEMEN

been awarded the cross. Collin fought against heavy odds at Givenchy in the keep held by his platoon, slowly withdrawing in the face of superior numbers, and contesting every inch of the ground. When the enemy was pressing him hard he attacked the gun and team single-handed, and kept the enemy at bay until he fell mortally wounded. In a daylight attack on a series of crater posts near Givenchy, Hewitson led his party to their objective, clearing the enemy from both trench and dug-out.

The first of the four Rifle brigade heroes was Sergeant William Francis Burman. Under grave difficulties south-east of Ypres, he attacked a machine gun, killed the gunner, and carried the gun to the company's objective, where he subsequently used it with great effect. Later he got behind the enemy, who was impeding the battalion on his right, killing six and capturing thirty-one Germans. The other three crosses of the Rifle Brigade were in the list published on June 29, 1918. Sergeant William Gregg, D.C.M., M.M., "saved the situation at a critical time" by rushing an enemy post at Bucquoy. At La Pannerie, Corporal Joseph Edward Woodall captured a machine gun and eight men single-handed. After the objective had been gained, heavy fire was encountered from a neighbouring farmhouse, so Woodall collected some men and rushed the farm, taking thirty prisoners. Private William Beesley, single-handed, rushed a post at Bucquoy, and with his revolver killed two of the enemy.

The Worcestershire regiment also earned four crosses in the fourth year. In a list of twenty awards, dated November 27, 1917, appeared the name of Private Frederick George Dancox, who was one of a party of ten, detached as "moppers-up." One of their objects was the silencing of a troublesome machine gun in the Boesinghe sector. Dancox worked his way through the barrage and entered the emplacement from the rear, threatening the garrison with a bomb. Shortly afterwards he reappeared with a machine gun under his arm, followed by forty of the enemy, and the gun was kept in action by him throughout the day. On December 19, 1917, he was reported killed in action.

The second cross gained by the Worcesters was that of Captain (acting Lieutenant-Colonel) Frank Crowther Roberts, D.S.O., M.C. He showed conspicuous bravery during operations covering twelve days west of the Somme and at Pargny. He exhibited "exceptional military skill in dealing with the many very difficult situations of the retirement, and amazing

V.C. HEROES OF THE WAR (IV)

endurance and energy in encouraging and inspiring all ranks under his command." Second-Lieutenant John Crowe twice went forward at Neuve Eglise with nine men to engage the enemy, both times in face of active machine gun fire and sniping. His action was so daring that on each occasion the enemy withdrew from the high ground into the village, where he followed them and himself opened fire on them.

Particularly conspicuous was the leadership throughout three days of intense fighting on the river Aisne, of Major and Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel (temporary Brigadier-General) George William St. George Grogan, C.M.G., D.S.O. He was, except for a few hours, in command of the remnants of the infantry of a division and various attached troops. "His action during the whole of the battle," it was officially stated, "can only be described as magnificent." His utter disregard for his personal safety and his sound practical ability materially helped to stay the onward rush of the enemy. Throughout the most critical third day of operations, he spent his time under constant fire of all kinds, riding up and down the front line, encouraging his troops, and reorganizing those who had fallen into disorder.

The Sherwood Foresters (Notts and Derbyshire Regiment) carried off three crosses. When during an attack south-east of Ypres, visibility was obscured owing to fog and smoke, the two leading waves passed over certain hostile dug-outs without clearing them. Thus severe casualties were inflicted on the advancing troops, and volunteers were called for to clear up the situation. Corporal Ernest Albert Egerton at once jumped up and dashed for the dug-outs under heavy fire. He shot in succession three Germans, and then 29 of them surrendered. His colleague, acting Corporal Fred Greaves, showed initiative when his platoon was held up by machine gun fire from a concrete stronghold. Realizing that unless this post was taken quickly the men would lose the protection of the barrage, Greaves, followed by another non-commissioned officer, rushed forward and reached the rear of the building; there he bombed the occupants, killing and capturing the garrison and taking four machine guns. Later in the day, when the troops of a flank brigade had given way, he collected his men and enfiladed the enemy's advance. The third Sherwood Forester was Captain (temporary Lieutenant-Colonel) Charles Edward Hudson, D.S.O., M.C. When the enemy had penetrated the front line he collected various headquarter details

WELCH FUSILIERS

and drove the enemy towards the British front line. With two men, he then rushed the German position, shouting to the enemy to surrender, which some of them did. Although severely wounded he directed the counter-attack, which was successful.

As briefly as possible may now be related the story of the men in the twenty-one regiments which have each two crosses to their credit. Second-Lieutenant (acting Captain) Thomas Riversdale Colyer-Fergusson won the first of the two for the Northamptons. Finding himself with a sergeant and only five men in a difficult position at Bellewaarde, he carried out the attack as originally planned, and succeeded in capturing the enemy trench and disposing of the garrison. He successfully resisted a counter-attack, during which, assisted by his orderly only, he captured a machine gun and turned it on the assailants. Temporary Second-Lieutenant Alfred Cecil Herring saw his post, at Montague Bridge, cut off from the troops on both flanks and surrounded. He immediately counter-attacked and recaptured a position the enemy had gained. During the night he was continually attacked, but beat off all assaults.

The first V.C. of the Royal Welch Fusiliers was Corporal James Llewellyn Davies, who, during an assault at Pilckem, pushed gallantly through the British barrage, and, single-handed, attacked a machine gun emplacement after several men had been killed in attempting to take it. This he took; and then, although wounded, led a bombing party to the assault of a defended house. He died later of wounds. His companion, acting Corporal John Collins, whose award was announced on December 19, 1917, repeatedly went out under heavy fire in Palestine and brought wounded back to cover, thus saving many lives. In subsequent operations he was conspicuous in rallying and leading his command, and he led the final assault.

The two Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders were Lieutenant John Reginald Noble Graham, attached to the Machine Gun corps, and Second-Lieutenant John Crawford Buchan. At Istabulat, Mesopotamia, Graham accompanied his guns across open ground, under heavy fire, and when most of his men became casualties assisted in carrying the ammunition. Twice wounded, he continued to control his guns during the advance, and was able to open an accurate fire on the enemy.

When fighting with his platoon in a forward position of the battle zone east of Marteville, Buchan, although wounded,

V.C. HEROES OF THE WAR (IV)

insisted on remaining with his men, and later, when heavy fire was raking his position, continued to visit his posts. When his command was surrounded he collected his platoon and prepared to fight his way back to the supporting line. At this point the enemy, who had crept round his right flank, rushed towards him, shouting out "Surrender!" He gave the reply "To hell with surrender!" and, shooting the foremost assailant, finally repelled this advance. He then fought his way back to the supporting line, where he held out till dusk.

Second-Lieutenants Denis George Wyldbore Hewitt and Montague Shadworth Seymour Moore were the two members of the Hampshire regiment to earn the distinction in the fourth year. Hewitt set a magnificent example of coolness and contempt of danger north-east of Ypres, by leading forward the remains of his company under heavy fire. He had been hit by a piece of shell, which exploded the signal lights in his haversack and set fire to his equipment and clothes. Having extinguished the flames, he continued at the post of duty, in spite of his severe wound. He was killed by a sniper.

Moore showed great gallantry during a second attack on an objective which had not been captured near Tower Hamlets, east of Ypres. He arrived there with only a sergeant and four men, but, nothing daunted, at once bombed a large dug-out and took 28 prisoners and three guns. Soon he was reinforced, but as his position was entirely isolated, he dug a trench and repelled bombing attacks throughout the night. In the morning he retired, having held his post for thirty-six hours.

The two King's Royal Rifles were Sergeant Edward Cooper and Rifleman Albert Edward Shepherd. Cooper was Stockton's first V.C. When machine guns were holding up an advance at Langemarck, he immediately rushed forward with four men to the block-house. About one hundred yards distant he ordered his men to lie down and fire, but finding this did not silence the guns, he rushed forward and fired his revolver into an opening in the block-house. The guns ceased firing and the garrison surrendered, seven machine guns and 45 prisoners being captured. When Shepherd's company was held up by a machine gun at Villers Plovich, he volunteered to rush it, which he did, killing two gunners and capturing the gun. The company, on continuing its advance, came under heavy enfilade fire, and when the last officer had become a casualty,

TWO SCOTTISH REGIMENTS

Shepherd took command, ordered the men to lie down, and himself went back to obtain the help of a tank. He returned to his company and led them to their last objective.

The two Seaforth Highlanders were Sergeant Alexander Edwards and Lance-Corporal Robert McBeath. The former led several men against a hostile machine gun north of Ypres, killed all the team, and captured the gun. Later, when a sniper was causing casualties, he crawled out to stalk him, and although badly wounded in the arm, managed to kill him. As only one officer was now left with the company, Edwards, realising that the success of the attack depended on the capture of the farthest objective, led his men on until this had been taken. Lance-Corporal R. McBeath went out alone west of Cambrai, and located a hostile machine gun that was checking the advance, worked his way towards it, and shot the gunner with his revolver. Finding other guns in action, he attacked them with the assistance of a tank, and drove the gunners into a deep dug-out. He rushed in after them, shot one who opposed him on the steps, and captured three officers and thirty men.

Two non-commissioned officers earned the distinction for the King's Own Scottish Borderers: Sergeant (acting Company Quartermaster-Sergeant) William H. Grimaldeston and Sergeant (acting Company Sergeant-Major) John Skinner displayed a heroism that had much in common. Grimaldeston collected a small number of men to fire rifle-grenades on a block-house that was holding up the left of an attack at Wijndendrift. He then obtained a volunteer to assist him, and, in spite of very heavy fire from the block-house, the two pushed on towards it and made for the entrance. Grimaldeston threatened the men inside with a hand-grenade, and forced them to surrender. Skinner, although wounded in the head, collected six men, and, with great determination, worked round the left flank of three block-houses whence machine guns were delaying the advance also at Wijndendrift. He succeeded in bombing and taking the first block-house single-handed; then, leading his six men towards the other two, they captured sixty prisoners.

An officer and a private carried off the two crosses for the Yorkshire Light Infantry. Major (acting Lieutenant-Colonel) Oliver Cyril Spencer Watson, D.S.O., showed gallant leadership during critical operations at Rossignol Wood. His command was at a point where continual attacks were made by the

V.C. HEROES OF THE WAR (IV)

enemy, and an intricate system of trenches in front, coupled with the fact that the position was under constant fire, rendered the situation still more dangerous. A counter-attack had at first achieved its object, but as the enemy were holding out in two improvised strong points, Watson led his remaining reserve to the attack. But he was outnumbered ; so finally he ordered his men to retire, remaining himself in a communication trench until killed. Private Wilfred Edwards, of the same regiment, showed conspicuous bravery when under heavy fire from a concrete fort at Langemarck. Having lost all his company officers, he dashed forward without hesitation, threw bombs through the loopholes, disabling the fort, and motioned to his company to advance.

Two men in the ranks earned the crosses credited to the West Riding regiment. Private Arnold Loosemore, also in the Langemarck sector, crawled through partially cut wire, dragging his Lewis gun with him, and then dealt with a strong party of the enemy who were checking his platoon, killing about twenty of them. Private Arthur Poulter won his V.C. at Erquinghem. On ten occasions he carried badly wounded men to a safer locality through a particularly heavy barrage. Two of these were hit a second time while on his back.

Private William Boynton Butler, of the West Yorkshire regiment, was in charge of a Stokes gun, in trenches which were being heavily shelled east of Lempire. Suddenly one of the fly-off levers of a Stokes shell came off and fired it. Butler at once picked up the shell and jumped to the entrance of the emplacement, where he called out to some infantry who were passing, urging them to hurry on as the shell was exploding. Then, turning round, he placed himself between the men and the live shell, afterwards throwing it on to the parapet and taking cover in the bottom of the trench. Sergeant Albert Mountain was the other West Yorkshireman. His company had dug themselves in at Hametincourt, but the position on a sunken road was very exposed, and they were forced to retire from it. The enemy was advancing in mass, and there was a call for volunteers for a counter-attack. Mountain immediately stepped forward and his party of ten men followed him. They advanced on the flank with a Lewis gun and brought enfilade fire to bear on the enemy patrol, killing about 100. Soon the enemy's main body appeared, and Mountain's men began to waver, but he rallied them and

THE LUSITANIA RECALLED

formed a defensive position from which to cover the retirement of the rest of the company. He then took command of the flank post, which was "in the air," and held on for twenty-seven hours until finally surrounded by the enemy. Mountain was one of the few who managed to fight their way back.

The two North Staffordshire heroes were Sergeant John Carmichael and Private (Lance-Corporal) John Thomas. When excavating a trench near Hill 60 at Zwarteleen, the sergeant saw that a grenade had been unearthed and had started to burn. He immediately rushed to the spot and, shouting to his men to get clear, placed his steel helmet over it. He stood upon the grenade until it exploded and blew him out of the trench.

When war broke out Thomas was working on the Lusitania, and he was in that liner on her last voyage, being one of the survivors. He subsequently joined the North Staffords and earned his V.C. in France. Observing the enemy making preparations for a counter-attack at Fontaine, he and a comrade decided to make a close reconnaissance. They went out in broad daylight under heavy fire. The other man was hit, and Thomas went on alone. Walking round a small copse he shot three snipers, pushed on to a building used by the enemy as a night post, and located the position of the German troops. This information was of such value that the hostile attack was broken up.

The two Gloucesters were both young officers. Second-Lieutenant Hardy Falconer Parson won the V.C. during a night attack on a bombing-post held by his command near Epehy, France. The bombers holding the block were forced back, but Parsons remained, and although severely scorched and burnt by liquid fire, continued single-handed to hold up the enemy by throwing bombs. He delayed the enemy long enough, but as a consequence succumbed to his wounds. Temporary Captain Mauley Angell James, M.C., led his company forward with "magnificent determination and courage," near Velu Wood, inflicting severe losses on the enemy and capturing 27 prisoners and two machine guns. Two days later he was ordered to hold on "to the last" in order to enable the brigade to be extricated. Leading his company forward in a local counter-attack, he was last seen working a machine gun single-handed.

The two crosses earned by the Black Watch (Royal Highlanders) were announced on November 27, 1917. Major (acting Lieutenant-Colonel) Lewis Pugh Evans, D.S.O., was commanding

V.C. HEROES OF THE WAR (IV)

the Lincolns when he did the work for which he was decorated. Near Zonnebeke he took his battalion in perfect order through a terrible enemy barrage, personally formed up all units and led them to the assault. While machine guns in an emplacement were causing casualties, and troops were working round the flank, he rushed at it himself and, firing his revolver through the loophole, forced the garrison to capitulate. After capturing the first objective he was severely wounded, but he re-formed his battalion and again led the men forward. Private Charles Melvin was in a company that had advanced to within 50 yards of the front-line trench of a redoubt at Istabulat, Mesopotamia, where, owing to the intensity of the fire, the men were obliged to lie down and wait for reinforcements. Melvin, however, rushed on over the ground swept from end to end by bullets. On reaching the enemy trench he halted and fired two or three shots, killing one of the enemy; then jumping into it, he charged the enemy with his bayonet. Attacked in this resolute manner most of them fled to their second line.

An officer and a private appear as winners of the cross for the Highland Light Infantry. Private (acting Lance-Corporal) John Brown Hamilton displayed conspicuous bravery at a time when the ammunition supply had reached a low ebb. North of the Ypres-Menin road, acting on his own initiative, he carried supplies of ammunition on several occasions through the enemy's belts of fire, to the front and support lines.

Major (acting Lieutenant-Colonel) William Herbert Anderson distinguished himself by his energetic leadership at Bois Favieres, near Maricourt. The enemy had penetrated a wood held by the British, and the flank of the whole position was in danger of being turned. Realizing the seriousness of the situation, Anderson succeeded in gathering the remainder of the two right companies, led the counter-attack, and drove the enemy from the wood, capturing twelve machine guns and seventy prisoners and restoring the original line. Later on the same day he reorganized his men after they had been driven in and made them ready for a counter-attack.

The Royal Warwicks had for their two V.C.'s, Private Arthur Hutt and Lieutenant (acting Captain) Julian Royds Gribble. At Terrier Farm, south-east of Poelcapelle, Hutt, when all the officers and non-commissioned officers of his platoon had become casualties, took command and led them on. Held up by a strong



THE NAVY'S NERVE CENTRE. The illustration shows Sir Eric Geddes, who was first lord of the Admiralty in 1917, and Admiral Sir Rosslyn Wemyss, first sea lord, in the latter's room at the Admiralty.



Imperial War Museum

A German U-boat of the mercantile cruiser Deutschland type. The original craft manned by a crew of 29, commanded by Captain Paul Koenig (died September, 1933), successfully voyaged to the United States with a cargo. In 1917 she was converted for offensive use.



Diagram explaining mine sweeping. It shows how the sweeping wire, drawn by two vessels, catches the mines without exploding them. When a number have been thus collected they are exploded by a heavy charge.

U-BOAT OF DEUTSCHLAND TYPE AND MINE SWEEPER



A striking view of soldiers and sailors leaving the great French liner Sontay before her final dive. She was torpedoed in the Mediterranean a hundred miles from land on April 16, 1917.



Rescued men climbing aboard the French gunboat that raced up to aid the transport Sontay. The commander, Lieutenant Mages, went down with his ship exclaiming: "Vive la France!"

AN EPIC OF FRENCH HEROISM



DEFEATING THE U-BOAT MENACE. The photograph shows a convoy steering a zig-zag course in the danger zone. The British convoy system proved its wonderful efficiency when almost fifty per cent. of the American forces were transported to Europe by British ships with scarcely any loss of life. Often as many as 40 merchant vessels were convoyed at one time, being marshalled in columns, with a screen of warships round them.

KILLED IN ACTION

post on his right, he immediately ran forward alone and shot the officer and three men in the post. Gribble was in command of the right company of the battalion when the enemy attacked at Beaumetz, Harmies Ridge, and his orders were to "hold on to the last." His men held on, and were eventually surrounded. Gribble was last seen fighting desperately.

The Manchester regiment is represented by Sergeant Harry Coverdale and Private Walter Mills. The former showed the utmost gallantry in approaching an enemy strong post, south-west of Poelcapelle, and close to it, disposed of an officer and two men who were sniping. He rushed two machine guns, killing or capturing the teams, and subsequently reorganized his platoon. Mills set an example of dauntless courage at Givenchy. When after an intense gas attack a strong enemy patrol endeavoured to rush the British posts, the garrisons of which had been overcome, Mills, though badly gassed, met the attack single-handed and continued to throw bombs until the arrival of reinforcements. Almost at once he died from gas poisoning.

