EDITORIAL

The War

Before the war it was not unusual for Promotion Examination papers to ask officers to consider the effect of modern weapons on some such battle as Waterloo. Bewildered subalterns searched earnestly for any possible reason for fighting at Waterloo if either side had had even one modern weapon, and finally comforted themselves with the old Promotion examination slogan: "Look at the syllabus and you will wonder how any one passes; look at the captains and majors and you will wonder how any one fails."

There is however an easier and more profitable feat of imagination for soldiers to attempt to-day: What would have happened if Germans, instead of Italians, had been opposed to us at the battle of Sidi Barrani? A lot of the future of the war depends on the answer, for there is little doubt that one day Germans will be opposed to us under similar conditions.

On present information it appears that the Italian army held a line of fortified areas from Sidi Barrani on the coast, southwards into the desert. Sidi Barrani was large and well garrisoned, the most southerly areas were held by specially trained desert troops who had considerable mobility. In the centre the construction of the defended areas was deliberately hindered and harassed by our mobile troops and the defences were far from complete when the attack was launched on them. The attack drove northwest to the sea and isolated the fort of Sidi Barrani which was then attacked and taken by deliberate but rapid assault. The Italian troops in the south appear to have been dispersed against air attack rather than concentrated against land attack; and this is always going to be a difficult balance to strike for both sides.

In brief, the Italians tried to adopt a system of defended areas and the system broke down because none of them held out. The reason was largely moral, influenced no doubt by our troops achieving surprise. The forward troops can hardly have been said to have died at their posts; they surrendered. The other main factor in their defeat has been mentioned, namely, that they dispersed to avoid air attack.

The German army's morale is sufficiently high to stand air attack when concentrated to meet land attack; and also to hold their defences against reasonable odds. The odds were unreasonable in the centre where the main attack fell, but reasonable at Sidi Barrani and in the south. Thus it is fair to assume that, against Germans, the first phase of the battle would have ended with the enemy's centre broken, our troops on the coast behind Sidi Barrani, and both the southern enemy force and Sidi Barrani still holding out; the former partially isolated, the latter wholly so.

It is then a nice military problem whether we should have continued the advance before or after reducing the two enemy fortresses within our lines. In the battle of France the Germans continued the advance and only in one instance did they pay for it; in that instance it was because we had mobile troops with which to make a sortie at their rear. In that lies the real solution. If Sidi Barrani had contained a strong mobile force it could not have been ignored, for it would have constituted too great a threat to leave imperfectly guarded, and too great a drain on our forces to be fully beleaguered whilst the advance continued.

It may not be wrong to expect the war, in whatever theatre, to take the form of rapid deep thrusts resulting in isolation of parts of the enemy forces, followed by sieges of, and sorties from, the enemy posts which hold out. On the result of the sieges and sorties will depend where the front stabilises in preparation for the process to be repeated. If this sequence of thrust, siege and sortie is correct it is apparent that infantry roles also fall into three categories. A mobile infantry is needed to accompany the thrusting force (and not the least of their tasks may be the collection of prisoners), static infantry are wanted to defend the fortresses which are the foundation of the fronts, and assault infantry are needed to reduce the fortresses. Whether the same infantry can fulfil all these roles is doubtful; and the Germans, who have twelve different types of infantry, seem to think not.

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The Greek War

The Greek successes against the Italians were not universally foreseen. Perhaps the average officer's knowledge of the Greek war was confined to the fact that it retreated rather hastily from Anatolia after the last war and that some of its men wore skirts and poofs on their shoes. In fact, the Greek soldier is extraordinarily tough as will be well known to those who served in the Macedonian Campaign of the

last war and his only trouble is a strong penchant for politics. He is a bit inclined to hold his own views on the justice of his cause, and not accept the official policy of his government, which is embarrassing in war where "minority reports" are out of place. The semi-dictatorship of General Metaxas has been very good for the army, as only moderate variations from the normal have been allowed in individuals' political views; so the soldiers' energies were diverted to more useful channels. At the same time a number of good officers who were displaced for political reasons have been allowed to rejoin, and no doubt now their country is in danger they will abstain from dabbling in politics. This concentration of effort was assisted by the nature of the war, for any soldier can see the justice of his cause when he is defending his own country against wanton attack.