Corporal William Clamp gained the first of the two crosses for the Yorkshire regiment. Near Poelcapelle he dashed forward with two men and attempted to rush a block-house the machine gun fire from which was checking the British advance. His first attempt failed, but he at once collected some bombs and, calling upon two men to follow him, again dashed forward. He was the first to reach the block-house, hurled in bombs, killing many of the occupants, and then entered and brought out a machine gun and about 20 prisoners. He then went forward again, encouraging his men until he was killed. Second-Lieutenant Ernest Frederick Beal also made the great sacrifice after earning the V.C. at St. Ledger. Organizing a small party, he led them against the enemy. On reaching a machine gun he immediately sprang forward, killed the team, and captured the gun. He continued along the trench, where he succeeded in capturing another machine gun in the same manner.

Second-Lieutenant (acting Captain) Arthur Moore Lascelles and Private Thomas Young were the two Durham Light Infantrymen V.C.'s. The former showed bravery and initiative at Masnières, when in command of his company in a very exposed position. After a heavy bombardment, during which he was wounded, the enemy attacked in very strong force but was driven off, the British success being due in great degree

V.C. HEROES OF THE WAK (IV)

to the fine example set by this officer, who, refusing to allow his wounds to be dressed, continued to organize the defence. The enemy again attacked and captured the trench, whereupon Lascelles jumped on the parapet and, followed by the remainder of his company, rushed out and drove over sixty of them back. Young showed conspicuous courage when acting as stretcher-bearer at Bucquoy. On nine occasions he went out in front of the line in broad daylight under heavy fire, and brought back wounded men. For five days he worked unceasingly.

The Border regiment's two V.C.'s were gained by Captain (acting Lieutenant-Colonel) James Forbes-Robertson, D.S.O., M.C., and Sergeant Charles Edward Spackman. Near Vieux Berquin, through his judgement, resource, energy, and example, Forbes-Robertson on four different occasions saved the line and averted a danger that might have had far-reaching results. An example will suffice to indicate these services. When troops in front were falling back he made a rapid reconnaissance on horse-back, in full view of the enemy and under heavy fire. He organized and, still mounted, led a counter-attack which was completely successful in re-establishing the line. Spackman went through heavy fire to attack a machine gun which was checking the leading company at Marcoing. He rushed the gun and enabled the company to advance.

Second-Lieutenant James Samuel Emmerson and Private James Duffy won V.C.'s for the Inniskilling Fusiliers. Emmerson led his company in an attack on the Hindenburg line, north of La Vacquerie, and cleared 400 yards of trench. For three hours, all other officers having become casualties, he remained with his company, refusing to go to the dressing-station, and repeatedly repelled bombing attacks. Later, when the enemy again attacked, he led his men forward and was mortally wounded. Duffy, a stretcher-bearer, went out, accompanied by another bearer, to bring in a seriously wounded comrade at Kereina Peak, Palestine. When his companion was wounded, Duffy returned to get another; immediately this man was killed. He then went forward alone, and under heavy fire succeeded in getting the two wounded men under cover.

With a brief account of how Second-Lieutenant (acting Captain) Alfred Maurice Toye, M.C., and Lieutenant (acting Captain) Allastair Malcolm Cluny McReady-Diarmid, of the Middlesex, earned the honour, the narrative of the 21 regiments with

VALOUR AT YPRES

two crosses each to their credit is concluded. At Eterpigny Ridge, Toye, when the enemy had captured the trench at a bridge-head, three times re-established the post, which was eventually recaptured by fresh hostile attacks. McReady-Diarnid also maintained the tradition of the "Die Hards" near the Mœuvres sector. When the enemy had penetrated some distance into the British position and the situation was critical, he at once led his company forward through a heavy barrage and engaged the enemy with such success that they were driven back three hundred yards. Throughout an attack on the next day he led the way, and it was entirely due to his marvellous throwing of bombs that the ground was regained. He was eventually killed.

As stated at the beginning of the chapter, twenty-one regiments of the line were credited with one Victoria Cross each during the year under consideration. In the London Gazette dated September 6, 1917, appeared the name of Private Thomas Barratt, South Staffordshire Regiment. As scout to a patrol north of Ypres, he worked his way towards the enemy line with the greatest determination, in spite of fire from hostile snipers, whom he stalked and killed. He not only killed many of the enemy, but also covered the retirement of his patrol.

For the Gordon Highlanders, a V.C. was earned by Private George McIntosh also at Ypres. He rushed forward under heavy fire and threw a grenade into a machine gun emplacement, killing two of the enemy. Entering, he found two machine guns, which he carried back with him. The fearlessness and rapidity with which he acted saved the lives of many of his comrades.

Sergeant Ivor Rees, of the South Wales Borderers, led his platoon forward by short rushes to a hostile machine gun, and then worked his way round to the rear of the gun position at Pilckem. When he was about twenty yards from the gun he rushed forward, shot one man, bayoneted another, and then bombed the concrete emplacement, killing five and capturing thirty prisoners, in addition to the machine gun.

Corporal Sidney James Day, of the Suffolks, was in command of a bombing section detailed to clear a maze of trenches held by the enemy east of Hargicourt. On reaching a point where the trench had been levelled he went on alone and bombed his way through, in order to gain touch with the neighbouring troops. When he returned to his section, a stink-bomb fell into a

V.C. HEROES OF THE WAR (IV)

trench occupied by two officers and three men. Day seized the bomb and threw it over the trench, where it exploded.

Private (acting Lance-Corporal) Frederick G. Room, Royal Irish Regiment, showed conspicuous bravery when in charge of some stretcher-bearers at Frezenberg. He worked continuously under intense fire, dressing the wounded with remarkable devotion. The V.C. of the Royal Scots was earned by Captain Henry Reynolds. His company was attacking in the same sector, and when approaching their final objective suffered heavily from a pill box which had been passed by the first wave. He reorganized his men and then proceeded alone towards it. When near the pill box he crawled to the entrance and forced a phosphorus grenade inside.

Second-Lieutenant Hugh Colvin, of the Cheshires, assumed command of two companies east of Ypres, and led them forward under heavy fire with great dash and success. Seeing the battalion on his right held up, he led a platoon to their assistance. He next went out with only two men to a dug-out, which he entered alone, and brought up fourteen prisoners. He proceeded with his two men to another dug-out where a machine gun had been holding up the attack. This he reached, and killing or making prisoners of the crew, captured the gun.

On the same date as the last two awards, the name of Sergeant James Ockenden, of the Dublin Fusiliers, also appeared. When acting as company sergeant-major east of Langemarck, he saw that the platoon on the right was held up by machine gun fire. Immediately he rushed the machine gun and captured it, killing the whole crew except one man.

The V.C. credited to the West Surrey regiment was earned by Captain (temporary Lieutenant-Colonel) Christopher Bushell, D.S.O., west of St. Quentin canal. He led C company of his battalion when they were co-operating with an allied regiment in a counter-attack. He was severely wounded, but he placed the whole line in a sound position. The cross awarded to Private Thomas Henry Sage, of the Somerset Light Infantry, was for conspicuous bravery during an attack on a strong point. At Tower Hamlets spur, east of Ypres, he was in a shell-hole with eight men, one of whom was shot while throwing a bomb. The live bomb fell into the shell-hole, and Sage, with great presence of mind, immediately threw himself on it, thereby saving the lives of several of his comrades.

THE TIGERS

At Marcoing, Major John Sherwood-Kelly, C.M.G., D.S.O., of the Norfolks, was commanding a battalion of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers when a party of another unit, detailed to cover the passage of a canal by his battalion, was held up. Sherwood-Kelly at once ordered covering fire, personally led the leading company of his battalion across the canal, and then reconnoitred the high ground held by the enemy. The left flank of his battalion, advancing to the assault of this high ground, was held up by wire. Thereupon, with a Lewis gun team he forced his way through obstacles, got the gun in position, and covered the advance through the wire, enabling the position to be captured. Second-Lieutenant Philip Eric Bent, D.S.O., of the Leicestershires, collected a platoon that was in reserve east of Polygon Wood, and together with men from other companies and various details, organized and led a counter-attack at a time when the enemy had forced back the line. He was killed while leading a charge which he inspired with the cry, "Come on, the Tigers!"

Second-Lieutenant Stanley Henry Parry Boughey, of the Royal Scots Fusiliers, armed with bombs, rushed forward alone at El Burf, Palestine, right up to the enemy, who had got within thirty yards of the firing-line. He was mortally wounded.

The V.C.'s credited to the Bedfordshire and Wiltshire Regiments were announced on April 25, 1918. For the former, Lieutenant-Colonel John Stanhope Collings-Wells, D.S.O., gained it for conduct in very critical situations during a withdrawal from Marcoing to Albert. When the rearguard was almost surrounded, he called for volunteers to stay behind and hold up the enemy, while the remainder withdrew. With his small body he kept back the Germans for one and a half hours. On a subsequent occasion he led the assault until killed.

Captain Reginald Frederick Johnson Hayward, M.C., of the Wiltshires, "displayed almost superhuman powers of endurance and consistent courage of the rarest nature" near Fremicourt. In spite of the fact that he was not only buried, wounded in the head, and rendered deaf on the first day of operations, and had his arm shattered two days later, he refused to leave his men, until he collapsed from sheer exhaustion.

Sergeant Harold Jackson, of the East Yorkshire regiment, went through a hostile barrage and brought back valuable in-

V.C. HEROES OF THE WAR (IV)

formation regarding the enemy's movements at Hermies. Later, when the Germans had established themselves in the British line, single-handed he bombed them out into the open. Private Harold Whitfield, Shropshire Light Infantry, single-handed, charged and captured a Lewis gun which was harassing his company at short range at Bury El Lisaneh, Egypt.

Second-Lieutenant Basil Arthur Horsfall, of the East Lancashire regiment, was in command of the centre platoon during a German attack between Moyenville and Blainzeville. When the enemy first attacked, three forward sections were driven back, and he was wounded in the head. Nevertheless, he immediately organized and led a counter-attack. He recovered the lost positions, but was killed in the action.

Corporal John Thomas Davies, who won the cross for the South Lancashires near Eppeville, mounted a parapet, thus fully exposing himself, in order to get a more effective field of fire. He kept his Lewis gun in action to the last, causing many casualties and checking the advance.

Near Boisieux, St. Marc, Private Jack Thomas Counter, of the King's (Liverpool) regiment, volunteered to fetch information which proved of the utmost value. Five runners had attempted to reach the front line, and had all been killed. Counter went out under terrific fire and succeeded in getting through. He returned, carrying with him some vital information, and subsequently carried back five messages.

The last name to be recorded is that of John Scott Youll, a second-lieutenant in the Northumberland Fusiliers. South-west of Asiago, Italy, he was in command of a patrol which came under the hostile barrage. Sending his men back to safety, he remained to observe the situation, but unable to rejoin his company, he reported to a neighbouring unit. When the enemy attacked he rushed a gun and turned it on his attackers.

PERSONALIA OF THE WAR

IN each volume we provide concise and authoritative biographical information concerning the outstanding personalities of the war. For clearness and ready reference they are grouped according to nationality. The most suitable volume in which to include these biographies is that wherein the subjects figure most prominently.

F
in
Mo
the
Str
in
191
out
the
wh
des
D.S
Au
sta
ten
lan

I
Reg
Hav
by
the
Afr
maj
con
serv
cou
In
In
arm
2nd
cha
to
Dec
turn
mac
on
Ypr
191

BRITISH

Vice-Admiral E. R. G. S. Evans

EDWARD RADCLIFFE GARTH RUSSELL EVANS was the son of a barrister. He was educated at the Merchant Taylors' School. Entering the navy in 1897, he became lieutenant in 1902, and was navigating officer to the Antarctic relief ship *Morning*, 1902-4, making two voyages to the S. Polar regions to the relief of the *Discovery* when she was frozen in MacMurdo Strait. He joined the British Antarctic Expedition as second in command in 1909, and after the death of Captain Scott in 1913 he brought it back. A commander in the navy, on the outbreak of the Great War he took part in the bombardment of the Belgian coast in 1914. He was in command of the *Broke* when, in 1917, that vessel and the *Swift* defeated six German destroyers. He was promoted captain in 1917, and received the D.S.O. In 1929, he became rear-admiral commanding the Royal Australian Navy. In 1933 he commanded the South Africa station, and as acting high commissioner was responsible for the temporary exile of the native chief Tshekedi from Bechuana-land. In 1921, he published *South with Scott*.

Viscount Plumer

HERBERT CHARLES ONSLOW PLUMER, 1st Viscount Plumer, was born March 13, 1857. A son of Hall Plumer of Torquay, he entered the army, York and Lancaster Regiment in 1876, and served with it in the Sudan in 1884. Having reached the rank of major, he came into the public eye by raising and commanding a mounted force during the rising of the Matabele in South Africa in 1896. He served in the South African War, 1899-1902, at the end of which he was made a major-general. From 1902-14 Plumer was constantly employed, commanding first a brigade and then a division at home, and serving as quartermaster-general and a member of the army council, while, 1911-14, he was in charge of the northern district. In 1906 he was knighted.

In January, 1915, Plumer was sent to take command of the 5th army corps, and in the following May, he was appointed to the 2nd army. From November, 1917, to March, 1918, he was in charge of the British force in Italy, after which, having returned to the 2nd army, he remained on the western front until December. He marched to the Rhine in December, and returned to England in April. In 1919, for his services, he was made a field marshal and a baron. During much of his period on the western front, his army was holding the salient around Ypres, and the attack on Messines, which he conducted in June, 1917, was regarded as one of the best managed operations of the

PERSONALIA OF THE WAR

war. Plumer was governor of Malta, 1920-24, and high commissioner of Palestine, 1924-28. In 1929 he was made a viscount. He died on July 16, 1932.

Viscount Byng

JULIAN HEDWORTH GEORGE BYNG, 1st Viscount Byng, was born September 11, 1862, a younger son of the 2nd earl of Strafford, and was educated at Eton. He joined the 10th Hussars in 1883. Next year he saw service in the Sudan, at El Tel and Tamai, and went through the South African War, where he commanded the South African Light Horse. He then commanded the 10th Hussars, and was commandant of the cavalry school at Netheravon 1904-5, and of a cavalry brigade from 1905-9. In 1912 he went as commander-in-chief to Egypt.

In the Great War Byng took the 3rd cavalry division to Belgium in October, 1914, and in May, 1915, succeeded Allenby as head of the cavalry corps. He left that to command the 9th corps in Gallipoli. Relinquishing that command in February, 1916, he succeeded Sir Edwin Alderson in that of the Canadian corps, and shared in the successes achieved in the great advance on the Somme in September, 1916. His next promotion, June, 1917, was to the head of the 3rd army, and he was made a general after the battle of Cambrai, November, 1917.

Knighted in 1915, he was raised to the peerage in August, 1919, as Baron Byng of Vimy and of Thorpe-le-Soken (Essex), and received a grant of £30,000. He retired from the army in November, 1919, on becoming chairman of the body appointed to administer the fund formed out of the accumulated profits of army canteen trading during the war. He was governor-general of Canada, 1921-26. He was made a viscount in 1926, and in 1928 was appointed commissioner of police for the metropolis. He retired in September, 1931.

Viscount Allenby

EDMUND HENRY HYNMAN ALLENBY, 1st Viscount Allenby was born April 23, 1861. He was educated at Haileybury and entered the army, the Inniskilling Dragoons, in 1879. His earliest active service was in the Bechuanaland expedition of 1884-5, and he was in Zululand in 1888. He served with the Inniskillings throughout the South African War, and was selected in 1902 to command the 5th Lancers. The command of a brigade followed, and in 1914, when the Great War broke out, Allenby was inspector-general of cavalry at Aldershot. He took out the cavalry division to France, was with it at Mons, and later, when it became a corps, took charge of it.

In 1915, being then a knight, he succeeded Sir Herbert Plumer in command of the 5th corps, and when the battle of the Somme

BRITISH

began, had been appointed to the 3rd army. He led that force at the battle of Arras in 1917, but in June of that year was sent to take command of the expeditionary force in Egypt. He set to work at once to organize railways and make roads. Having made his preparations, he delivered such a heavy blow that Jerusalem fell before the end of the year. After a period of waiting in 1918, he shattered the Turks at the battle of Megiddo, took Damascus, conquered Syria and reached Aleppo by the middle of October.

In 1917 Allenby was made a full general, and in 1918 received the G.C.B. In July, 1919, Allenby was made a field-marshal, and in August was voted a sum of £50,000 and created a viscount, adopting the title of Viscount Allenby of Megiddo and of Felixstowe in the county of Suffolk. In October, 1919, he was appointed high commissioner for Egypt and the Sudan, retiring 1925. His only son, Michael, an artillery subaltern, died of wounds in France, July 28, 1917.

Sir Philip Chetwode

SIR PHILIP WALHOUSE CHETWODE was born September 21, 1869, and educated at Eton. He entered the 19th Hussars in 1889, and served in Burma, 1892-93, and throughout the South African War. In August, 1914, he was in command of the 5th cavalry brigade, which came first into touch with the Germans before Mons was fought.

In 1916 he was sent to Egypt to take over the Desert column of the Egyptian expeditionary force, a composite body of mounted men. He led this at Rafa, and in the earlier attempts at the conquest of Palestine, taking a higher command after the second battle of Gaza. The conquest of Palestine under Allenby was partly due to him, for he was the chief lieutenant of the new commander-in-chief. In 1919 he became military secretary to the secretary for war, and was promoted lieutenant-general. He was deputy-chief of the imperial general staff, 1920-22, adjutant-general to the forces, 1922-23, commander-in-chief of the Aldershot command, 1923-27, and chief of the general staff in India, 1928-30. He became commander-in-chief of the army in India in the latter year, and was promoted field-marshal in 1933. In 1905 Sir Philip succeeded to the family baronetcy.

Sir Henry Chauvel

SIR HENRY GEORGE CHAUVEL was born in New South Wales, April 16, 1865. In 1886 he joined the New South Wales cavalry, and in 1890 transferred to the Queensland mounted infantry. He went to South Africa with the infantry, and later commanded a battalion of Commonwealth Horse. In 1911 he became adjutant-general of the Australian forces.

PERSONALIA OF THE WAR

On the outbreak of the Great War Chauvel was chosen to represent Australia on the Imperial General Staff in London, and after spending some time there he was sent to Egypt. In December, 1916, he was in command of the flying column that routed the Turks at Magdhaba; in the spring of 1917 he led the Anzac Mounted division at both the battles before Gaza, and afterwards succeeded Sir Philip Chetwode as commander of the Desert column. In this capacity he served in the final conquest of Palestine. He was inspector-general of the Australian forces 1919-30, and chief of the general staff 1923-30.

General Hannyngton

JOHN ARTHUR HANNYNGTON was born February 26, 1868. He joined the Worcestershire Regiment in June, 1889, and later transferred to the Indian army. He was employed with the King's African Rifles, 1901-10. In the Great War he was in command of a brigade, 1916-17, and, promoted major-general, rendered distinguished service in the campaign in East Africa under Smuts. He died August 21, 1918.

Sir Stanley Maude

SIR FREDERICK STANLEY MAUDE, the son of General Sir F. Maude, V.C., a member of an Irish family, was born June 24, 1864. Educated at Eton, he passed in 1884 from Sandhurst into the Coldstream Guards, and in 1885 served in the Sudan. Having passed through the Staff college, he joined the staff in 1897, and was for a time brigade major of the brigade of Guards. He served in South Africa, where he was in the operations of Lord Methuen's force, and afterwards in the Transvaal; there he won the D.S.O. From 1901-4 he was military secretary to the governor-general of Canada, after which he was for a time at the War Office. From 1906-8 he was a staff officer at Plymouth; and, 1909-12, assistant-director of the territorial force.

When the Great War broke out, Maude was on the staff of the 5th division, with which he went to France. In October, 1914, he was appointed to command the 14th brigade, but soon returned wounded to England. He took command of the 13th division, with which he went in 1915 to Gallipoli, to Egypt, and finally to Mesopotamia. In Gallipoli he shared in the withdrawal from both Suvla and Helles.

On August 28, Major-General Maude was made a temporary lieutenant-general, and appointed to succeed Sir Percy Lake in the command of the Mesopotamian forces. No immediate offensive operations were attempted. First of all the Army had to be reorganized. Grave problems of administrative reform had

BRITISH

to be solved. Railways, ordnance, the medical service, transport, communications and supplies had to be established on a satisfactory basis. The Karun and Euphrates fronts had to be organized afresh. Then came a visit of inspection up the Tigris. General Maude's reputation for care and circumspection was found to be well justified. By the middle of December, in which month he was made a K.C.B., he had completed his programme and had moved his headquarters up to the front.

Kut-el-Amara fell on February 24, 1917. The Turks were driven back 110 miles in fifteen days, losing, apart from their dead, nearly 8,000 prisoners. On March 11, the British flag was flying over Bagdad. After a pause came another forward move, marked by a victory at Ramadie and other successes. In Bagdad, Maude was struck down suddenly by cholera, and on November 18, 1917, he died. Parliament voted £25,000 to his widow. A man of tact, patience, and kindness, with no mean military skill, Maude ranks by common consent as one of the successful generals of the Great War. A crucifix erected in the churchyard of S. Paul's, Knightsbridge, London, was unveiled to his memory in January, 1921.

Sir William Marshall

SIR WILLIAM RAINE MARSHALL was born October 29, 1865, and was educated at Repton. He joined the Sherwood Foresters in 1886, and served as a regimental officer on the N.W. frontier of India, 1897-98, being in the Tirah campaign. In 1899-1902 he went through the South African War, where he was wounded. When the Great War broke out, Marshall was commanding a battalion in India. In January, 1915, he was put in charge of a brigade and he commanded the 87th brigade in Gallipoli, being soon promoted to a division. He was present at both the original landing and the final evacuation. During part of 1916, he commanded the 27th division at Salonica and in September, on the reorganization of the forces in Mesopotamia, he commanded one of the two corps in that army during the advance to Bagdad. On Maude's sudden death, he was given the supreme command, November 18, 1917, and finished the campaign with credit and success. He was knighted in 1917. From 1919 to 1923, he was head of the southern command, India. He retired in 1924, and in 1929 published *Memories of Four Fronts*.

Sir Alexander Cobbe

SIR ALEXANDER STANHOPE COBBE was born June 5, 1870. He was educated at Wellington College, and joined the South Wales Borderers in 1889; in 1892 he was transferred to the Indian Staff corps. For some years he served in Ashanti, commanding a battalion of Central African Regiment; there he was

PERSONALIA OF THE WAR

severely wounded and won the D.S.O. In Somaliland in 1902-04 he led a flying column and earned the V.C. When the Great War broke out, Cobbe was a staff officer, and as such went to France with the Indian Corps. Again in India, he was temporarily director of staff duties and military training. In Mesopotamia he led one of the detachments that under General Maude helped to take Bagdad in 1917. After that operation he commanded a corps. In 1917 he was knighted, and in 1924 was made a general, and became G.O.C. Northern Command, India, 1926. He died on June 29, 1931.

Earl of Cavan

FREDERICK RUDOLPH LAMBERT, 10th earl of Cavan, was born October 16, 1865. He was educated at Eton, and entered the Grenadier Guards in 1884. His first active service was in South Africa, 1899-1902, after which he was commandant of a school of instruction for volunteer officers at Chelsea. In the Great War he took over the 4th, or Guards' brigade. He became leader of the Guards division on its formation in June, 1915. The command of the 14th corps followed, and at the head of this Cavan was despatched to Italy to help General Plumer, in November, 1917.

On January 1, 1918, he was made a K.C.B., and in the spring, when General Plumer was recalled to a command on the Western Front, just as the enemy launched his masses against Arras, the British command in Italy was transferred to Lord Cavan, who in July took another step in rank as temporary general, the forces under him having meanwhile won new laurels in helping to crush that part of the short lived Austrian offensive which was directed against the positions facing the Asiago plateau. He was head of the War Office section of the British delegation at the Washington Conference, 1921, in which year he was made general. He was chief of the Imperial General Staff from 1922 until his retirement in 1926.

Sir Jacob Deventer

SIR JACOB LOUIS VAN DEVENTER was born in 1868. His early life was spent as a farmer near Pretoria. He came into prominence in the South African War (1899-1902) as second in command to General Smuts when the latter invaded Cape Colony. When in 1914, the rebellion broke out in South Africa early in the Great War, he was in command of a force at Upington against Maritz and prevented the latter from taking it. He succeeded Major-General A. R. Hoskins as commander-in-chief in East Africa, May, 1917, and continued in that post until the end of the War. He was made K.C.B. in 1917, and lieutenant-general in 1919. He died August 27, 1922.

BRITISH

General Ashmore

EDWARD BAILEY ASHMORE was born February 20, 1872. The son of a barrister, he was educated at Eton. From Woolwich he passed into the Royal Artillery in 1891, and served with the R.H.A. in the South African war, being severely wounded at Sanna's Post in 1900. Having passed through the Staff college, he joined the general staff in 1908, and in 1914 was assistant secretary to the inspector-general of Oversea Forces. He had, however, joined the reserve of the R.F.C., and after a few months on the staff at the opening of the Great War, joined that corps in November, 1914. He remained at the front, as commander of a brigade, until the middle of 1917, when he returned to England as a major-general to take charge of the air defence of London. From 1924 to 1928 he was in command of the territorial air defence brigades.

Lord Trenchard

HUGH MONTAGUE TRENCHARD, 1st Baron Trenchard, was born February 3, 1873. He entered the army in 1893, and served with the Imperial Yeomanry in the South African war, 1899-1902. In 1906 he took part in the West African frontier campaign, and was commandant of the North Nigeria regiment, West African Frontier Force, 1908-13. In 1912 he took his pilot's certificate and became instructor at the Central Flying school. He was promoted a year later to assistant commandant. On the outbreak of the Great War he became commandant of the military wing of the R.F.C. In July, 1915, he was promoted a brigade commander, and came home to become chief of the air staff. He resigned in April, 1918, and was appointed to the command of the Independent Air Force in France. In 1919 he again became chief of the air staff. He was made a baronet and promoted to air-marshal in 1919, and became marshal of the Royal Air Force in 1927. In 1931 he was made commissioner of the Metropolitan Police. He was created a baron in 1930.

Earl of Balfour

ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR, 1st Earl of Balfour, was born at Whittingehame, his family seat in Haddingtonshire July 25, 1848, the eldest son of James Maitland Balfour by his marriage with Lady Blanche Mary Harriet Cecil, daughter of the 2nd marquess of Salisbury. He spent his schooldays at Eton, and passed to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he gained a second class in the moral science tripos of 1870.

At the general election of 1874, Balfour entered the House of Commons for the borough of Hertford in the Conservative

PERSONALIA OF THE WAR

interest, and three years later became private secretary to his uncle Lord Salisbury. He attended Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury on their mission to Berlin in 1878. During the 1874-80 parliament, Balfour made little mark. In the next parliament (1880-85) the Conservative party was in opposition and he attached himself to the little band of independents, led by Lord Randolph Churchill, who became known as the Fourth Party. When Gladstone fell and Lord Salisbury formed his first short government in 1885, Balfour was given office as president of the Local Government Board, but he soon changed this post for the secretaryship of Scotland. At the 1885 election he was returned for East Manchester, an association which lasted for twenty-one years. In 1887 he succeeded Sir Michael Hicks-Beach as chief secretary for Ireland, an office which gave him full opportunity of showing the measure of his great abilities. In October, 1891, he became leader of the House of Commons on the death of W. H. Smith. From 1892-5 he was leader of the opposition.

In 1895 the Unionist party was again returned to power and Balfour became first lord of the Treasury and leader of the House of Commons, continuing to hold these two posts down to the end of 1905. From July, 1902, when Lord Salisbury resigned, to December 1905, he was also prime minister to King Edward VII. When the general election was held in 1906, the Unionists were routed at the polls and Balfour himself was rejected at East Manchester. After a few weeks a seat was found for him in the city of London, and he resumed his place as leader of the Unionists, which he retained until his resignation in 1911.

A new phase in Balfour's career opened with the Great War. He at once offered his unofficial services in any capacity to Asquith, and when the first Coalition Government was formed in May, 1915, he went to the Admiralty as first lord, and remained there until the formation of the new Government under Lloyd George in December, 1916. He was then transferred to the much more congenial duties of the Foreign Office, and in 1917 he was head of the British mission to the U.S.A., which in no small measure contributed to the entry of America into the war. He also did brilliant work with his pen in masterly refutation of German state papers designed principally to influence American opinion. During the Paris conference a large share of the most responsible duties of the British delegation naturally fell upon him as secretary of state for foreign affairs. He resigned from the Foreign Office in October, 1919, and became lord president of the council.

Balfour showed a true constructive instinct in his establishment of the Committee of Imperial Defence, which did invaluable work in a field previously neglected. While not a man of action like Joseph Chamberlain, he interested himself profoundly in questions of naval and military strategy, and was one of the

BRITISH

strongest supporters of Lord Fisher while he was reorganizing the British navy. He received an earldom in 1922, and died March 19, 1930, when his titles passed to his brother Gerald.

Viscount Milner

ALFRED MILNER, 1st Viscount Milner, was born of English parents at Bonn, March 23, 1854. He was educated in Germany, at King's College, London, and Balliol College, Oxford, where he had an exceptionally brilliant career, ending with a fellowship at New College. He became a barrister, but for a time was on the staff of the *Pall Mall Gazette*.

Milner's public career began with the post of private secretary to G. J. Goschen. This led to his appointment as under-secretary for finance in Egypt, 1889-92, and chairman of the board of inland revenue, 1892-97. He was created K.C.B. in 1895, and in 1897 was sent to South Africa as governor of the Cape of Good Hope, and conducted the negotiations with Kruger before the South African war. He remained at his post during the struggle, took part in the peace negotiations, and afterwards was governor of the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies until 1905. Conscious possibly of the hostility he had aroused in Great Britain, Milner, who had been made a baron in 1901 and a viscount in 1902, remained in retirement for some years, although he emerged to denounce the budget of 1909.

Milner's gifts were placed at the service of the country during the war. In June, 1915, he was appointed chairman of a committee on Food Supply in War Time; in December, 1916, he joined Mr. Lloyd George's ministry as a minister without portfolio, and to his hands were frequently entrusted the solution of some of the knottiest problems of war policy. In February, 1917, he went on a special mission to Russia; and in April, 1918, he succeeded Lord Derby as secretary of state for war. He was colonial secretary, 1919-21, during which period he headed a special mission to Egypt.

Although possessed of high administrative gifts, a certain reserve, sometimes called hardness, prevented Milner from becoming a popular figure. He was accused of being a bureaucrat of the Prussian type. His writings include *England in Egypt*, 1902, and *The Nation and the Empire*, 1913. He died May 13, 1925, when his title became extinct.

Marquess of Lansdowne

HENRY CHARLES KEITH FITZMAURICE, 5th marquess of Lansdowne, was born January 14, 1845, the elder son of the 4th marquess. He was educated at Eton and Balliol College, Oxford, and succeeded to the peerage and estates when he came of age. Consequently he was never in the House of

PERSONALIA OF THE WAR

Commons, but in the Lords he soon became prominent. Adhering to the Whig traditions of his family, he joined the Liberal ministry as a lord of the treasury in 1869, and was under-secretary of war in 1872. In 1880 he was made under-secretary for India, but resigned almost at once, as he disagreed with a measure affecting Irish land. In 1883 he went to Canada as governor-general, and after five years there was transferred to India, where he was viceroy until 1893.

By this time the marquess had joined the Liberal Unionists, and as one of their leaders he became secretary for war in Lord Salisbury's ministry in 1895. He was still in that office when the South African war broke out, and was blamed for the unpreparedness of the British army at the outset of that struggle. In 1900 he was transferred to the Foreign Office, being secretary there until 1905. On Lord Salisbury's resignation, the Unionist leadership in the House of Lords fell to Lansdowne, and he was the head of the party in opposition there, from 1906 to the outbreak of the Great War. In 1915, when a Coalition government was formed, he joined it as minister without portfolio, but on certain matters, Ireland notably, he was not altogether in accord with his colleagues, and he resigned in 1916. In November, 1917, he came forward to advocate overtures for peace with Germany, and was the leader of a small but somewhat influential party that believed that course desirable.

Lansdowne, who was a K.G., and had received most of the other honours open to a man of high birth, married a daughter of the 1st duke of Abercorn, in 1869. His elder son, the earl of Kerry, who succeeded to the titles and estates, sat in the House of Commons, 1908-18; the younger, Lord Charles Mercer-Nairne, was killed in the Great War in 1914. In 1895 the marquess had inherited from his mother the barony of Nairne and estates in Scotland, which he handed over to his younger son, who thereupon changed his name to Mercer-Nairne. He died June 3, 1927.

Viscount Rhondda

DAVID ALFRED THOMAS, Viscount Rhondda, was born at Aberdare, March 26, 1856. His father, Samuel Thomas, was a successful grocer who later became interested in collieries. The son was educated at Clifton and at Caius College, Cambridge, after which he entered business in South Wales. Possessing the qualities needed to take advantage of the opportunities then offering in South Wales, he soon became one of the leading men in the coal and allied trades.

In 1888, Thomas entered parliament as Liberal M.P. for Merthyr, and therein he sat continuously until 1910, the last few months for Cardiff. In 1916 he was made a baron, and in

BRITISH—FRENCH

December he joined the coalition ministry as president of the local government board. In June, 1917, he accepted the position of food controller, and he was successful in a difficult and thankless task, but it broke him physically, and on July 3, 1918, he died. He had just been made a viscount. He and his daughter were saved when the *Lusitania* was torpedoed.

Lord Rhondda's title passed to his daughter, Margaret Haig (b.1883), who succeeded to many of his positions, and became known as an advocate of women's rights. She also founded a periodical, *Time and Tide*.

Dame Katharine Furse

DAME KATHARINE FURSE was born at Bristol, November 23, 1875, the daughter of John Addington Symonds, and was educated privately. She married C. W. Furse, the painter, in 1900. On the outbreak of the Great War, she developed the activities of the Voluntary Aid Detachments established in 1909 in connexion with the territorial force, and went to France to organize the work there. Returning in the spring of 1915, she became commandant-in-chief of the V.A.D.'s. In 1917 she resigned this appointment and became director of the Women's Royal Naval Air Service. She was created G.B.E. in 1917.

FRENCH

General Nivelle

ROBERT GEORGES NIVELLE was born at Tulle, October, 15, 1856, of English descent on his mother's side. He joined the French army as a lieutenant of artillery, October 1, 1878. He saw active service in Tunisia, Algeria, China, and again in Algeria, 1908-12, and on December 25, 1911, was made a colonel and chief of the staff of the Algerian division.

On the outbreak of the Great War, Nivelle was in command of the 5th artillery regiment, and participated in the invasion of Alsace. In September, 1914, he fought in the battle of the Aisne, and, promoted brigadier-general, successively commanded the 27th infantry brigade and the 61st infantry division. He became general commanding the 3rd army corps, December 23, 1915. Placed at the head of the 2nd army, April 27, 1916, he played a great part in the battle of Verdun, being, as the result of his success, chosen to succeed Joffre, and on December 12, 1916, was appointed commander-in-chief of the armies of the north and north-east. In April, 1917, he conducted an offensive in the Craonne-Reims area; but the losses were heavy, and it was decided that the offensive should be continued on a less

PERSONALIA OF THE WAR

extensive scale. From December, 1917-1919, Nivelles was commander-in-chief of the French troops in N. Africa. He retired in 1921, and died March 23, 1924.

Marshal Fayolle

MARIE EMILE FAYOLLE was born at Le Puy, Loire, May 14, 1852. He entered the French army as a lieutenant of artillery in 1877, and saw active service in Tunisia. He was later a professor in the Ecole Supérieure de Guerre, became colonel 1907, and general 1910. At the outbreak of the Great War he was in command of the 139th brigade, and then, after leading a division, commanded the 33rd army corps. Succeeding Castelnau, he led the French 6th and 1st armies in the battle of the Somme, 1916. In 1917 he commanded the army of the centre, which took part in the Aisne battles. In October, 1917, he was in Italy as commander-in-chief of the French forces. In 1918 he returned to France and was placed at the head of the reserve army. For a time, in 1919, he commanded the French army of Occupation in Germany. In 1920 he was appointed French military representative on the permanent armaments commission of the League of Nations. He was made a marshal of France on February 21, 1921.

General Mitry

HENRI DE MITRY, the son of the comte de Mitry, of an old Lorraine family, was born at Le Ménil Mitry, September 20, 1857, and educated at the Lycée at Nancy and at St. Cyr. He entered the French army as a lieutenant of cavalry in 1877, was colonel of the 29th Dragoon Regiment in 1910, and general of brigade in August, 1914, becoming general of division in February, 1915. During the Great War he commanded successively the 1st Cuirassier brigade, the 6th cavalry division, the 2nd cavalry corps, the 6th army corps, part of the army of the north, and the French 9th and 7th armies. He took part in the battle of the Yser, October-November, 1914, in the battle of the Aisne in 1917, and in 1918, in the battle of Montdidier, the Flanders battles, and the 2nd battle of the Marne. He died August 18, 1924.