The fighting itself seems to have been a model of sustained effort on the part of the Greeks and military miscalculation on the part of the Italians. The Greeks are the first nation to face the the new problems which arise when fighting the Italians: the collection and disposal of prisoners and war material in vast quantities, and the supply of stores to troops who have struck at iron and penetrated deep into cheese. They seem to have been quick at collecting Italian weapons and vehicles and turning them on the enemy; but, with the vast quantities collected, there must be times when they wished they had whole units trained and available to take over the Italian equipment as fast as it fell into the bag.

Details of the Greek mountain warfare technique are not yet published, but they will be of interest to India. They seem to have been both bold and unsparing of human effort.

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Air Co-operation

The formation of an Army Co-operation Command of the Royal Air Force has been heralded in the Press with approval. It is said that the army can now rely on having all the air support that it desires. The army never could have all the air support that it wants, and there will seldom be enough aeroplanes available to produce all the air support that is desired before, during and after a major land operation. The Army Co-operation Command will ensure that the needs of the army are studied, and are met so far as possible, but they have not got the power to divert the whole resources of the Air Force to the assistance of the army in time of need. This can only be done by the War Cabinet on the advice of their Service

chiefs, so the degree of air support given to the army is dependent more on the advice which is given by the Chief of the Air Staff than on the size of the Army Co-operation Command. The fact that a new Chief of the Air Staff was appointed at the same time as the Army Co-operation Command was instituted is a good omen of a change of policy in this respect.

There is no doubt we have a long way to go before we achieve the same degree of co-operation as the Germans. There is still a separate Air Force war and an Army war on the battlefield, and air resources may be applied to objectives which have no relation to military plans. So long as there is divided command and divergent training for war this is inevitable. For this reason, apart from others, we welcome the appointment of Sir Robert Brooke-Popham as Commander-in-Chief, Far East. As a former infantry soldier, Air Officer Commanding Iraq and Commandant of the Imperial Defence College he is obviously suitable for a combined command. It is to be hoped that this example will be followed and that it will before long become the regular practice to place units of one service under a senior officer of another when circumstances appear to dictate such a course, and to provide him with a combined staff to help him fulfil his functions.

Although the Imperial Defence College and C.I.D. have done much to promote co-operation and mutual understanding, there is much to be said for the formation in each service of a War Staff Corps on the lines of the German Great General Staff. Officers of this category will then be obviously suitable both as commanders and staff officers of combined formations or even for interchange between the respective services.

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The Far East

By signing the Tripartite Pact, Japan has finally appeared in her true colours as an enemy of Great Britain. This does not necessarily mean that an immediate attack is to be expected on British possessions in the Far East. In fact, such an eventuality becomes less likely as our strength increases and as the strain of the Sino-Japanese war draws on the economic life of the country.

The treaty is not popular in Japan. Neither Italy nor Germany are in a position to give practical help in subduing China. On the other hand, Great Britain and the United States are Japan's best customers, and it is felt, now that export trade has almost vanished and the army is locked in a seemingly profitless

and endless struggle, that an alliance with the Axis powers can be of little value.

In China there are signs that the war is telling on the life of the country. The financial and economic situation gives cause for anxiety. The reopening of the Burma Road and the provision of credit facilities and loans from Great Britain and the United States should improve conditions. It must not, however, be forgotten that the Chinese have fought alone for over three years and that even a Chinaman's resistance to overwhelming force cannot be prolonged indefinitely.

The capitulation of French Indo-China enabled the Japanese to get supplies of certain essential raw materials, particularly rice and rubber, at a cheap price. This advantage has, to some extent, been offset by the stiff resistance offered by the Dutch to economic demands on the Netherlands East Indies.

There is no sign that the Japanese southern army, which was withdrawn into Tongking, is to carry out the threat of invading Yunnan. This may be due to the difficulty of undertaking such a venture. It is more likely that the troops are required to form the nucleus of a force which is to be stationed at some strategic position, such as Hainan Island. Such a force could be used to intimidate the French, Thais, and the Dutch and could, with very little imagination, be regarded as a direct threat to Singapore.