General Guillaumat

MARIE LOUIS ADOLPHE GUILLAUMAT was born at Bourgneuf, January 4, 1863. He joined the French army October 1, 1884. He saw active service in Algeria, Tunisia, Tongking and China, and in the Boxer outbreak in 1900 commanded the French troops in Tientsin. Brigadier-general and director of infantry under the minister of war in October, 1913, he was

FRENCH—AMERICAN

appointed chief of the cabinet of the minister of war in June, 1914. He commanded the 4th infantry division in 1914 and the 1st army corps in 1915, which were heavily engaged in the Argonne and in Champagne. Promoted general of division, December, 1915, he took part in the Verdun fighting, 1916, and was appointed head of the French 2nd army, December, 1916. In December, 1917, Guillaumat succeeded Sarraill at Salonica, became governor of Paris, June, 1918, and in October was placed at the head of the French 5th army. He was appointed inspector-general, June, 1919, and in 1924 to the command of the army of Occupation in the Rhineland.

Paul Painlevé

PAUL PAINLEVÉ was born December 5, 1863, became professor of science at Lille in 1886, and at the Sorbonne seven years later. Interested in aviation, he was one of the first passengers carried by Wilbur Wright in France. He was minister of public instruction and inventions, 1915, minister of war, March-September, 1917, and prime minister, September-November, 1917. He was criticised for the failure of the French offensive of April, 1917, which Nivelle's supporters maintained was due to the interference of the cabinet with military plans. He defended himself against these charges, and published a full account of his own part in the 1917 campaign in a special number of *La Renaissance Politique, Littéraire, Économique*, in 1919. He became advisory director-general to the Chinese government railways in 1920. In April, 1925 he again became for a short time prime minister, and in 1926-30 was minister of war. In 1932 he was minister for air in Herriot's cabinet.

AMERICAN

Admiral Sims

WILLIAM SOWDEN SIMS was born at Port Hope, Canada, October 15, 1858; he graduated from the U.S. Naval academy in 1879, and entered the American navy in the same year. During the Spanish-American war, 1898, he was naval attaché in Paris, and two years later was assigned to duty on the Kentucky, afterwards becoming fleet intelligence officer on the staff of the commander-in-chief, on the Asiatic station. Promoted commander, Sims commanded the battleship *Minnesota*, Atlantic Fleet, 1909-11. He then went to the Naval War college, Newport, and during the second year of his course was a member of the War college staff. In 1913 he was made commander of the torpedo flotilla of the Atlantic Fleet, and in 1915 was given command of the dreadnought

PERSONALIA OF THE WAR

Nevada. On the entry of the U.S.A. into the Great War, he was put in charge of the operations of the American vessels in European waters, and in 1918 was made vice-admiral.

After the war he was reappointed president of the War college. In 1921, during a visit to England, he was recalled owing to his speech condemning Sinn Fein. He published *The Victory at Sea*, 1920, which won the Pulitzer prize for the best book of the year on American history. He retired in 1923.

Admiral Benson

WILLIAM SHEPHERD BENSON was born at Macon, Georgia, September 25, 1855. He graduated at the Naval Academy in 1877. Captain in 1909, he was commandant, in 1913 and 1915, of the navy yard at Philadelphia. In May, 1915, he was appointed chief of operations, a post corresponding to that of First Sea Lord in Great Britain. In November, 1917, he was a member of the American mission to Europe, and in 1920 became chairman of the U.S. Shipping Board. He died May 21, 1932.

General Pershing

JOHN JOSEPH PERSHING was born in Missouri, September 13, 1860, of Alsatian descent. Graduating from West Point in 1886, he entered the U.S. army as a lieutenant of the 6th cavalry regiment. He saw service against the Apache and Sioux Indians during the next three years. In 1897 he was appointed instructor in tactics at West Point, and in 1898, having resigned his post, took part in the Spanish-American war, particularly in the fighting around Santiago. Next he organized the bureau of insular affairs, war department, Washington. In 1899 he was sent to the Philippines, and with the rank of general had charge of the expedition against the Moros of Mindanao in 1902. Appointed military attaché at Tokio, he was in Manchuria with Kuroki's army during the Russo-Japanese War in 1905.

After some service on the general staff, Pershing returned once more to the Philippines, this time as governor of the Moro province. There he stayed five or six years, occupied with much the same work, partly administrative and political, partly military, that falls to the lot of a British resident in the Malay states. It was not until the Mexican situation grew tense that he became once more a soldier and nothing else. He was assigned, early in 1914, the task of patrolling part of the Mexican border, an arduous and thankless job, which he carried out as well as his small force and inferior facilities would allow. In 1916 he led the punitive expedition sent into Mexico in pursuit of Villa.

AMERICAN

On the entry of the U.S.A. into the Great War he was made commander-in-chief of the American expeditionary force, May 18, 1917, with the rank of lieutenant-general, and was in France in the following June at the head of a division. He remained commander-in-chief of the American forces on the West front throughout the war. He planned and commanded the American army's attack on the St. Mihiel salient and directed the operations of the 1st and 2nd armies in the Meuse-Argonne offensive of 1918. Awarded the G.C.B. in 1918, he received the freedom of the city of London in 1919. Promoted full general in the same year, he became chief of the staff in 1921. On October 17 of that year he laid the Congressional Medal of Honour on the grave of the Unknown British Warrior in Westminster Abbey.

General Scott

HUGH LENOX SCOTT was born in Kentucky on September 22, 1853. He entered the army in 1876 and saw service in various Indian risings. Adjutant-general of Cuba, 1898-1903, and governor of the Sulu archipelago, 1903-6, he then became commandant at West Point. Promoted brigadier-general in 1913, his command lay on the Mexican frontier. In the Great War he was chief of the U.S. general staff until 1917, when he went to France and saw active service.

He served with a British division in the front line at Arras, and with a French division in the front line at Chalons, and took part in the battle for Passchendaele ridge. He was awarded the D.S.M., 1918. He became chairman of the state highway commission of New Jersey in 1923, and in 1928 published *Some Memories of a Soldier*.

President Wilson

THOMAS WOODROW WILSON was born at Staunton, Virginia, December 28, 1856. He came of Scottish and Irish stock, his father being Rev. J. R. Wilson, a Presbyterian minister, and his mother Janet Woodrow. Educated at Davidson college, North Carolina, and at the universities of Princeton and Virginia, his student career was brilliant. He became a lawyer, and practised for a time at Atlanta, Georgia. Already a student of political science, Wilson's first book, *Congressional Government*, appeared in 1885. In the same year he was chosen associate professor at Bryn Mawr college, moving in 1888 to the Wesleyan university as professor of political economy. In 1890 he became professor of jurisprudence and politics at Princeton, and from 1902-11 he was its president.

In November, 1910, Wilson, a Democrat, was elected governor of New Jersey, where he initiated vigorous reforms. This

PERSONALIA OF THE WAR

brought him before the public, and in 1912, after a spirited contest, he was chosen Democratic candidate for the presidency. The election gave him 6,200,000 votes, a large majority over Roosevelt and Taft, who had split the Republican vote.

Taking office March 4, 1913, Wilson carried out the Democratic programme with unusual celerity, reducing the tariff, establishing a federal income tax, and reforming the currency. He declined to embroil the U.S.A. for the sake of American interests in Mexico, and, in face of great disorders, contended that the Mexicans must be left alone to work out their own salvation. Wilson induced Congress to conform to treaty obligations by repealing its act exempting American shipping from Panama Canal tolls, and he negotiated treaties with Great Britain, France, and the South American republics, by which, in the event of disputes, a year must elapse before a resort to arms.

When the Great War broke out, Wilson refused to judge between the combatants. He would not denounce the devastation of Belgium, but he was incensed at the British maritime blockade, and he exasperated the Allies by public speeches about "peace without victory," the "freedom of the seas," and a league to enforce peace. However, Wilson kept the U.S.A. out of the war, and on that record he was re-elected president in November, 1916, when he polled something like a million more "popular" votes than he did in 1912. But his second term had hardly begun when the German unlimited U-boat campaign forced him to assent to America's entry into the war. In an address to Congress, January 8, 1918, he laid down his fourteen points as a programme of world peace. In other speeches he insisted on a peace that would conform to abstract justice and national aspirations, and he advocated especially the principle of self-determination. After the armistice Wilson went to Paris as the head of the United States delegation.

He achieved there his first concern, the adoption of the League of Nations, but he bought his success dearly. Bitter and factious opposition awaited his ideas in his own country, and to overcome it Wilson undertook a speech-making tour throughout the United States. Illness struck him down in the middle of it, and he left office March 4, 1921, a broken man. He died February 3, 1924. His chief books are *The State*, 1889; *A History of the American People*, 1902; and *Constitutional Government in the U.S.A.*, which has already been mentioned.

Robert Lansing

ROBERT LANSING was born at Watertown, New York, October 17, 1864, and was educated at Amherst college. He became a barrister in 1889, and while practising at Watertown came into prominence as assistant counsel for the

AMERICAN—RUSSIAN

U.S.A. in the Bering Sea arbitration, 1892-93. Appointments of a similar kind followed, and Lansing was engaged on the Alaskan boundary and the North Atlantic fisheries. In June, 1915, President Wilson made him secretary of state, and he was the president's chief colleague in the important matters that preceded and followed the entry of the U.S.A. into the Great War. He resigned in February, 1920. His memoirs of the Versailles Peace Conference, entitled *The Peace Negotiations*, a Personal Narrative, appeared in 1921. He returned to law practice until his death, October 30, 1928.

BELGIAN

General Ruquoy

LOUIS HUBERT RUQUOY was born November 3, 1861. He entered the army as a lieutenant of the 1st Chasseur Regiment, 1881. After attending the Ecole de Guerre, 1890-93, he joined the general staff, 1893, and was given command of the 3rd Chasseurs, 1914. He participated in the sorties from Antwerp in September, and took part in the battle of the Yser. In 1916 he became a lieutenant-general, and was made chief of the general staff, January 6, 1917. He was again given command of the 5th Division in April, 1918. During the Belgian offensive, September—October, 1918, he was attached to King Albert's headquarters.

RUSSIAN

General Korniloff

LAVR GEORGIEVITCH KORNILOFF, the son of a Cossack officer who had risen from the ranks, was born in 1870 in Siberia. In 1886 he began the usual course of Cossack military training. Later he was educated at the Nikolaiefsky military academy, St. Petersburg, and joined the regular army. After travel in China, Persia, and the East, he served as a volunteer with the Boers in the South African war, and also took part in the Russo-Japanese war, 1904-5. Early in the Great War he was captured by the Austrians, but he succeeded in escaping and made his way on foot across Hungary into Rumania, eventually reaching Bukarest, whence he returned to the Russian lines.

During the Russian retreat from the Dunajetz, Korniloff, with the 48th division, broke through the Austro-German encircle-

PERSONALIA OF THE WAR

ment, and rejoined the main Russian forces. In the first days of the Revolution he was given the Petrograd command, but resigned it owing to interference with his orders. He then became commander-in-chief of the Russian 8th army, and played a magnificent part in the Russian offensive of July, 1917, capturing Haliz from the Austrians, and piercing their line. After being made commander of all the south-western armies, he replaced Brusiloff as generalissimo. Differences developed between him and Kerensky, who arrested him in September, 1917. After regaining his liberty, Korniloff, with Alexeieff and other moderate leaders, withdrew to the south on the overthrow of Kerensky, joined the Kuban Cossacks who formed the "Volunteer Army," and attacked the Bolsheviks. He was killed in north-west Caucasia, March 31, 1918, by a shell that burst over the house in which he and his staff were.

Alexander Kerensky

ALEXANDER FEODOREVITCH KERENSKY was born at Simbirsk in 1881. He studied law at the university of St. Petersburg, and became a barrister at Moscow, where he gained a reputation as a defender of those accused of political offences. He joined the Russian labour party, and sat in the last Duma as a moderate socialist. At the beginning of the revolution he became minister of justice and the distinctive socialist member of the provisional government formed by Prince Lvoff in March, 1917. He speedily became the chief figure in Russia, and when the government was reconstructed on May 16 he was given the post of minister of war and marine. Shortly afterwards he commenced an oratorical campaign on the disorganized Russian front, and was the prime mover in the offensive on the south-west in the opening of July.

In that month Kerensky formed a coalition government, of which he was premier, the ministry, after some trouble, being completed early in August, he himself acting as minister of war as well as premier. On August 25 he presided over the Moscow conference, where Korniloff, the commander-in-chief, commented in strong terms on the disorganization in the army, for which Miliukoff, leader of the Constitutional Democrats, or Cadets, accused Kerensky of being responsible by his issue of a charter giving privates virtually equal rights with officers. Korniloff subsequently made proposals for restoring discipline, and his position was strengthened by the fall of Riga, which he had predicted. Tardily Kerensky agreed to accept Korniloff's suggestions, but meanwhile Korniloff had indicated his belief that only a military dictatorship could save Russia and the army. This led to a conflict between him and Kerensky, in which the latter prevailed, and Korniloff was arrested.

RUSSIAN

* On September 15 Kerensky proclaimed the Russian Republic, with himself as president of the Provisional Government, which then consisted of four other socialist members. He also assumed the chief command of all the Russian forces. During October, the power of the Bolsheviks increased, though Kerensky formed a new cabinet composed of socialists and moderates for the purpose of uniting Russia. Trotsky denounced this government, and on November 8 he and Lenin carried out a coup d'état. Kerensky fled, and eventually escaped from Russia, appearing in London in June, 1918. In 1919 he published in London, a book entitled *Prelude to Bolshevism*.

Pavel Miliukov

PAVEL NIKOLAIEVITCH MILIUKOV was born January 27, 1859. He was educated in St. Petersburg and Moscow, and lectured in Moscow on history, 1886-95, but was expelled on political grounds. He then went to Sofia in a similar capacity, but the Russian government procured his dismissal after two years. Returning to Russia in 1899, he was arrested in 1901 and imprisoned for presiding at a secret political meeting. In 1902 he lectured in America, and in 1904-5 studied in London. Returning to St. Petersburg in 1905, he was elected to the first Duma, but was not allowed to sit, became leader of the Cadets or Constitutional Democratic party, and was a member of the third Duma. He was a member of the Russian parliamentary delegation to Britain in 1909. After the revolution of March, 1917, Miliukov became minister for foreign affairs, resigning in May of that year.

Prince Lvoff

GEORGE EUGENIEVITCH LVOFF was born in 1861 and was educated at Moscow university. He afterwards devoted his energies to the education of the peasantry. In the famine year of 1891 he served on relief committees, and in the Red Cross, and during the Russo-Japanese war he was head of its organization in Manchuria. He took a leading part in 1906 in bringing about the first Duma, to which he was returned as one of the leaders of the Constitutional Democratic party known as Cadets. For signing the manifesto at Viborg, calling upon the people to refuse taxes, he was debarred from sitting in the Duma. Prime minister in the provisional government formed after the revolution of March, 1917, and in the coalition government of May, he resigned in July, and left Russia after the advent of the Soviet regime, visiting Britain, France, and the U.S.A., 1918. He died March 7, 1925.

PERSONALIA OF THE WAR

Lenin

LENIN was the name assumed by Vladimir Ilitch Ulianoff. He was born at Simbirsk, April 10, 1870, the son of an hereditary noble who was a state councillor. After passing through the Simbirsk Gymnasium he continued his education at the university of Kazan, but was expelled from it and banished from the town for taking part in a student's demonstration against the government. In 1891 he studied law at the university of St. Petersburg, and four years later was exiled to Siberia as a pronounced revolutionary. Released in 1900, he left Russia and lived for a short time in London in 1902. He soon became prominent as a socialist leader of an extreme type at various congresses. During the first Russian revolution, in 1905, he was the chief editor of the *New Life*, the first socialist daily paper openly published in St. Petersburg. His work resulted in the Zimmerwaldian conferences of 1915 for the re-establishment of the International. During these years he visited many countries, spreading his propaganda, but for the most part he resided either in Switzerland or in Galicia, where he kept in touch with other Russian extremists.

In 1917, some weeks after the fall of the tsardom, the German government, under an arrangement made with it by Fritz Platten, a prominent Swiss socialist, permitted Lenin and other extremists to travel through Germany in a sealed carriage and enter Russia, where he at once put himself at the head of the Bolsheviks, in opposition to the moderates and particularly to Kerensky. Gaining great influence over the soviets, Lenin pitted his strength against Kerensky in July 16-17, but the latter triumphed, and the disturbances engineered by Lenin and his associates were suppressed. For a short time Lenin disappeared, and Trotsky with a number of other Bolsheviks was arrested.

In September, Trotsky was liberated, and, with Lenin secretly inspiring him, actively intrigued against the Kerensky government. In the third week of October in the preliminary parliament which met to prepare for the constituent assembly, Trotsky violently attacked Kerensky, and in effect declared war upon him. On November 8, Lenin suddenly reappeared, deposed the government, and established himself as president of the "Council of the People's Commissars," as he called the regime he thereupon set up. One of his first steps was to negotiate for peace with Germany. On January 18, 1918, he dissolved the constituent assembly, which had met for the first time on the previous day, and later in the year he transferred the seat of his government from Petrograd to Moscow. Meanwhile, Russia went to pieces, and he kept himself in power by a system of terrorism. All efforts, whether by organized move-

RUSSIAN

ment or by assassination, failed to overthrow him, but he was shot at and wounded in August of that year.

During 1919-20 Lenin and his colleague Trotsky were able successfully to defeat all attempts to overthrow their power by Koltchak, Denikin, and Wrangel. The war with Poland in 1920, while resulting in the nominal victory of the latter, left Soviet Russia much the same as regards territory. By this time Lenin had come to see that socialist theories alone were unable to advance the economic prosperity of Russia, and the trade agreement signed between Great Britain and the Soviet government in March, 1921, was further evidence of his increasing moderation of view. He died on January 21, 1924. His remains lie in an imposing mausoleum in Red Square, Moscow. His *Pages from my Diary* was published in 1923.

Lev Trotsky

LEV DAVIDOVITCH TROTSKY, the name assumed by Leiba Bronstein, was born 1877 in the Kherson government, the son of a Jewish chemist. In 1899 he was arrested at Odessa as a member of the South Russian Workmen's League, and banished to Siberia for four years, but effected his escape in the third year of his exile. During the attempted revolution in Petrograd (now Leningrad), 1905, he was president of the Petrograd council (soviet) of Workmen, was again arrested, and banished to Siberia, the sentence being for life. Within six months he escaped, and for some years lived in France, Switzerland, and elsewhere, supporting himself by journalism.

On the outbreak of the Great War Trotsky was in Paris, where he edited a Russian socialist paper. At Petrograd during the revolution of 1917, he became a supporter of Lenin, and, taking part in the abortive outbreak in July against the government of Kerensky, was arrested and thrown into prison. He was liberated in September, and forthwith under the inspiration of Lenin, began a campaign of intrigue against Kerensky.

Elected president of the Petrograd Soviet, he formed soon afterwards, the Bolshevik revolutionary committee, which on November 6-7 started the coup d'état that led to Kerensky's fall. On November 8, he, with Lenin, seized the reins of government and established the "Council of the People's Commissars," Lenin, being its president, and Trotsky commissar for foreign affairs. In 1918 he became commissar for war, and in 1921 wrote *The Defence of Terrorism*. In February, 1929, he was exiled from the U.S.S.R. on account of his anti-Soviet activities. Sent to Constantinople, he settled in Pera, and two months later removed to the island of Prinkipo. His *History of the Russian Revolution* was published in 1933.