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The Eastern Group Conference

The army in general has seen and heard little of the Eastern Group Conference though the Conference was held almost entirely for the ultimate benefit of the army. The Viceroy invited units of the Empire in the East to send representatives of their organizations engaged in production of war supplies to a conference in India. They accepted and it happened that the United Kingdom was sending a mission to India at the same time on approximately the same subject. This mission, known as the Roger Mission, arrived with knowledge of what war stores were required to be produced by the Eastern Empire and with the purpose of seeing how far these requirements could be met in India. They appropriately joined the conference as the representatives of Great Britain.

The purpose of the conference was to co-ordinate the whole productive capacity of the Eastern Empire; some countries have surpluses of what others require, and each could start new production of some articles more easily than others. These differences should clearly be settled by conference, and, judging from the

final speech of the leader of the Australian Delegation, much has been achieved. "Speaking for myself," he said, "I can say that I have learned much about the needs of other parts of the British Commonwealth comprised in the Eastern Group and also of the capacity of the respective parts to assist in the war effort. It is gratifying to find to what extent we can make a substantial contribution." That in a nutshell is what the conference set out to do and has done. There is still the executive work to be continued; and this, from the army's view, is all that is important. To take a very simple example: the conference may have recommended the establishment of a new shirt factory in India, and it may even have been decided where and how the factory will be built. Before production begins the producer may run short of money, he may have difficulty in getting his raw materials, it may be found that Australia has a surplus of shirt buttons which could economically be carried to the Indian shirt factory, and so on.

All such difficulties must be smoothed out quickly by the body which succeeds the conference. It will need considerable powers, both financial and executive, for it will have to ensure that no essential effort is hindered by lack of money or by lack of material; and even in war vested interest is apt to produce unnecessary shortages.

It will be of interest to see what form the conference's successor takes, and what powers it is given. The army should grudge it no power that it can wield. Until it is formed the Government of India have agreed to keep the work of the conference in motion by maintaining a small staff in Delhi. This may be taken as an indication that the new body will be established in India; but it will not be under the Government of India.

The Articles in this Number

"FIFTY YEARS AGO"—An extract from the *U. S. I. Journal* of fifty years ago which shows that our troubles to-day are not new.

"LAND WARFARE" is based on a lecture given to the *U. S. I.* in Simla in August, 1940. The author expresses himself frankly on past ineptitudes and is precise and clear in stating our military needs for the future. The article is not, of course, an official statement.

"AN INTERLUDE IN THE CAMPAIGN IN NORWAY" gives a good account of modern "small-war" technique. It is a type of warfare in which India is always interested.

"LEARNING GREEK" is an opportune member of this series of articles. The author gives facts about the Greek army which make its successes in Albania more easily understood.

"PROBLEM OF FORCE TO SPACE" is an analysis of one aspect of modern war. The author follows the evolution of modern war until he reaches the army that is required to-day.

"SPAIN" deals with the characteristics of the Spanish, with special reference to their value as allies. They are likely to be somebody's ally before the war ends.

"THE ARMY AND CIVIL LIFE—A COMPARISON" is written by an officer who looks at the army, as he finds it, through eyes trained in modern civil life. He suggests many ways in which the army might learn from civil life, and his suggestions are worth consideration by professional soldiers. The fact that some of them are not practicable in the form presented, should encourage further examination, not criticism.

"OFFICERS' MESSES" is a reply to the article "MESSES AND CLUBS" published in October. The author takes a poor view of the earlier article.

"PERSONAL EXPERIENCE" is the first of this "Feature." There are two stories of actual war experience, both of which show that some confusion is a part of battle, however much it may be resented on manœuvres.

"DUFFER IN ASSAM" is a story of forest warfare. The principal character neglects the advice of his elders, and therefore betters, with the usual result.

"SORROWS OF MULLA KURBAN ALI" is a translation of a Persian story. To the occidental mind the ending may appear to be something of an anti-climax. To the Persian the ending appears appropriate and even beautiful.

"FIFTY YEARS AGO"

Extracts from "The United Service Institution Journal" of January, 1891:

THE MILITARY TRAINING OF JUNIOR REGIMENTAL OFFICERS

PAPER READ BY CAPTAIN A. C. MACDONNEL, R.E., D.A.A.G, FOR INSTRUCTION

My experience is that certain portions of the art of war are taught very completely, but that some of the most important of all the branches are, from custom, left almost untouched. It will be well to note the subjects in which a junior officer ought to be instructed, and we can then proceed to discuss how each of them can be developed.