PERSONALIA OF THE WAR

ITALIAN—GREEK

General Diaz

ARMANDO DIAZ was born at Naples, December 5, 1861. He was educated in Naples, and at the military school, Turin. He entered the Italian army April 24, 1881, and was on active service in Abyssinia in 1896. When Italy intervened in the Great War in 1915 he was still a junior major-general, but in the following year he commanded the 23rd army corps in the Carso battles. In November, 1917, following the battle of Caporetto, he replaced General Cadorna as generalissimo and held up the Austro-Germans on the line of the Piave and in the mountains. In June, 1918, he repulsed a general attack, and in October—November severely defeated the Austrians along their whole front, and was in command when the armistice was concluded. He became inspector-general in 1919. He was created Duca della Vittoria (Duke of Victory) 1921, and died February 29, 1928.

Vittorio Orlando

VITTORIO EMMANUELE ORLANDO was born at Palermo, May 19, 1860. He became professor of constitutional law there in 1883, entered the Italian parliament in 1898, and in 1908 was minister of public instruction, and later minister of justice. In 1916 he was minister of the interior, becoming prime minister in 1917. For the next two years Orlando was virtually dictator in Italy. He was a dominant force at the Paris peace conference, constituting, with Lloyd George, Wilson, and Clemenceau, the "Big Four." His ministry fell in June, 1919, owing to his advocacy of a policy of compromise in regard to Fiume and other Italian demands. He later became president of the chamber, and in October, 1920, was appointed ambassador to Brazil. He later returned to parliament, but retired as an anti-Fascist in 1925.

GREEK

King Constantine

KING CONSTANTINE OF GREECE, son of George I. of Greece, was born at Athens, August 3, 1868. He married Sophia, princess of Prussia and sister of the ex-Kaiser, William II., in October, 1889. The Greek defeat in the war against Turkey (1897) having made him unpopular, he left the country, but was brought back by Venizelos in 1910. His success as a commander in the Balkan Wars, 1912-13, restored him to

fav
tion
proc
Ven
Salo
reti
the
Sept

E
Retu
asser
Libe
in 18
Gree
comj
with

Ve
of th
poli
depo
or no
made
the t
of tes
On
shoul
parli
Sept
of th
the c
was
prim
whon
there
and s
He
being
was
whic
Lau
allow
remai

GREEK

favour, and he succeeded to the throne on his father's assassination, March 18, 1913. On the outbreak of the Great War he proclaimed Greece neutral, a policy which led to quarrels with Venizelos, the formation of the provisional government at Salonica, and eventually to his deposition, June 11, 1917. He retired to Switzerland, and his second son, Alexander, ascended the throne. He again became king in 1920, but abdicated September 27, 1922. He died January 11, 1923.

Eleutherios Venizelos

ELEUTHERIOS VENIZELOS was born in 1864, in comparatively humble circumstances, at Murniaes, Crete, and was educated at the university of Athens. He became a barrister in 1886. Returning to Crete, he was elected a member of the Cretan assembly in the following year, and was soon leader of the Liberals. In 1896 he headed the Cretan revolution. But when, in 1897 Great Britain, France, and Russia made Prince George of Greece high commissioner, Venizelos was dissatisfied with this compromise, and headed a revolt in 1905, which resulted in the withdrawal of the prince the following year.

Venizelos went to Athens in 1909, where he was chosen head of the revolutionary military league, which sought to purify political life, but he successfully opposed its secret aim of deposing King George. From that time, whether prime minister or not, Venizelos was the real leader of Greece. In 1912-13 he made Greece a member of the Balkan League, fought through the first and second Balkan wars, and secured large additions of territory.

On the outbreak of the Great War he desired that Greece should support the Allies, but was thwarted, in spite of his parliamentary majority, by King Constantine; he left Greece in September, 1916, for Crete, and later placed himself at the head of the Salonica revolution, establishing a government there. On the dethronement of Constantine in June, 1917, for which he was largely responsible, he went back to Athens, and became prime minister of Greece, now reunited, under King Alexander, whom the Allies had set up in place of his father. Venizelos thereupon joined the Allies against Germany, organized an army, and sent it into the field as part of the Salonica forces.

He represented Greece at the Paris Conference, in 1919, but being defeated at the election of November, 1920, he resigned. He was again prime minister for a few weeks in 1924, previous to which he had represented his country at the conference at Lausanne. He was then exiled and went to Paris, but was soon allowed to return. In 1928 he again became prime minister, and remained in power until May, 1932.

PERSONALIA OF THE WAR

Admiral Condouriotis

ADMIRAL CONDOURIOTIS was born in the island of Hydra, April 4, 1855. He commanded a squadron in the Greco-Turkish war in 1897, and during the first Balkan War in 1912 forced the Turkish fleet to take refuge in the Dardanelles, and defeated two attempts to raise the blockade. A member of the provisional government at Salonica during the Great War, Condouriotis became minister of marine when Venizelos became premier of reunited Greece in 1917. He resigned in 1919, when parliament gave him the title of "admiral" for life. On the death of King Alexander in 1920 he became regent. After an interval abroad he again became regent in December 1923. His title was changed to president in April 1924.

GERMAN

General von der Marwitz

GEORG VON DER MARWITZ was born at Klein Nossin, Stolp, on July 3, 1856. He was educated at the Stolp College and in the Cadet corps, and entered the German army as a lieutenant of cavalry in 1875. From 1883-88 he was at the war academy in Berlin, and in 1905 was chief of the staff of the 18th army corps. Two years later he was placed in command of a cavalry brigade, became general of cavalry in 1908, and in 1912 was commander of the 3rd division.

When the Great War broke out he was active on the North of the Eastern front, but in April, 1915, he was fighting among the passes of the west Carpathians, and in May was advancing on Przemyśl. In October, 1916, he was fighting in south Volhynia. In November, 1917, he was in command of the German 2nd army in France, and inflicted on the British a defeat at Cambrai early in December, after having himself been defeated by them some days before in the same sector. He led the same army in the great German offensive in March, 1918, and commanded the 5th army in the Verdun area, September-October. He died October 28, 1929.

General Otto von Below

OTTO VON BELOW, brother of Fritz von Below, was born at Danzig on January 18, 1857. Educated in the Cadet corps, he entered the German army as a lieutenant of infantry in 1875. He became a general in 1909 and commanded the 2nd division, with headquarters at Insterburg, East Prussia. During the Great War, after fighting on the Eastern front, where in May, 1915, he commanded the Nieman



A view showing part of the huge encampment which was erected when Etaples was a British base.



Courtyard of the Ecole Militaire or Barracks at Montreuil, France, used as the offices of British G.H.Q. from March, 1916, to April 1919.



Grand Place at Nieuport, Belgium, with the Cloth Hall on the left, and Clock Tower, as they appeared before the destruction of the town in the Great War.

NOTED CENTRES OF WAR ON THE WEST FRONT



GALLANT ITALIAN NAVAL EXPLOIT. Italian sailors on the night of December 9-10, 1917, cut the steel hawsers holding the mined net before entering the harbour at Trieste (see plate 34), where they torpedoed the Austrian battleships *Wien* and *Monarch*, the former being sunk.

GERMAN—AUSTRIAN

army, capturing Libau, Windau, and Mitau, he replaced General von Bülow as commander of the German forces between Arras and Soissons, on the Western front, in 1916. In October, 1917, at the head of the German 14th army, he led the Austro-German offensive against Italy on the Isonzo front, and won the battle of Caporetto. Thereafter he was transferred to the Western front again, and commanded the German 17th army in the second battle of the Somme, in March, 1918.

Count Bernstorff

JOHANN HEINRICH, COUNT BERNSTORFF was born in London, November 4, 1862. He entered the German army in 1881, but joined the diplomatic service in 1889. Appointed attaché to Constantinople, he proceeded in 1892 to Belgrade as secretary of legation and subsequently held positions in the embassies at St. Petersburg and London. In 1908 he was appointed ambassador to the U.S.A., and he held that post until February, 1917, when he was given his passports by President Wilson, on the rupture of diplomatic relations between America and Germany. After returning to Germany he went to Constantinople as ambassador, and in 1919 was one of those who discussed the terms of peace presented by the Allies. He was liberal member of the German Parliament 1921-28.

Count Zeppelin

FERDINAND, COUNT ZEPPELIN was born at Constance, July 8, 1838. He joined the army at the age of 20 and in 1863 fought in the American Civil war on the Union side. Returning to Germany he saw active service in the wars of 1866 and 1870-71. Retiring from the army in 1891, he devoted the remainder of his life to aeronautics. In 1899 he formed a company and built his first floating airship dock. For some years he continued his airship construction until in 1906 he made a successful flight of 60 miles in two hours. The German government then came to his help, and in 1908 his fourth airship passed the government's tests but was wrecked. He died March 8, 1917.

AUSTRIAN

Count Czernin

OTTOKAR, COUNT CZERNIN was born in 1872. During the Great War, Czernin was Austro-Hungarian minister at Bukarest (where he became unpopular at home by hinting at concessions in Transylvania) until Rumania joined the Allies in August, 1916. At Brest-Litovsk he was the principal Austrian delegate, having in December, 1917, succeeded Burian as foreign minister of the dual monarchy, holding that position

PERSONALIA OF THE WAR

until April 15, 1918. His resignation was necessary after the speech in which he stated that Clemenceau had made offers of peace before the great German offensive opened on March 21. Clemenceau retorted that Czernin had lied, and the emperor Karl found Czernin's dismissal inevitable.

In January, 1918, he had made a fairly moderate speech on the war, in the course of which he referred specifically to the famous Fourteen Points. President Wilson, speaking in reply, commented on the difference between the tone of the speech and that of one delivered simultaneously by the spokesman of Germany. Czernin published his reminiscences in 1919, under the title (English translation) *In the World War*. He died April 4, 1932.

ARABIAN

King Feisal

FEISAL, King of Irak, the third son of Hussein, king of the Hejaz, was born in Arabia in 1887. He left the country when five years old, and spent the next 18 years in Constantinople, where he received a modern education and, later, appointments under the Turkish government. Along with his brothers, Ali and Abdulla, he took a leading part in the movement which led to the deposition of Abdul Hamid. He commanded the Arab contingent in the Turkish campaigns in the district south of Mecca, against a new religious sect which was threatening the stability of the emirate of the Hejaz that had been restored after the downfall of Abdul Hamid.

When, in June, 1916, his father sided with the Allies against Turkey, Feisal took command of the rebels in Medina, but was defeated by the Turks. He then presented to the British a scheme for the formation of an Arab regular army. This was accepted and Feisal's army eventually formed Allenby's right wing in Palestine. His services in the conquest of Palestine and Syria were rewarded with the privilege of setting up in eastern Syria (Amman, Damascus and Aleppo) a provisional military administration which was guaranteed to the Arabs as an independent sphere by the Sykes-Picot Treaty.

In 1919 Feisal was present at the peace conference in Paris, and in March, 1920, he was made king of Syria, but owing to his failure to recognize the claims of France in that country, he was deposed by General Gouraud, the latter entering his capital, Damascus, on July 25. After a visit to England, he became candidate for the throne of Irak, and in 1921 was chosen king by a huge majority. He died suddenly at Berne on September 8, 1933.

DIARY OF EVENTS
1917

DIARY OF EVENTS

From January 1, 1917 to December 31, 1917.

1917

- JAN. 1.—Sir Douglas Haig created Field-Marshal.
Transport Ivernia sunk by submarine in Mediterranean.
Renewed offensive in East Africa.
- JAN. 2.—Text of new Allied Note to Greece published.
- JAN. 3.—Lord Cowdray appointed Air Minister.
Germans clear the Dobruja by the capture of the Maoin bridge-head.
- JAN. 4.—In the Carpathians, Russians break through the front of General von Kovess's army near Mount Botosul.
East African "round-up." Announced that while the operations of Jan. 1 were in progress, a detached column reached the Rufji River in the vicinity of Mkalinso, and established itself on both banks of that stream.
British airmen again bomb the railway bridge at Kuleli Burgas.
- JAN. 5.—Germans and Bulgarians capture Braila.
Mr. Lloyd George and Lord Milner arrive in Rome to confer with the French and Italian Governments.
North of Beaumont-Hamel British troops seize two hostile posts.
- JAN. 6.—Russian rally on the Sereth.
- JAN. 7.—Russians report heavy fighting near Riga, where they vigorously attack.
British carry out a successful raid south of Armentières.
- JAN. 8.—War Office announces that General Smuts has pressed his operations against the main body of the enemy in the valley and delta of the Lower Rufji River.
Germans capture Focsani.
Further Allied Note to Greece, with 48 hours' time limit.
- JAN. 9.—British advance towards Rafa in Sinai campaign.
Russians attacking in the Riga region capture an island in the river Dvina, east of Glaudan.
British seize and consolidate section of enemy trench east of Beaumont-Hamel.
H.M.S. Cornwallis sunk by enemy in Mediterranean.
- JAN. 10.—Russians report continued advance in the Riga district.
Allies' Reply to President Wilson's Peace Note published.
- JAN. 11.—British cavalry occupy Hai town, on the Shatt-el-Hai.
H.M. seaplane-carrier Ben-My-Chree sunk by gun fire in Kastelorizo Harbour (Asia Minor), 1 officer and 4 men wounded.
Greek reply to allied ultimatum complies with demands on the main points.
- JAN. 12.—New War Loan issued.

DIARY OF EVENTS, 1917

- JAN. 13.—On the Lower Sereth, Mackensen's Turkish troops storm the village of Mihalea. In the Casin Valley, in the Moldavian Highlands, the Rumanians attack and occupy enemy trenches.
- JAN. 14.—British troops on the Struma front defeat a Turkish patrol. Enemy positions at Neohari are bombarded in co-operation with the Navy.
- JAN. 15.—Italians repulse Bulgarian attack near Lake Prespa.
Sir Douglas Haig and General Nivelle attend conference with the War Cabinet in London.
- JAN. 16.—War Office announces that the south bank of the Tigris east of Kut-el-Amara has been cleared of the Turk, save for one small stretch in the bend of the river.
Italian advance in Albania.
- JAN. 17.—British troops occupy a line of enemy posts north of Beaumont-sur-Ancre.
Canadian troops carry out a very successful daylight raid north-east of Cité Callonne.
Greece accepts the demands of the Allies in their entirety.
- JAN. 18.—British make further progress during the night north of Beaucourt-sur-Ancre.
Germans announce the s.s. Yarrowdale, captured by German raider, taken into German port on December 31, with 469 prisoners on board.
- JAN. 19.—Great Munitions explosion at a munitions factory in Silvertown, E. London, 69 killed, 400 injured.
- JAN. 20.—British air raid on Bagdad.
Lieut.-General Hoskins succeeds Lieut.-General Smuts in East African command.
- JAN. 21.—British carry out successful raid south-east of Loos.
War Office announces the capture of the last trenches in the Tigris bend, north-east of Kut-el-Amara.
- JAN. 22.—Officially announced that the encircling movement against the Germans on the Lower Rufji River is making progress. In the Makege region they are being harassed by converging columns.
Naval actions in North Sea. British light forces meet a division of enemy torpedo-boat destroyers off the Dutch coast, and in a short engagement one of the enemy torpedo-boat destroyers is sunk, the rest scattered after suffering "considerable punishment."
- JAN. 23.—Germans report that Bulgarian troops have crossed the southern branch of the Danube opposite Tultcha.
- JAN. 24.—Dimitrieff's army, forced to give up part of its gains near Riga, is driven back a mile and a half, and loses a third of the ground previously won.
- JAN. 25.—Obstinate fighting continues west and south-west of Riga.

DIARY OF EVENTS, 1917

British carry out a very successful daylight raid near Hulluch.

The Greek Government presents formal apologies to the Ministers of the Allied Powers for the regrettable occurrences of December 1, 1916.

Allied Naval conference. Admiralty announces that the results of an important Naval conference held in London between representatives of Great Britain, France, and Italy were entirely satisfactory.

Small German vessel bombards Suffolk coast; no casualties.

H.M. auxiliary cruiser *Laurentic* sunk off Irish Coast by German submarine or mine; 121 officers and men saved.

JAN. 26.—War Office reports continued falling back of enemy on the Lower Rufiji; 100 miles east of Lake Nyassa a German force has surrendered.

JAN. 27.—Brilliant operation near Le Transloy carried out by British; 350 prisoners.

JAN. 28.—Russians break through enemy's lines on front of 3,000 yards near the border of the Bukovina, Transylvania, and Rumania.

JAN. 29.—British raid north-east of Vermelles.

JAN. 30.—Duke of Connaught appointed Colonel-in-Chief of the Volunteer force.

JAN. 31.—Tsar receives Lord Milner and other British, French, and Italian delegates assembled in Petrograd for Allied conference.

FEB. 1.—Intensified U Boat Warfare. From this date Germany is to prevent, "by all weapons," sea traffic in wide zones round Great Britain, France, Italy, and in the Eastern Mediterranean. The United States to be allowed access to Falmouth with one steamer per week, and a Dutch paddle-steamer to be allowed to ply between Flushing and Southwold.

FEB. 2.—Food Controller issues important statement asking for voluntary restriction of food consumption to avoid compulsory rationing.

British naval air raid on Bruges Harbour.

FEB. 3.—United States Rupture with Germany. Count Bernstorff given his passports, and Mr. Gerard recalled from Berlin.

British line east of Beaucourt advanced 500 yards on front of three-quarters of a mile.

FEB. 4.—President Wilson's Note to neutrals, inviting them to take action similar to his.

British occupy 500 yards of trench north-east of Gueudecourt.

Senussi main force defeated.