They are classified as follows:

1. Regimental Duties.
2. Drill.
3. Military Law.
4. Duties in the Field.

This is the classification laid down in the "Queen's Regulations."

I do not propose here to say much about the present regimental instruction in the first three, except that I believe that there is every facility and incentive to junior officers to make themselves well acquainted with these duties, but it is with reference to the instruction under the fourth heading I would wish to draw particular attention.

As a rule, the regimental instruction to junior officers in such duties is "nil"! I think I am in a position to say this, not only from my personal knowledge of the "regime" of many regiments, but from the absence of even elementary knowledge on the part of many officers who come under me for instruction in these very subjects.

The arguments usually put forward against carrying out regimental instruction in "Duties in the Field" are as follows:

(*a*) There is no time! There are so many things nowadays to look after that there is no time left for anything extra.

(*b*) It is very difficult to get your officers and men together for instruction.

(c) It is very difficult to make out schemes which will commend themselves to every one taking part in the instruction. Every Commanding Officer does not consider it his duty to act as a personal guide or instructor in tactics to those under him.

Taking objection (a) first. This is of course a serious difficulty to be contended against, but I feel quite certain that it is not insuperable.

I conscientiously believe that the officers of our army have their time occupied by military work quite as much as those of other armies, but a great part of such time is uselessly frittered away from want of a good regimental system in carrying out their duties. I would point out that the present programme of regimental instruction ignores generally that part of an officer's profession which may be called the intellectual part, and which alone will bring out his ever increasing interest in it. Prince Kraft says, in talking about the training of a recruit, that if he sees nothing but the barrack square and his barrack room and is employed only in the most mechanical and elementary exercises he will get into a solid state of mind and make no further progress. But if he has an opportunity of occasionally going out into the open to learn his field exercise, he recovers from the monotony of his elementary training and gets an approximate idea of his work as a soldier together with a fresh desire to fit himself for it.

Now I think the same may be said of officers, who are kept at nothing but their regimental duties and what we have defined in the Queen's Regulations as ordinary drill.

If officers would train those under them always with an idea of a supposed enemy within striking distance, every one would get an approximate idea of his work with a desire to fit himself for it.

I am quite sure that time could be saved from the usual programme of instruction in many ways. Hours are spent at the orderly room of many regiments when the same number of minutes would have been sufficient. The duties of supervision of cleaning equipment, saddlery and horses I think are capable of being more quickly performed, and far less time could be spent on drill movements and manœuvres that would never be utilized in the field, for example, all drills at close touch might be abolished, and everything done at manœuvre (i.e., 30 inches) interval.

LAND WARFARE

By Brigadier E. E. Dorman-Smith, M.C.

The simplicity of land warfare was, I believe, referred to by Napoleon, who said that in warfare everything is simple, but went on significantly to add that it was the simple which was difficult.

In the history of land warfare it is only on rare occasions that human communities have been equally prepared at any one time for aggressive action. Normally, the aggressor, a dissatisfied power of some sort, seeks gains in goods and territory, while the possessor of those goods endeavours to ward off attack. Accordingly, continental military thought sums up the basic elements of land warfare into Attack, Defence and Freedom of movement or action.

Of those three principles, Defence is common to aggression or anti-aggression since even the forces of aggression must make their homeland secure from any counter-attack before embarking on their enterprise. In primitive communities, aggressors unless they happen to be nomads from distant lands protected by sea or mountains or great deserts, defend their own cities or villages with walls before they move to attack their more prosperous neighbours. Therefore, throughout history, the first business of communities having anything of spiritual or material value to defend, has been the protection of their property by fortifications. Fortifications are the earliest development in land warfare. But the ultimate object of the aggressor being the reduction of the victim's will to resist by cutting off his means of livelihood, necessitates his entry, with armed forces, into his victim's country. That introduces the second main element, in land warfare, the mobile field army. Now, to defeat the aggressor or to save his own life, the defender may retire within his own fortifications and wait for an opportunity to strike the invader as he moves into the depths of his country. To counter this the invading field army must reduce the strong places containing the defender's mobile forces. This brings us to the factor of siege, and because the overthrow of fortified places by siege cannot usually be undertaken solely by a field army, which is designed for mobile operations and requires means of warfare too heavy and cumbrous to keep pace with it, we get the third element of land armies. Therefore

throughout the history of land warfare, you will find the following three elements in all land armies:

(*a*) Fortress holders,
(*b*) Field fighters and
(*c*) Siege layers,

and though occasionally you will get homogeneous armies the units of which have been equally capable of carrying out these three functions, oftener you will have distinct and separate elements in an army for the three functions. The basic problem of land warfare is therefore to find the proper balance between fortifications, field armies and siege troops. From this brief review we see that the elements of land warfare fall in the end into two main groups—the first group being Fortification and Siege, the second being warfare "in the Field." Throughout history the balance of importance between these groups, the static and the mobile, has see-sawed. In the days when powerful field armies and their supplies could lie safe behind fortress walls ready to pounce on the rear of armies which left the fortress untaken, fortification and siege formed the primary branch of the science of land warfare. As field armies grew larger (and this awaited the development of the art of maintenance) they could afford to ignore the mobile troops in the fortified places and fortifications because they were of less importance than field armies. But the ultimate instrument of decision in land warfare has usually been the battle between the field armies; it is therefore important to understand the mechanism of battle, because this knowledge is the best guide in organizing a field army.

The first task of any army, whether it fights in a fortress or in the open, is to preserve its means of sustenance. Field armies draw their sustenance from their line of communications, or on occasions from the countryside over which they are fighting, so, broadly speaking, field armies are most vulnerable to an attack from the rear, and this attack is most effective when an army is immobilized by attack, or threat of attack, from the front or flanks. To this end, field armies which do not wish or are unable, to attack, seek to form strong battle fronts which are too extensive to be turned by flank attacks without the attacker's army being broken into two unco-ordinated parts, each weaker than the defender's reserves. On the other hand the attacker by developing greater mobility, endeavours to out-manœuvre the enemy on one or both of his flanks; either to deliver a decisive attack on them or alternatively by feinting against one hostile flank to

make the enemy over-extend and then to break his original front by a direct and violent onslaught. The Defender* who awaits the attack may, if he decides to give battle either resist and exhaust the enemy in preparation for a counter-stroke or he may by giving ground, draw the attacker into a situation in which he in turn exposes his flank and rear to counter-attack. That was the expedient of Hannibal at Cannae and a similar manœuvre saved the allies at the Battle of the Marne in 1914. In each case, both the attacker and the defender strive at some stage of the battle to bring off the rear attack. A field army must therefore be designed for attack and defence and the ultimate delivery of the rear attack.

In the history of land warfare, the problem of organizing a field army for attack and defence has most commonly been resolved by dividing the army into three main elements:

(*i*) A line of battle strong in defence and capable of attack if supported by

(*ii*) A fire element; and

(*iii*) A mobile assault element for the rear attack.

To make these elements manageable in large armies, they are first grouped into units by functions and those units in turn are grouped into higher formations, either unmixed as regiments or brigades, or into groups containing a mixture of the three elements.

Field armies require the highest possible mobility because mobility added to protected offensive power has throughout history been the secret of the rear attack. An army equal to its enemy in fighting power but 50 per cent. more mobile can do what it pleases with its enemy. The ideal mobility is reached when the line of battle, fire and assault elements are all more mobile than the adversary. On rare occasions in history this ideal has been reached by having all elements in the army mounted, as with the Mongol armies, but normally the assault arm was mounted, the fire element was horse-drawn and the line of battle walked on foot and set the real pace of the army. This was common to all European armies, but even so the army with the highest power of manœuvre on the battlefield normally succeeded in developing a successful flank or rear attack. To-day, though the

* In 1914 the Germans threw their whole weight against the Allies' left flank. In 1940 the Germans feinted against the Allies' left by attacking in Holland and north Belgium. The Allies reacted by leaving the frontier fortifications in north France and advancing to Dutch and Belgian assistance and the Germans then broke the Allied centre on the Meuse.

main elements of land armies remain, all, through mechanization can be equally mobile, while wireless control has made possible dispersed manœuvre in the approach and on the battlefield. But to-day a new arm for the rear attack has appeared in the air-borne land soldier.