DIARY OF EVENTS, 1917

- FEB. 5.—British troops enter Siwa. In the meantime a portion of a British force occupies the Munasib Pass (24 miles west of Girba), captures an enemy convoy, and successfully ambushes the leading party of the enemy fleeing from Girba.
- FEB. 6.—British line advanced near Grandcourt.
National Service plans outlined by Mr. Neville Chamberlain at great London meeting.
- FEB. 7.—British capture Grandcourt.
Anchor liner California torpedoed; 43 passengers and crew missing.
- FEB. 8.—British capture Sailly Hill.
Allied naval air raid on Bruges.
- FEB. 9.—Transport Tyndareus, having on board a battalion of Middlesex Regiment, with whom was Colonel John Ward, M.P., mined off Cape Agulhas. All on board were saved, and the Tyndareus reached port under her own steam.
- FEB. 10.—British capture strong system of trenches at southern foot of the Serre Hill; 215 prisoners taken.
- FEB. 11.—British occupy 600 yards of hostile trench north of the Ancre in neighbourhood of the Beaucourt-Puisieux road.
Enemy driven back to the last line of trenches in the Dahra bend of the Tigris, west of Kut.
- FEB. 12.—Announced that small British force has completed punitive expedition into Ovamboland, in north of S.W. Africa, against turbulent native chief on Portuguese border.
Submarine shells French coast near Biarritz.
- FEB. 13.—Announced that White Star liner Afric has been sunk by submarine.
President Wilson refuses to listen to the German proposal to discuss the situation until and unless Germany cancels her illegal practices.
- FEB. 14.—Great French raid north-west of Compiègne, reaching enemy second line.
- FEB. 15.—Announced that all coal-mines in United Kingdom taken over by Government for period of the war.
Mr. Hughes announces formation of National Government in Australia.
The offensive against the Turks on the right bank of the Tigris in the Dahra bend results in clearing the loop of the enemy.
- FEB. 16.—Lists for the great War Loan closed. £1,000,312,950 "new money" raised.
- FEB. 17.—Advance on the Ancre. Enemy positions covering Miraumont on the north and Petit Miraumont on the south of the river captured on a front of a mile and a half.
Zeppelin raid on Boulogne.
General Maude's troops assault the Sanna-i-Yat position and occupy enemy's two front lines.

DIARY OF EVENTS, 1917

- FEB. 18.—Contact established between Italians and French in Southern Albania.
- FEB. 19.—Successful British raid south of Souchez.
Germans rush small British post near Le Transloy.
- FEB. 20.—British raid enemy's lines south-east of Ypres on a front of 500 yards, and reach his support line.
- FEB. 21.—New British Blockade Order published.
Transport Mendi carrying last batch of the South African native labour contingent to France sunk in collision twelve miles from Isle of Wight. Loss of over 600 lives.
- FEB. 22.—Seven Dutch ships torpedoed by German submarines outside Falmouth; three sunk.
- FEB. 23.—French Ministry of Marine announces mail steamer Athos, carrying troops to France, torpedoed in the Mediterranean; 1,450 persons saved.
Important speech by Mr. Lloyd George in House of Commons on restriction of imports, and increase of home-grown food.
British cross the Tigris in the neighbourhood of the Shumran bend.
- FEB. 24.—British capture Kut-el-Amara.
- FEB. 25.—German withdrawal on the Ancre.
Cunard liner Laconia torpedoed.
Enemy torpedo-boat destroyers fire a number of shells at Broadstairs and Margate; woman and two children killed, material damage slight. A short engagement takes place in the Channel between a British destroyer and a force of several enemy destroyers.
- FEB. 26.—Franco-British conference at Calais, at which French and British Prime Ministers attended.
- FEB. 27.—Further British advance towards Bapaume. Ligny, and western and northern outskirts of Puisieux-au-Mont taken.
- FEB. 28.—Capture of Gommecourt.
Sir Douglas Haig reports that during the month of February the British captured 2,133 German prisoners, including 36 officers; and 11 villages have been captured.
- MAR. 1.—North of Miraumont British line advanced 600 yards on a front of one and a half miles.
Aeroplane raid on Broadstairs, one woman injured.
- MAR. 2.—Russians take Hamadan, in Persia.
British progress north of Warlencourt-Eaucourt, and north-west of Puisieux-au-Mont.
- MAR. 3.—British advance a quarter of a mile on a front of five miles, north of Puisieux-au-Mont, and east of Gommecourt.
- MAR. 4.—British Advance on Somme.
British naval air raid on blast furnaces of Brebach.
German attack at Verdun.
British line extended south of Somme to Roye.

DIARY OF EVENTS, 1917

- MAR. 5.—Advance on Bagdad. British cavalry engage a Turkish rearguard at Lajj (nine miles south-east of Ctesiphon).
- MAR. 6.—British cavalry fourteen miles from Bagdad.
- MAR. 7.—French raiding activity between the Oise and the Aisne, and in the Argonne.
Russians occupy Bijar and Sihna.
- MAR. 8.—British line advanced on either side of the Ancre valley.
French victory in Champagne.
Count Zeppelin dies from inflammation of lungs.
Interim report of Dardanelles Commission published.
Russians occupy Bisitun (Persia).
- MAR. 9.—During the night the passage of the Diala is forced, and the British advance four miles towards Bagdad.
- MAR. 10.—British capture Irlas.
- MAR. 11.—Fall of Bagdad to Sir Stanley Maude.
- MAR. 12.—General Smuts arrives in London for the Imperial War Conference.
Revolution in Russia. The Army refuses to deal with food rioters in Petrograd, and the Duma is prorogued. Latter, headed by M. Rodzianko, calls upon the Tsar for a representative Government; several regiments join the Parliamentary cause; the Cabinet resigns, and the Duma, failing a reply from the Tsar, elects a Provisional Government; arrest of ex-Ministers ordered.
- MAR. 13.—British advance on Bapaume.
Sir Stanley Maude reports British advanced detachments reach a point 30 miles up-stream from Bagdad.
- MAR. 14.—Sir Douglas Haig reports British line advanced on a front of over one-and-a-half miles south-west and west of Bapaume.
China breaks with Germany by severing diplomatic relations and taking possession of the German merchantmen at Shanghai.
- MAR. 15.—The Tsar abdicates the throne and renounces all rights of succession on behalf of his son. Grand Duke Michael Alexandrovitch appointed Regent. National Government set up.
- MAR. 16.—Zeppelin raid on South-Eastern counties.
Aeroplane raid on Kent; no casualties.
- MAR. 17.—Fall of Bapaume to the British.
Russians occupy Kerind.
Zeppelin L39 brought down at Compiègne.
Resignation of M. Briand, the French Premier.
General Maude's troops occupy Bahriz.
- MAR. 18.—From Monchy, south-west of Arras, to north of Soissons, a total distance of 70 miles, German armies are in retreat.

DIARY OF EVENTS. 1917

- German torpedo-boat destroyers fire a number of shells at Ramsgate; no casualties, and material damage slight. At the same time a British destroyer is torpedoed and sunk east of Dover; a second destroyer torpedoed but not seriously damaged.
- MAR. 19.—Continued German retreat.
Russians report their occupation of Harunabad.
M. Ribot new French Premier.
- MAR. 20.—British hospital ship *Asturias* torpedoed; 92 casualties.
First meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet held in London.
- MAR. 21.—British continue to advance rapidly, reaching points ten miles to the east of the Somme.
Ex-Tsar Nicholas placed under arrest.
Preliminary meeting of the Imperial War Conference held in London.
- MAR. 22.—Sir Douglas Haig reports enemy's resistance is increasing along the front from west of St. Quentin to south of Arras.
- MAR. 23.—Big French advance between the Somme and the Oise.
- MAR. 24.—Admiralty announces 111,000 tons of British shipping sunk by raider *Moewe*.
- MAR. 25.—Between the Somme and the Oise, French troops drive enemy beyond important position of Castres-Essigny-le-Grand and Hill 121 (latter, one mile south of St. Quentin).
- MAR. 26.—General Murray's forces defeat 20,000 Turks five miles south of Gaza, Palestine, taking 900 prisoners, including Turkish commander and his staff.
- MAR. 27.—Announced British drive enemy from Longavesnes, Lieramont, and Equancourt, and occupy these villages.
- MAR. 28.—British capture Villers-Faucon and Saulcourt.
- MAR. 29.—British capture Neuville-Bourjonval.
- MAR. 30.—British occupy Ruyaulcourt, Sorel-le-Grand, and Fins.
Later in day Heudicourt is captured, and possession gained of Marteville, Vermand, Soyécourt, and Ste. Emilie.
- MAR. 31.—British capture Jeancourt, Hervilly, and Herbécourt.
British occupy Deli Abbas, sixty miles north-east of Bagdad.
- APRIL 1.—British take Savy, four miles west of St. Quentin.
- APRIL 2.—Francilly-Selency, Selency, and Holnon carried by British, who are within two miles of St. Quentin.
President Wilson asks Congress to declare that a state of war exists with Germany.
- APRIL 3.—Russian reverse on Stokhod.
- APRIL 4.—Announced British capture Metz-en-Couture.
French patrols enter suburbs of St. Quentin.
- APRIL 5.—British capture Ronssoy and Basse-Boulogne and Lempire, and progress beyond Metz-en-Couture.

DIARY OF EVENTS, 1917

- APRIL 6.—United States at war with Germany.
- APRIL 7.—Seaplanes raid Zeebrugge Mole during the night; and off Zeebrugge two German destroyers are torpedoed.
- APRIL 8.—British progress in neighbourhood of Bapaume-Cambrai road on a front of 3,000 yards north of Louveral. Cuba at war with Germany.
- APRIL 9.—British launch a battle on a vast scale from Lens to St. Quentin. In the direction of Cambrai British troops storm Hermies and Boursies; in the direction of St. Quentin they capture Fresnoy-le-petit.
- Vimy Ridge captured.
- Austria severs diplomatic relations with the United States.
- Brazil breaks with Germany.
- British hospital ship *Salta* mined in Channel; 52 persons missing.
- APRIL 10.—Battle of Arras. British operations energetically pursued, outskirts of Monchy-le-Preux (five miles east of Arras) reached. In direction of Cambrai British line advanced north of Louveral.
- APRIL 11.—Capture of Monchy-le-Preux and La Bergère.
- APRIL 12.—Capture of Wancourt, Heninel, Gauche Wood, Gouzeducourt village and Wood.
- APRIL 13.—Continued British advance. Bailleul, Vimy, Petit Vimy, Givenchy-en-Gohelle, Angres and Wancourt Tower captured. North-west of St. Quentin the village of Fayet is captured; 13,000 prisoners and 166 guns taken since April 9.
- Bolivia breaks with Germany.
- APRIL 14.—Allied air raid on Friebrug as reprisal for sinking of hospital ships.
- APRIL 15.—British transport *Arcadian* torpedoed in Eastern Mediterranean; 19 officers and 260 men missing.
- British transport *Cameronia*, with troops on board, torpedoed in Eastern Mediterranean; 140 persons missing.
- APRIL 16.—Sir Douglas Haig reports capture of large booty at Liévin and on the Souchez river.
- Great French Offensive. Attacking on a 25 mile front between Soissons and Rheims, the French capture defensive line between Soissons and Craonne, enemy's second line between Craonne and Juvincourt, and reach the Aisne Canal, taking 10,000 prisoners.
- APRIL 17.—Hospital ships *Donegal* and *Lanfranc* torpedoed while transporting wounded from France. From *Donegal*, 29 men and 12 of crew missing. Of *Lanfranc's* complement, 34 drowned, including 15 Germans; 152 wounded German prisoners rescued.
- Battle of the Aisne. French offensive continues, the fighting front extended to a point beyond Auberive, which village is captured; over 2,500 prisoners taken on this new front.

DIARY OF EVENTS, 1917

American destroyer attacked and mined by German submarine 100 miles south of New York.

APRIL 18.—British progress south-east and east of Epéhy, and capture Villers-Guislan.

APRIL 19.—Continued French offensive along the Aisne and in Champagne.

British check at Gaza.

APRIL 20.—French occupy Sancy, on the Vréigny plateau, and in Champagne seize important points near Moron-Villiers. British capture Gonnelleu.

Mr. Balfour, who is on special mission to United States, arrives at Halifax.

King and Queen attend service at St. Paul's Cathedral on occasion of entry of United States into the war.

Five German destroyers attempt a raid on Dover by night.

Two of them are sunk by two vessels of Dover patrol. On the same night German destroyers fire some shells on Calais.

APRIL 21.—British gain ground along north bank of the Scarpe, east of Fampoux.

British carry Istabulat, the last station before Samarra, on Bagdad railway.

APRIL 22.—British progress east of Havrincourt Wood, and carry southern portion of Trescault village (east of the wood).

APRIL 23.—Three British seaplanes attack five German destroyers steaming north from Belgian coast. One destroyer believed sunk.

General Maude occupies Samarra station.

APRIL 24.—British capture hamlet of Bilhem.

APRIL 25.—British line advanced slightly south of Scarpe River. Announced 3,029 prisoners captured since morning of April 23.

Advance in Balkans. British attack on front of two miles and a half between Lake Doiran and a point north-west of Doljeli, and advance 500 yards.

German destroyers bombard Dunkirk.

APRIL 26.—German effort to retake Gavrelle completely repulsed. British capture quarries on eastern outskirts of Hargicourt.

APRIL 27.—German destroyers heavily bombard Ramsgate, about 100 shells being fired; 2 killed, 3 injured.

APRIL 28.—British attack on a front of several miles north of river Scarpe. Arleux-en-Gohelle captured by Canadians, and progress made north-east of Gavrelle and on western slopes of Greenland Hill. South of the river, ground is gained north of Monchy-le-Preux.

APRIL 29.—British capture trench system south of Oppy on a front of about a mile, after heavy fighting. Prisoners taken since morning of April 28 number 976.

DIARY OF EVENTS, 1917

- APRIL 30.—Announced General Pétain appointed Chief of Staff to General Nivelle.
- MAY 1.—Sir Douglas Haig reports following captures during April: 19,343 prisoners, 257 guns and howitzers, 227 trench-mortars, and 470 machine guns.
British steamship Gena sunk off Aldeburgh by torpedo from German seaplane.
- MAY 2.—French gain ground in the woods to the west of Mont Carnillet.
- MAY 3.—Admiralty announces homeward-bound troop transport Ballarat torpedoed on April 25; no casualties.
Sir Douglas Haig launches new attack on the German lines on a front of over twelve miles, east of Arras.
- MAY 4.—French capture Craonne.
British transport Transylvania torpedoed in the Mediterranean; 413 casualties.
- MAY 5.—Together with French troops a Venezelist contingent attack in region of Lyumnitza, Macedonia, and occupy advanced enemy positions on a front of 5,000 yards.
- MAY 6.—French gains maintained in face of fierce counter-attacks. Officially announced that operations of May 4 and 5 give the French mastery of the crest on which the Chemin des Dames runs, over a front of 18½ miles.
- MAY 7.—British line improved at Bullecourt.
German aeroplane drops four bombs on North-East London with slight damage.
- MAY 8.—British withdraw from Fresnoy.
- MAY 9.—British regain portion of lost ground west of Fresnoy, and progress in neighbourhood of Bullecourt.
- MAY 10.—British scouting force of light cruisers and destroyers under Commodore Tyrwhitt engage eleven German destroyers between Dutch and English coasts. Enemy retreats, pursued by four destroyers, latter abandoning pursuit within range of Zeebrugge guns.
- MAY 11.—Announced two new groups for voluntary attestation to be opened, to include men, married or single, between 41 and 45, and between 45 and 50.
- MAY 12.—Hindenburg line attacked in neighbourhood of Bullecourt, also astride the Arras-Cambrai road and north of the Scarpe.
Strong combined naval and air attack on Zeebrugge.
- MAY 13.—Sir Douglas Haig reports greater part of Bullecourt in British hands.
M. Gutchkoff, Russian Minister of War, resigns.
- MAY 14.—British capture Roeux, and advance their line north of Gavrelle.
Zeppelin L22 destroyed by British in North Sea.
Italian offensive on Julian front, on the Isonzo, and Carso.

DIARY OF EVENTS, 1917

MAY 15.—Announced that important changes made in Admiralty organization; the First Sea Lord (Admiral Sir John Jellicoe) takes additional title of Chief of the Naval Staff, and has as his deputy Vice-Admiral Sir Henry Oliver. Sir Eric Geddes, with honorary and temporary rank of vice-admiral, becomes a member of the Board, with the title of Controller.

Austrian light cruisers and destroyers raid allied drifter line in the Adriatic, and sink 14 British drifters. H.M.S. Dartmouth and Bristol, assisted by French and Italian destroyers, chase enemy. One Austrian cruiser sunk and another destroyed.

General Petain, French Commander-in-Chief in succession to General Nivelle.

MAY 16.—Coalition Government in Russia. M. Miliukoff resigns as Foreign Minister, and is succeeded by M. Tereshtchenko. M. Kerensky succeeds M. Gutchkoff as Minister of War.

MAY 17.—Announced that a flotilla of United States destroyers has arrived in England to co-operate with British naval forces. Rear-Admiral Sims in command of all United States naval forces sent to European waters.

British capture Bullecourt.

MAY 18.—Italy's offensive. The great battle, whose first notable feature was the capture of Monte Kuk, continues to develop in favour of the Italians, who capture Hill 652, the topmost peak of Monte Vodice. The number of prisoners now in Italian hands is 6,432.

Officially announced that British heavy artillery is co-operating with Italian Army on Julian front.

MAY 19.—French torpedo-boats, after short engagement off Dunkirk, drive off flotilla of German destroyers.

MAY 20.—British attack Hindenburg line north-west of Bullecourt, between remains of that village and Fontaine.

MAY 21.—Sir Douglas Haig reports British hold whole of Hindenburg line from a point one mile east of Bullecourt to Arras, except for a stretch of 2,000 yards immediately to the west of Bullecourt.

MAY 22.—On the Aisne front the French deliver at three points an attack which produces good results on the Vauclerc and California plateaux to the north-west of Craonne.

MAY 23.—Zeppelin raid on Eastern Counties; one man killed in a Norfolk village.

Great Italian victory on the Carso.

MAY 24.—French report 8,600 German prisoners taken on the Aisne and Champagne fronts since May 1.

Italians fight their way towards Trieste, the heaviest battle raging from hills on Jamiano-Brestovica road across the Lisert marshes to the sea. British monitors in Gulf of Trieste co-operate by shelling the rear of the enemy's lines.

DIARY OF EVENTS, 1917

MAY 25.—17 enemy aeroplanes attack the south-east of England between 5.15 and 6.30 p.m. Bombs dropped at a number of places, but nearly all the damage occurs in Folkestone. Total casualties: 76 killed, 174 injured. Three enemy aeroplanes shot down on their return journey by fighting squadrons of the R.N.A.S. from Dunkirk.

Italians carry network of trenches extending from mouth of Timavo river to Feast, east of Jamiano, and capture heights between Flondar and Medeazza. In the Vodice area they retain Hill 652.

MAY 26.—Hospital ship Dover Castle torpedoed in Mediterranean; six men missing.

MAY 27.—Battle of the Carso. Italians carry fortified trenches east and south-east of Jamiano, and occupy San Giovanni.

MAY 28.—Great aerial activity on western front, in the course of which 12 German machines destroyed by British, and 10 others driven down out of control.

MAY 29.—Italy reports capture of 23,681 Austrian prisoners since May 14.

War Office reports remnants of main German forces in East Africa have broken south from the morasses of the Rubji valley, and raiding-parties have made their way into Portuguese territory.

Announced Mr. Arthur Henderson has undertaken an important mission to Russia on behalf of the Government.

MAY 30.—French report strong artillery fire on both sides near St. Quentin.