Supply and the transport of supplies and impedimenta has been a constant preoccupation of armies. All means of supply have been essayed. From living on the country or foraging, living on magazines and supply by mobile wagon trains, down to the elaborate supply system of to-day. But be it realized that neither mobility nor fighting power can be achieved until the maintenance and transport problem has been solved.

The last great constant in war has been the human factor—the leader and the led. The led by training, given normal military virtues, can be shaped into whatever military mechanism we give the commander, but the real commander, although he may be matured by experience and guided by the severe principles of war, is unique, born, not made. It is the art of the commander which applies the principles of war to strike the enemy where, when and how the enemy likes it least.

Our studies of the mechanism and mobility of armies on land should not ignore the important part in land warfare played by sea mobility made possible by sea power. In ancient history the armies of the Mediterranean nations, Greeks, Persians, Carthaginians and Romans fought as armies at sea as well as on land. Sea fighting in fact did not become a specialized business till after the Spanish Armada. But it is rather with sea-carriage of armies than sea fighting that we are now concerned. The seaways have frequently turned the flank of the landways. A "sea-mobile" army has a safe road to the rear attack.

This inconvenient truth is apt to be ignored by the soldiers of continental armies, but islanders whose livelihood depends on the sea and on sea power have no excuse for such ignorance, their armies without sea mobility are only half effective.

Now the history of land warfare has not by any means been one of steady and continuous advance towards the solution of these problems. The ancient Greeks and Romans brought fortification, siege and field warfare to a proficiency which was then lost for over 1,000 years; and even in the best periods of the art of warfare it frequently occurs that armies have been raised and organized with more regard to custom and precedent than to basic principles, though there are many examples to the contrary.

But whenever a mechanism of land warfare has been created and used in accordance with the basic principles of war and in the light of the best available experience, it has triumphed with ease over land forces which, through failing to watch the development of war and to modify their practices accordingly, were quite unable to understand the fate which was awaiting them or to avoid it when it arrived. That is the real meaning of modernization.

Modernization is not a thing of last year or this. It has been going on steadily throughout the centuries. Whenever there has been a really effective army, it has been a thoroughly modern one for the period in which it was built up. Modernization therefore seeks, first, to provide a General with the highest speed of movement; secondly, the best fighting power; and thirdly, an efficient service of maintenance in the field. The task of those who are responsible for the creation of land armies in any epoch is to build up a fighting machine with the most modern weapons and equipment, in the light of the principles of war and the best experiences of the day. The fulfilment of this task demands constant and continuous efforts towards the evolution of better methods and a readiness to scrap the outworn or obsolete, both during actual warfare and the intervals of peace between wars. It is fatal to begin the new war where the last one left off, and this can be clearly shown by the study of the history of land warfare in our own time since 1914.

PART II

It must be remembered that in 1914 air power was in its infancy. The armies of 1914 were the last in the history of warfare to operate only on the ground. In Western Europe, the field armies assembled behind frontiers protected by fortified places which guarded the main lines of approach. They were organized into infantry divisions which fought on foot and were considered capable of assaulting the enemy's line of battle. They were supported by artillery and they had cavalry divisions for the rear attack. Their weapon basis was the one-man weapon, with a certain amount of automatic firearms amongst the infantry. They were numerically the largest armies which had ever taken the field. Their transport was, as always in the past, horse-drawn. Their tactical idea was based on the flank manœuvre followed by a cavalry attack against their opponent's rear. They were armies in the tradition of Napoleon and Wellington modified by the

experiences of 1870. But they had *modern* rifles and some modern artillery and no one realized the effect of this modern wine in the traditional bottles except a continental banker named Bloc, who prophesied their utter inability to apply their tactical ideas because of the effect of modern fire power. He was right.