MAY 31.—French regain ground temporarily lost to the north-east of the Mont Haut.

JUNE 1.—Sir Douglas Haig reports 3,412 German prisoners captured during May.

Lord Devonport resigns as Food Controller.

JUNE 2.—The King holds an Investiture in Hyde Park, and decorates 300 soldiers and 50 relatives of men who died.

British transport Cameronian torpedoed and sunk in Mediterranean; 63 missing.

JUNE 3.—Fighting south of Souchez river.

JUNE 4.—British carry out successful raids north of Armentieres.

JUNE 5.—A squadron of 16 German aeroplanes drops bombs in Essex, and attacks the naval establishments in the Medway. British guns and aeroplanes engage the enemy, and 10 German machines are brought down; 38 persons killed and wounded.

A force of light cruisers and destroyers under Commander Tyrwhitt engages six German destroyers in the Channel; Szo is sunk by gunfire and another severely damaged. Enemy naval base and workshops at Ostend heavily bombarded by British warships.

DIARY OF EVENTS, 1917

- JUNE 6.—Operations north of the Scarpe successfully completed; enemy's positions on western slopes of Greenland Hill on a front of about a mile captured.
Lord Northcliffe announced as at head of British mission to United States.
M. Jonnart arrives in Greece as High Commissioner of the Protecting Powers.
- JUNE 7.—Messines Ridge captured.
- JUNE 8.—General Pershing, Commander-in-Chief of U.S. Expeditionary Force, arrives in London.
Yanina, in Greek Epirus, occupied by Italians.
- JUNE 9.—Sir Douglas Haig reports prisoners in battle of Messines to date total over 7,000.
- JUNE 10.—Italian attack in the Trentino.
British naval and military forces carry out an operation against a German detachment in the estuary of the Lukeledi, German East Africa.
- JUNE 11.—One of H.M. drifters, "I. F. S.," engages five enemy seaplanes in the Channel; two brought down.
- JUNE 12.—British gain further ground east and north-east of Messines on two mile front, and occupy Gapaard.
French troops land at Corinth, and a Franco-British column enters Thessaly.
King Constantine of Greece abdicates, and is succeeded by his second son, Prince Alexander.
Turkish port of Saliss, in the Yemen, captured by men from British warships.
- JUNE 13.—Allied Troops land at the Piræus.
Announced total British captures since June 7 are: 7,342 German prisoners, 47 guns, 242 machine guns, and 60 trench mortars.
15 German aeroplanes attack and bomb East End and City of London about midday; 160 killed and 432 injured.
- JUNE 14.—British Attack near Messines.
British storm Infantry Hill, east of Monchy-le-Preux.
Zeppelin L43 destroyed in North Sea by British naval forces.
- JUNE 15.—Elder Dempster steamship Addah torpedoed by German submarine.
Lord Rhondda new Food Controller.
- JUNE 16.—Italians capture strongly-fortified position on Corno Cavento.
- JUNE 17.—Two Zeppelins raid East Anglia and Kentish coast respectively. One airship damaged by gunfire and brought down in flames by pilot of Royal Flying Corps. The other drops bombs on coast town; two persons killed and sixteen injured.

DIARY OF EVENTS. 1917

- JUNE 18.—British fall back from certain advanced posts in front of Infantry Hill after severe fighting.
- JUNE 19.—Italian success in Trentino.
- JUNE 20.—West of Soissons-Laon road Germans gain foothold in a French trench near Vauxaillon.
- JUNE 21.—Germans enter one of British front-line posts near Lombaertzyde (near Belgian coast), but driven out.
- JUNE 22.—German attacks on French north of the Aisne.
- JUNE 23.—Heavy artillery fighting north of the Aisne.
P. and O. liner Mongolia strikes a mine and sinks off Bombay.
- JUNE 24.—Intense artillery activity on both sides reported from several points held by Belgian troops near the Flanders coast.
British advance near Lens.
- JUNE 25.—First units of American troops arrive in France.
M. Zaimis, the Greek Premier, resigns; M. Venizelos returns to Athens.
Three R.N.A.S. machines fight 10 German aeroplanes near Roulers, one German machine being destroyed and two more driven out of control.
- JUNE 26.—British airmen raid Turkish camp at Tekrit, on the Tigris, and cause much havoc.
- JUNE 27.—Report of Mesopotamia Commission published.
M. Venizelos forms a Cabinet, and takes the office of Minister of War, with Admiral Condouriotis as Minister of Marine.
- JUNE 28.—British make considerable progress towards Lens.
- JUNE 29.—Announced General Allenby succeeds General Murray in Palestine command.
- JUNE 30.—British gain west and south-west of Lens.
- JULY 1.—Sir Douglas Haig reports 8,686 German prisoners captured during June, also 67 guns, 102 trench-mortars, and 345 machine guns.
Russians attack on a wide front, on each side of Brzezany (Eastern Galicia), a mixed army of Germans, Austrians, and Turks.
Manchu Emperor restored in China.
- JULY 2.—Attacking along the Tarnopol-Lemberg railway line, the Russians take two fortified villages; 6,300 prisoners taken, bringing total to over 18,000.
British naval airmen raid Bruges docks.
- JULY 3.—Artillery activity in the region of Ypres.
- JULY 4.—About 7 a.m. 12 to 14 German aeroplanes attack Harwich; casualties, 11 killed and 36 injured. Returning, the raiders are intercepted by naval aircraft from Dunkirk; two hostile machines brought down in flames and a third damaged.

DIARY OF EVENTS, 1917

- JULY 5.—Germans fire 400 shells on Reims.
- JULY 6.—Russians attack between Zborow and Koniuchy, and at Brzezany, taking over 1,000 prisoners.
- JULY 7.—About 20 enemy aeroplanes raid London, after dropping bombs in the Thanet district. Casualties: 59 killed and 193 injured. One enemy machine brought down at mouth of Thames, two more 40 miles from the East Coast, and a fourth fell in flames off mouth of the Scheldt.
- Emperor of China again abdicates.
- JULY 8.—German attacks on Aisne front repulsed.
General Korniloff breaks through Austro-Hungarian defences west of Stanislaw on a wide front.
- JULY 9.—Successful raid on Constantinople by R.N.A.S.
General Korniloff wins his way into Wiktorow, five miles south-west of Halicz.
- The Commodore, Lowestoft, reports H.M. armed trawler Ireland destroyed two enemy seaplanes and took four prisoners.
- H.M.S. Vanguard blown up as a result of internal explosion and sunk; 801 casualties.
- JULY 10.—Russians capture Halicz.
After intense bombardment, Germans penetrate British positions east of the Yser mouth, on a front of 1,400 yards to a depth of 600 yards, reaching right bank of river Yser near the sea.
- JULY 11.—General Korniloff's troops fight severe and obstinate battle at Kalusz and occupy the town.
- JULY 12.—Announced that forces of King of the Hejaz have gained victory over Turks in north of Arabia, and whole country east of Sinai Peninsula between Maaw and Akaba is now in their possession.
- JULY 13.—General Korniloff's left wing sweeps forward in an encircling movement on Dolina.
- JULY 14.—Russians win further successes on the Lower Lomnica, and south-west of Kalusz, taking 600 prisoners.
Germans penetrate two lines of French trenches west of Cerny, but are later evicted from all except 500 yards of advanced trenches. French conquer a network of trenches on Moronvillers Ridge, taking 360 prisoners.
- Herr Bethmann-Hollweg, German Imperial Chancellor, resigns, and is succeeded by Herr Michaelis, Prussian Under-Secretary of Finance.
- JULY 15.—In the region of the Mont Haut and the Teton, Germans assault the position captured by the French on July 14.
- JULY 16.—The battle in Champagne ends in the complete defeat of the Germans.

DIARY OF EVENTS, 1917

Light British naval forces sight a number of German steamers off the Dutch coast and capture four.

JULY 17.—French gains at Verdun.

The King issues Proclamation declaring that the name of Windsor is to be borne by his Royal House, and relinquishing the use of German titles and dignities.

Sir Eric Geddes becomes First Lord of the Admiralty in place of Sir Edward Carson, who joins the War Cabinet. Mr. Winston Churchill appointed Minister of Munitions.

JULY 18.—French defeat violent German counter-attacks against the captured positions in Verdun region.

JULY 19.—Germans attack south of Lombaertzyde, and reach British line only on a small portion of the front attacked. Those who entered the trenches driven out by counter-attacks.

Russian troops' defection. Several detachments of Russian troops in Galicia refuse to obey the military command, and as a result Germans break through Russian line. The lost positions are east of Zloczow, east of Brzezany, and near Halicz.

Herr Michaelis, the new German Chancellor, delivers important speech on German peace conditions.

JULY 20.—On a wide front between Lemberg and Tarnopol Russian troops retreat.

M. Kerensky becomes Prime Minister in Russia.

JULY 21.—South-east of Cerny, failure of German desperate attacks on the French.

JULY 22.—A squadron of enemy aeroplanes, reported at from 15 to 21, drop bombs on Felixstowe and Harwich and proceed down the Essex coast; 13 persons killed, 26 injured. One of the raiding aeroplanes is brought down into the sea not far from the coast.

British line advanced slightly south-east of Monchy-le-Preux.

H.M. armed mercantile cruiser Otway torpedoed and sunk; 10 men killed by the explosion.

JULY 23.—East of Vilna, part of the northern Russian army opens an offensive, penetrates German positions to depth of two miles, and takes 1,000 prisoners, but development of further success is jeopardised by instability and weakness in the morale of certain detachments.

JULY 24.—Great Russian retreat in Galicia; Halicz and Stanislaw given up.

Rumanian offensive. General Shtcherbatcheff's army of Russian and Rumanian troops win a striking victory in Moldavia, breaking enemy line on a wide front.

JULY 25.—Germans gain a little ground near Ailles and Hurtelise in the neighbourhood of Craonne.

DIARY OF EVENTS, 1917

- JULY 26.—Announced Rumanian troops have advanced towards the upper reaches of the river Susitza.
Fall of Kolomea to the Germans.
- JULY 27.—British submarine captures German steamer Batavier II. in the North Sea.
- JULY 28.—German troops reach Russian frontier of Eastern Galicia on both sides of the town of Husiatyn.
- JULY 29.—French win success between Hurtebise and the district south of La Bovelie (west of Ailles).
- JULY 30.—H.M.S. Ariadne announced torpedoed.
- JULY 31.—Third Battle of Ypres. Great allied attack on broad front, extending north and south of Ypres, launched; over 5,000 prisoners.
- AUG. 1.—Germans counter-attack east and north-east of Ypres, and compel British to withdraw from St. Julien.
- AUG. 2.—More violent German attempts to recover lost ground north-east of Ypres repulsed.
General Brusiloff resigns as Russian Commander-in-Chief, and is succeeded by General Korniloff.
- AUG. 3.—British recapture St. Julien.
Fall of Czernovitch to the Austrians.
- AUG. 4.—Beginning of fourth year of the War.
- AUG. 5.—Germans gain a footing at Hollebeke, but are immediately driven out by counter-attacks.
- AUG. 6.—British line advanced south-west and west of Lens.
- AUG. 7.—Germans attack in Verdun sector repulsed by French.
- AUG. 8.—Germans, continuing their attacks between the Focsani-Marasesti and River Sereth, press back Russo-Rumanian troops to north of Bizighesti.
- AUG. 9.—Enemy troops cross the Susitza, strike north at Rumanian railways, and threaten the rear of Russo-Rumanian armies.
- AUG. 10.—British attacks east of Ypres, complete capture of the village of Westhoek, and secure whole of Westhoek ridge.
- AUG. 11.—Germans press forward in Trotus valley and beyond Focsani.
Mr. Arthur Henderson resigns from the Cabinet.
- AUG. 12.—About 20 enemy aeroplanes appear off Felixstowe. Driven off, they turn south and drop bombs at Southend and Margate. Casualties at Southend, 32 killed, 43 injured. Two German aeroplanes destroyed.
- AUG. 13.—Mr. G. N. Barnes appointed to War Cabinet.
Vigorous Rumanian offensive in Trotus valley continued.
- AUG. 14.—China formally declares war on Germany and Austria-Hungary.
Announced that Pope's peace proposals delivered to all belligerent Governments.

DIARY OF EVENTS, 1917

AUG. 15.—Canadians capture Hill 70.

AUG. 16.—Ypres battle resumed. British attack on a front of over nine miles north of Ypres-Menin road, capture their first objectives, and carry the village of Langemarck.

Destroyer action in German Bight, in which German destroyer and two mine-sweepers are badly damaged.

AUG. 17.—Sir Douglas Haig reports further gain of ground west of Lens.

AUG. 18.—New Italian offensive from Monte Nero (Upper Isonzo) to the sea.

AUG. 19.—Italian advance on the Carso.

AUG. 20.—Great French victory at Verdun. Attacking on both banks of the Meuse, the French carry enemy's defences on a front of eleven miles to a depth which exceeds, at certain points, one and a quarter miles.

AUG. 21.—Canadians attack west and north-west of Lens and capture enemy's positions on a front of 2,000 yards.

The French continue their advance at Verdun.

Zeppelin raid on coast of Yorkshire.

AUG. 22.—A squadron of aeroplanes of the Gotha type raid Kent coast, dropping bombs on Ramsgate, Margate, and Dover; casualties, eleven killed and twenty-six injured. Three enemy machines destroyed, while in fighting at sea five enemy scouts are driven down.

AUG. 23.—All-day fight for stronghold south of Lens, known as the "Green Crassier." Canadians gain a footing in it and hold it against counter-attacks.

The French report their total prisoners at Verdun since August 20th are 7,640.

Russians retire on the Riga front.

AUG. 24.—Italians take Monte Santo.

French take Hill 302 and Camard Wood.

AUG. 25.—First lists published of two new Orders—the Order of the British Empire and the Order of the Companions of Honour.

AUG. 26.—British attack and capture enemy's positions east of Hargicourt on a front of over a mile.

AUG. 27.—British attack enemy's position east and south-east of Langemarck, and advance their line on a front of over 2,000 yards astride the St. Julien-Poelcapelle road.

AUG. 28.—Russian troops defection in Rumania. In the Focsani area the enemy attack in region of Muncelul, and a Russian division abandons its positions, fleeing in disorder.

AUG. 29.—French report artillery activity on both sides in Verdun area.

AUG. 30.—On the Ypres front British advance line south-east of St. Janshoek.

AUG. 31.—French win ground north-west of Hurtebise.

DIARY OF EVENTS, 1917

- SEPT. 1.—Germans force passage of the Dwina at Uxkull.
Sir Douglas Haig reports capture of 7,279 German prisoners in August fighting; also thirty-eight guns.
British light forces sink four German mine-sweeping vessels off Jutland.
- SEPT. 2.—Hostile aeroplanes cross the east Kent coast at about 11.15 p.m. and fly seawards a few minutes later. A few bombs are dropped.
- SEPT. 3.—Germans take Riga.
Aeroplane raid in bright moonlight on Sheerness-Chatham district. Naval casualties, 107 killed, 86 wounded.
- SEPT. 4.—Moonlight aeroplane raid on London. Eleven killed and 62 injured.
Submarine shells Scarborough. Three killed, five injured.
Italians resume offensive on Bainsizza Plateau.
- SEPT. 5.—German air attack on French hospital near Verdun; 19 inmates killed, 26 wounded.
- SEPT. 6.—British advance line of posts south-west of Lens.
- SEPT. 7.—On Lens front British line of advanced posts in Avion and east of Eleu-dit-Leauvette pushed forward.
- SEPT. 8.—Crisis in Russia. General Korniloff demands a military dictatorship; M. Kerensky dismisses him and proclaims him a traitor.
- SEPT. 9.—Germans launch violent counter-attack in sector Fosses Wood-Caurières Wood, and are heavily defeated. Enemy repulsed on both sides of Hill 344.
- SEPT. 10.—French report they have consolidated their gains of September 8 in Fosses-Caurières sector.
- SEPT. 11.—Near Villeret, south of the Baupaume-Cambrai road, Northumberland troops take 400 yards of German trench.
- SEPT. 12.—M. Kerensky assumes command of Russian armies.
Argentina hands passports to Count Luxburg, the German Chargé d'Affaires in Buenos Aires.
French Balkan advance. French carry by surprise the village of Pogradec, on south-west bank of Lake Ochrida.
- SEPT. 13.—Germans attack British positions at Langemarck after heavy bombardment, but are repulsed.
General Alexeieff appointed Chief of Staff to M. Kerensky. Announced from Balkan area that in the region of the lakes French troops reach Mumulista and Hill 1,704.
- SEPT. 14.—British progress north-east of St. Julien.
General Korniloff surrenders to General Alexeieff.
- SEPT. 15.—Russia proclaimed a Republic. M. Kerensky establishes new War Cabinet of five Ministers.
- SEPT. 16.—Enemy counter-attacks north of Inverness Copse repulsed, also attempt to advance north of Langemarck after heavy bombardment. Successful British raids on Arras front and between Cambrai and St. Quentin.

DIARY OF EVENTS, 1917

- SEPT. 17.—Germans fail in attempting raid on British trenches south of Lombartzyde.
- SEPT. 18.—Troops of the York and Lancaster Regiment raid German positions in Inverness Copse.
- SEPT. 19.—Germans gain footing in salient near Froidement Farm, on the Aisne front, but are soon thrown out.
- SEPT. 20.—Great British offensive launched east of Ypres on an eight-mile front athwart the Ypres-Menin road.
Germans capture Jacobstadt and pierce the Dvina front.
- SEPT. 21.—Germany and Austria return vague replies to the Pope's peace Note.
Announcement of resignation of General Alexieff as Chief of Staff owing to differences with M. Kerensky.
- SEPT. 22.—Menin road battle. Three strong enemy counter-attacks north of Tower Hamlets completely repulsed.
- SEPT. 23.—British destroyer reported sunk by German submarine in Channel; 50 survivors.
- SEPT. 24.—Gotha moonlight raids on English coast and London; 15 killed, 70 injured.
- SEPT. 25.—Airship raid in the early morning over Lincolnshire and Yorkshire coasts; three persons slightly injured.
Another moonlight Gotha raid on Kent and Essex coast and south-east outskirts of London; 7 killed, 25 injured.
Announced that both Argentine Houses of Parliament have declared for severing relations with Germany.
- SEPT. 26.—Renewed British offensive east of Ypres.
Announced that Peru has sent ultimatum to Germany.
- SEPT. 27.—British naval aircraft carry out a bombing raid on St. Denis Westrem aerodrome, direct hits being observed on fifteen Gotha machines lined up there.
The Republic of Costa Rica has broken off diplomatic relations with Germany.
- SEPT. 28.—German aeroplanes attack South-East Coast of England, but are driven off.
General Maude, in a brilliant manœuvre, surprises Turks at Ramadie, and an all-day battle ensues, as the result of which British troops carry enemy's main positions, and completely encircle him.
- SEPT. 29.—At daybreak General Maude's troops resume attack at Ramadie, and Turkish commander surrenders.
Italian storming company carry some of the high ground south of Podlaka and south-east of Madoni.
Moonlight air raid on London and coasts of Kent and Essex; 11 killed, 82 injured.
- SEPT. 30.—Moonlight air raid on London. About 10 machines penetrate the outer defences, and four or five get to London. Bombs are dropped in London, Kent, and Essex; 9 killed, 42 injured.

DIARY OF EVENTS, 1917

- OCT. 1.—Sir Douglas Haig reports 5,296 German prisoners taken during September.
Moonlight aeroplane raid on London and South-East Coast; 10 killed, 38 injured.
Severe fighting on Lindi-Masasi road and in the Mbemkuru Valley, German East Africa.
- OCT. 2.—German attacks on British front east of Ypres repulsed.
H.M.S. Drake torpedoed.
French airmen bomb Baden as reprisal for bombardment of Bar-le-Duc.
- OCT. 3.—Further German attacks east of Ypres repulsed.
Sir Auckland Geddes, Minister of National Service, in a speech at Edinburgh, makes important statement on National Service.
- OCT. 4.—British attack on eight-mile front from railway north of Langemarck to Tower Hamlets ridge, on Ypres-Menin road. All objectives gained.
General Smuts indicates coming air reprisals on Germany.
- OCT. 5.—Sir Douglas Haig reports 4,446 prisoners since morning of October 4.
British engage retreating enemy in Mbemkuru Valley, German East Africa.
- OCT. 6.—Enemy's artillery fire directed mainly against British new positions on the ridge from Broodseinde southwards.
Peru and Uruguay break diplomatic relations with Germany.
- OCT. 7.—German attack east of Polygon Wood beaten off.
War Office announces General Maude's captures at Raniadic are : Prisoners, 3,455; guns, 13; rifles, 1,061.
- OCT. 8.—M. Kerensky forms a new Coalition Cabinet.
- OCT. 9.—Franco-British success east of Ypres.
Death of Sultan of Egypt.
Belgian troops capture Mahenge, German East Africa.
Admiral von Capelle announces mutiny in the German Navy, and accuses Independent Socialists of being privy to the revolt.
- OCT. 10.—Sir Douglas Haig reports 2,038 prisoners taken on October 9, and that British troops fell back slightly between Poelcappelle and Wallemolen.
- OCT. 11.—Announced all commercial cable communications with Holland interrupted by order of British Government until Netherlands Government stops the transit of sand, gravel, and scrap metals through Holland from Germany to Belgium.
- OCT. 12.—British attack on six-mile front, along the Passchendaele Ridge.
Major-Gen. J. M. Salmond becomes Director-General of Military Aeronautics in place of Sir David Henderson, who

DIARY OF EVENTS, 1917

is deputed to undertake special work. Major-General Branner, Deputy-Director of Military Aeronautics, is appointed to a command abroad.

German troops occupy greater part of the island of Oesel, guarding entrance to Gulf of Riga. German Dreadnought reported mined.

OCT. 13.—British naval airman shoots down enemy machine over Ostend.

OCT. 14.—Eastern county troops raid enemy's trenches south-east of Monchy-le-Preux.

OCT. 15.—Announced mine-sweeping sloop Begonia lost with all hands; also that armed mercantile cruiser Champagne torpedoed and sunk. Five officers and 51 men lost.

OCT. 16.—Germans announce that they have taken 3,500 prisoners and 30 guns in Oesel Island. Part of Russian garrison escapes to Moon Island.

OCT. 17.—Announced that whole of Oesel is now in German occupation, also Moon Island.

U.S. transport Antilles torpedoed; 67 lost.

Announced a big German mercantile cruiser the Irben Strait and drove the Russian ships north towards Moon Sound.

British occupy Nyangao, German East Africa.

Two British destroyers, Mary Rose and Strongbow, conveying twelve Scandinavian merchantmen, are sunk with nine of the escorted vessels in the North Sea by two very fast German raiders.

OCT. 18.—Announced that Germans have occupied the island of Dago.

OCT. 19.—Zeppelin raid on eastern and north-eastern counties. Bombs are dropped in London area. Casualties in all districts: Killed, 34; injured, 56.

United States Government issues statement which says no supplies from U.S.A. are to be sent to Holland or Scandinavian countries unless their governments conform to certain requirements.

OCT. 20.—Many of the German airships raiding England on October 19 drift over to France. One is shot down near Lunéville, a second is captured intact near Belfort, while two others come down in the Basses-Alpes and are destroyed by their crews.

OCT. 21.—Germans begin to land on the Verder Peninsula, in Esthonia.

OCT. 22.—French and British troops advance on either side of the Ypres-Staden railway, north-east of Ypres. All objectives taken.

OCT. 23.—French Advance on Laon.

Germans admit withdrawal of their troops between Gulf of Riga and Dvina.

DIARY OF EVENTS, 1917

- Oct. 24.—Battle of Caporetto. Austro-German troops break through Italian advanced lines on left bank of the Isonzo between Plezzo and Tolmino. Germans claim 10,000 prisoners.
- Oct. 25.—Italians in retreat. By sheer weight of numbers the enemy on a twenty miles front, from the Plezzo basin to Tolmino, compel Italian army to fall back. Over 30,000 Italian prisoners taken.
- Oct. 26.—British and French armies launch new attacks on Ypres battle-front. Main operations are carried out by British and Canadian regiments north of Ypres-Roulers railway. Canadian battalions establish themselves on rising ground south of Passchendaele.
- Italian Ministry, under Signor Boselli, has fallen.
- Oct. 27.—Grave Italian reverse. Enemy crosses boundary line between Mt. Canin and head of the Judrio Valley.
- Six British and French destroyers meet and attack three German destroyers and 17 aeroplanes off the Belgian coast.
- Oct. 28.—Austro-Germans break through the Italian line of defence, debouch from the Friulian passes, and reach and set fire to Cividale. Gorizia is taken by Austro-Hungarian divisions. Enemy claim 100,000 prisoners and 700 guns.
- Brazil declares war on Germany.
- Oct. 29.—Fall of Udine to the enemy.
- Signor Orlando accepts King of Italy's request to form a Ministry.
- Parliament passes resolutions of thanks to the fighting forces of the Empire.
- Oct. 30.—British launch new thrust on the Passchendaele Ridge.
- Oct. 31.—Hostile aeroplane crosses Kentish coast at 4.30 a.m. and is driven off.
- Aeroplane raid by moonlight on London and south-east coast; 8 killed, 21 injured.
- Italians fall back to the Tagliamento.
- British capture Beersheba.
- Nov. 1.—Sir Eric Geddes, First Lord of the Admiralty, in his maiden speech in the House of Commons, makes important statement on the naval position.
- Count Hertling accepts the German Chancellorship.
- The Italian Armies of the East are withdrawn behind the Tagliamento.
- British capture Turkish first-line defences at Gaza.
- Nov. 2.—Germans retreat on the Aisne as result of French victory at Malmaison, abandoning the Chemin des Dames on a front of 12½ miles.
- Austro-Germans reach eastern bank of the Tagliamento.
- British forces operating in the Kattegat destroy a German auxiliary cruiser and ten armed patrol craft.

DIARY OF EVENTS, 1917

Nov. 3.—American troops killed in action. As the result of a German raid on French front three American soldiers are killed, five wounded, and twelve captured.

Nov. 4.—German pressure increases on left of Italian army on the Tagliamento. Enemy attacks west of Lake Garda repulsed.

British naval forces destroy an enemy electrically-controlled high-speed boat that attacked them off Belgian coast.

Nov. 5.—Austro-Germans cross the Tagliamento.

Announced Mr. Lloyd George and French Premier are in Italy, also General Smuts, Sir William Robertson, General Foch, and other allied military advisers.

General Allenby reports operations against Gaza continuing; 2,636 prisoners to date.

General Maude routs Turks at Tekrit, on the Tigris, and occupies the town.

Nov. 6.—Austro-German troops win the passage of the Middle Tagliamento, and Italians fall back to the west towards the lines of the Livenza and Piave.

Canadian troops take village of Passchendaele.

Nov. 7.—British capture Gaza.

Enemy cross the Livenza, and are pursuing Italians towards the line of the Piave.

Nov. 8.—Coup d'Etat in Petrograd. The Extreme wing of the Petrograd Soviet, under leadership of pacifist agitator Lenin, announces that it has deposed the Provisional Government of M. Kerensky. Latter is said to have fled, and an order for his arrest issued. Extremists issue proclamation for an immediate peace.

Nov. 9.—Whole of Turkish army defeated at Gaza and Beer-sheba in retreat, harassed by Sir E. Allenby's force, which occupies Ascalon.

A Supreme Political Council of the Allies for the whole of the western front is created, to be assisted by a permanent central military committee. The following are members of this committee: General Foch (France), General Cadorna (Italy), and General Sir Henry Wilson (Great Britain).

General Diaz, Italian Commander-in-Chief.

Nov. 10.—Enemy advance from the Trentino down the Val Sugana and take Asiago.

Nov. 12.—Turks reported organizing a position behind the northern branch of the Wadi Sukereir, guarding road to Jerusalem. British make progress towards El Tineh.

War Office reports rapid progress in East Africa; Ndonda Mission Station and Chikukwe have been occupied, and main force of the enemy is hard pressed.

Mr. Lloyd George delivers grave speech in Paris on failure of Allies to secure unity of strategical direction.

DIARY OF EVENTS, 1917

Austro-Germans establish a bridgehead across the Lower Piave twenty miles north-east of Venice. Italians give up Ponzaso.

- Nov. 13.—The supporters of Lenin report that the Revolutionary Army (Russia) has defeated the "counter-Revolutionary forces of Kerensky and Korniloff."

French Premier announces British front in France is to be extended.

General Allenby's troops carry enemy's positions on the Wadi Sukereir.

- Nov. 14.—British destroyer and a small monitor sunk by enemy submarine while co-operating with the Army in Palestine.

French Cabinet resigns.

Enemy repulsed on the section of the Italian line Meletta Davanti-Monte Fior-Monte Castelgoberto. On the Lower Piave fresh enemy attempts to effect a crossing are frustrated.

Jerusalem railway reached.

- Nov. 15.—M. Clemenceau (France) accepts the task of forming a Cabinet.

Announced in Parliament that since beginning of the war the British Armies have captured on all fronts about 166,000 prisoners and over 800 guns. Territory conquered in all theatres is about 128,000 square miles.

General Allenby's troops three miles south of Jaffa.

- Nov. 16.—British widen the salient on ridge at Passchendaele.

Austro-Germans advancing on both sides of the Brenta reach Cismon.

Lord Cowdray resigns Air Ministry.

M. Clemenceau, Prime Minister of France, forms a Ministry.

- Nov. 17.—Lenin in complete possession of Moscow.

Jaffa (Joppa) occupied by British.

British light cruisers chase those of enemy to within 30 miles of Heligoland. A German patrol vessel is sunk, one light cruiser set on fire, a heavy explosion occurs in another, while a third cruiser is seen to drop behind. British sustain no losses in ships.

- Nov. 18.—Enemy forces strike hard between the Brenta and the Piave. Near latter they storm Quero and Monte Cornella.

Sir Stanley Maude dies at Bagdad.

- Nov. 19.—British forces in Palestine capture Kuryet-el-Enab and Beit Likia.

United States destroyer Chauncey sunk in collision.

- Nov. 20.—First battle of Cambrai. The British 3rd Army, under General Byng, smashes the Hindenburg Line on a front of 10 miles between Arras and St. Quentin, and advances four to five miles.

DIARY OF EVENTS, 1917

Nov. 21.—General Byng's great victory. Important progress is made west and south-west of Cambrai. North-east of Masnières, British capture enemy's double line of trenches on east bank of the Canal de l'Escaut. Noyelles de l'Escaut, Cantaing, Fontaine Notre Dame, and Mœuvres are captured. The number of prisoners to date exceeds 8,000.

Nov. 22.—British consolidate their big gains in Battle of Cambrai. Fontaine Notre Dame is retaken by the enemy. Prisoners now total over 9,000.

Germany declares her intention of widening the zone barred to shipping. It is extended around the British Isles, mainly to the west; a new zone cutting off the Azores is designated.

British capture Jabir, in the hinterland of Aden.

Nov. 23.—Sir Julian Byng promoted to rank of General, in recognition of distinguished service in Battle of Cambrai.

Severe fighting takes place at the storming of the important and dominating high ground about Bourlon Wood.

Nov. 24.—Announced General Plumer in command of British forces in Italy, and that Lieut.-Gen. Sir R. W. Marshall is in command in Mesopotamia.

Powerful German attack presses British back a short distance on the hill in Bourlon Wood. Later, British troops counter-attack and re-establish line on northern edge of wood. British re-capture Bourlon village.

Nov. 26.—General Allenby's mounted troops capture positions three miles and a half to the west of Jerusalem. British advanced patrols which crossed the River Auja, four miles to the north of Jaffa, compelled to retreat to south bank.

Lord Rothermere appointed President of the Air Council.

Nov. 27.—Severe fighting around Bourlon.

Colonel Tafel, commander of a German force—that from Mahenge—surrenders unconditionally to British in East Africa. It numbered over 3,500.

Nov. 28.—Enemy artillery active east of Ypres.

Nov. 29.—British advance slightly west of Bourlon Wood.

First meeting of Inter-Allied Conference at Paris.

Announced Germany prepared to treat for peace with Russian Extremists.

Nov. 30.—Great German attacks on the Cambrai front.

Dec. 1.—British retake village of Gonnellieu and St. Quentin spur, but retire from Masnières salient.

Sir Douglas Haig reports 11,551 German prisoners taken during November.

German East Africa reported by General Van Deventer completely cleared of the enemy.

Dec. 2.—British capture strong points on main ridge north of Passchendaele.

DIARY OF EVENTS. 1917

- DEC. 3.—British line slightly withdrawn at La Vacquene and east of Marcoing.
Turks driven out of positions north of Deli Abbas.
- DEC. 4.—President Wilson recommends to Congress declaration of war against Austria-Hungary.
- DEC. 5.—British evacuate Bourlon Wood.
British drive Turks out of Kara Tepe.
Enemy reduce salient in Italian lines north-east of Asiago.
- DEC. 6.—Moonlight morning raid on London and south-eastern Counties; 7 persons killed, 22 injured.
Rumania joins Russia in armistice.
- DEC. 7.—General Allenby occupies Hebron.
Halifax wrecked by explosion of a munitions ship; estimated loss of life several thousands.
U.S. at war with Austria.
- DEC. 8.—French and British troops in the fighting-line in Italy.
Ecuador severs diplomatic relations with Germany.
- DEC. 9.—Jerusalem surrenders to General Allenby.
- DEC. 10.—On the Cambrai front Scottish troops carry enemy posts east of Boursies.
Panama declares war on Austria-Hungary.
- DEC. 11.—Cuba declares war on Austria-Hungary.
Austrians make heavy attacks against the Italian lines from the Col della Berretta in the west to the Calcina Valley in the east, but are repulsed.
- DEC. 12.—Four German destroyers attack convoy of five neutral vessels and a British vessel in North Sea. All six vessels and escorting destroyer Partridge, are sunk. Earlier in day two steam trawlers sunk off the Tyne by enemy destroyers.
- DEC. 13.—Continued fighting near Bullecourt.
Austrians attack outer defences of Monte Grappa, but fail.
British line extended north-east of Jerusalem.
- DEC. 14.—Admiralty issues details of constitution and powers of the Naval Allied Council.
Italians compelled to give up Col Caprile.
French cruiser Châteaurenault torpedoed.
- DEC. 15.—Twelve miles south-east of Jaffa, British line is carried 1½ miles to the north-east on a five-mile front.
Russo-German armistice signed at Brest-Litovsk; all hostilities to cease for one month from Dec. 17.
Recall of General Sarraill from Salonica reported, General Guillaumet announced as his successor.
- DEC. 16.—Italians win back positions in Col Caprile.
- DEC. 17.—British capture high ground east of Abu Dis (south-east of Jerusalem) and take 117 prisoners.
- DEC. 18.—Aeroplane raid on London. Bombs are dropped in London district and in Kent and Essex; 10 killed, 70 injured in London; one raider brought down.

DIARY OF EVENTS, 1917

- DEC. 19.—Announced American submarine F1 sunk with loss of 19 lives, as result of collision with F3.
Austrian attempt to cross the Piave Vecchia stopped.
- DEC. 20.—Germans capture British post east of Messines.
- DEC. 21.—Italians recapture Monte Asolone.
- DEC. 22.—Peace negotiations under presidency of Herr von Kühlmann opened between Russian Bolsheviks and the Central Powers at Brest Litovsk.
Two air attacks on Kentish coast.
Three British destroyers mined or torpedoed off the Dutch coast; 193 officers and men lost.
- DEC. 23.—Austrians from the Buso, in the gorge of the Franzela, to Mt. Val Bella, three miles to the south, force their way through, taking Val Bella and the Col del Rosso.
- DEC. 24.—British air raid on Manneheim.
- DEC. 25.—Fourth Christmas of the Great War.
- DEC. 26.—Big air battle near Venice. Twenty-five enemy machines bomb allied aviation camp. British airmen take part, and in co-operation with anti-aircraft defences bring down 11 enemy machines.
- DEC. 27.—Vice-Admiral Sir Rosslyn Wemyss becomes First Sea Lord in place of Admiral Sir John Jellicoe.
Announced General Van Deventer is pursuing the Germans in Portuguese East Africa.
Text of reply of Central Powers to Russian peace proposals issued.
- DEC. 28.—British advance on the road to Jericho.
- DEC. 29.—New advance in Palestine. British line is pushed forward another three miles. Bireh, nine miles north of Jerusalem, on the Shechem road, and several places east of the road occupied.
- DEC. 30.—French army in Italy storm and hold enemy positions on front of 2,000 yards on eastern shoulders of the main Tomba Ridge, capturing 1,392 prisoners, 7 guns.
British occupy Beitin (Bethel), El Balua, and in coastal sector a patrol reaches Kuleh (12 miles east of Jaffa).
- DEC. 31.—Admiralty announces H.M. mine-sweeping sloop *Arbutus* has foundered in very severe weather after being torpedoed. Her commander, one other officer, and seven men missing; also H.M. armed boarding-steamer *Grive* sunk in bad weather after being torpedoed, there being no casualties.
Announced Bolshevik and Chinese troops have been in action at Kharbin for the control of the railway. The Bolsheviks surrendered, and will be transported over the Manchurian border.

END OF VOLUME FOUR

of

hl-
ral

ch

la,
ay

ay
ke
ng

ca

ns

o-

ed
of
of

is
n

al

op
ng
en
nk
to

in
re
re