At the outset the fortifications fell with surprising speed because the aggressor had produced secret siege weapons. Then the invasion passed the fortresses and the field armies met and, after a short period of manœuvring, they were locked in a stalemate because unarmoured beings could not face the enormous fire power developed. Out of this evolved the paradox of a connected line of field forifications which turned into something much more permanent, stretching for hundreds of miles from sea to Alps. The field armies went straight into siege conditions and became fortress troops and siege armies. Both sides then began to increase their own defensive fire power by adding more and more automatic weapons and their offensive element by producing a more numerous and powerful artillery. Each in turn assaulted the other, failed, and then settled down to think again. With the passage of time both sides evolved new weapons and methods—the Germans gas, the Allies the tank, the Germans hurricane bombardment and infiltration tactics by infantry, which the Allies copied. On both sides there was the evolution of the Air Arm, and Land Warfare developed a new dimension. The result was that by 1918 both of these armies, which began as field armies, had succeeded in evolving a siege technique capable of carrying an assault through semi-permanent fortifications and so restoring field warfare, but even when field warfare was restored, neither side ever succeeded in breaking the other's front and developing the rear attack, because the horsed cavalry of the mobile arm was too vulnerable. Moreover, the demands on the production and supply system necessary to provide the armies with the immense quantities of warlike stores and particularly shell placed an intolerable strain on the maintenance system and the effort to turn a field army into a siege army had the inevitable result, that the armies on both sides had become almost powerless to move. Decision in land warfare still awaited the resuscitation of the rear attack to decisive depth. Realizing this the Allies, with the industrial resources of the world behind them, devised a new type of field army for the 1919 campaign—a war machine designed to reintroduce the rear attack, and, comprising some 20,000 armoured fighting vehicles. This new-model field army was to

combine heavy tanks for the frontal assault, mobile tanks for the rear attack, armour-protected infantry for the follow-through, and fire support from the air to cover land movements when the penetration had passed beyond the range of the artillery and the original front; and there were to be armoured supply echelons fit for cross-country movement, and even air-supply. The old army would be left *in situ* to contain its adversary's front while the new moved to the decision. Owing to the German collapse in 1918 under the strain imposed by the blockade this project never eventuated, and the full development of modern Land Warfare was thereby postponed for 21 years.

Meanwhile, the war had spread from the congested battlefields of France into the open lands of Eastern Europe, the deserts, plains and hills of North Africa and Western Asia. In these areas, however large the armies, there was still sufficient room for tactical manœuvre and therefore, for the flank or rear attack to develop. The British and Indian Cavalry exploited the rear attack in Mesopotamia and Palestine, but the war ended before mechanization of any sort really entered the Eastern theatres. There was, therefore, no real development of modern mobility in those regions and the easy victory of unmodernized forces did much to blind the eyes of those in power to the fact that the day of the horsed soldier in war had passed forever. Thus the Land Warfare of 1914—18 ended at the point when true modernization was about to make a new model army capable of restoring life to the stagnating field armies which had become siege armies. Then came anti-climax, for the collapse of the armies and air forces of Imperial Russia, Austria and Germany, left the Allies in a sort of military vacuum, they were too exhausted to realize that their own destruction at the hands of the Treasury officials of their countries was equally imminent. What survived of the Allied armies differed but little from the armies that took the field in 1914 and drifted into the four years' siege.

In the interval between 1919 and the return match of 1939 the stimulus which the first world war gave to civil industry had its reactions on military evolution. Aircraft evolved out of all recognition. Everywhere motor transport replaced the horse. Inventors were busy on the weapons of the last war, modernizing and improving the types of machine guns, mortars, tanks and artillery which made their first crude appearance in 1917-18. By 1934 a stage had been reached when the makeup of armies no longer depended on the limitations imposed over the whole of history by

horse-and-foot mobility and one-man-one-weapon. New means for improvement on old methods were there for anyone who wanted them and was prepared to use them. A stage had in fact been reached when the authorities responsible for the maintenance of the machinery of land warfare had to choose between two alternatives—the first a rejuvenation of the existing or old model pattern of army, which in the case of the British and French armies were the 1914 models with a top-dressing of 1918 equipment, by eliminating horsed transport, improving the infantry armament, mechanizing and re-equipping the artillery with longer ranged and more powerful weapons, adding a proportion of assault tank units and modernizing the cavalry arm by the substitution of tanks for horses. This process apparently left the basic tactical idea unchanged; so much so in fact that after such a rejuvenation the British army was able, without mental discomfort, to keep in use a Field Service Regulation which had been written before the army had been "Voronoffed." The second alternative was to return to the conception of 1919 but with all the facilities of 1935 and create new model armies scientifically designed for their special tasks, adapting weapons, mobility, supply systems and so on to the strategical functions which the particular army might be called upon to perform. But to understand the events of 1939-40 it is necessary to see how the contending nations absorbed the new equipment and weapons of war into their military organisms in the interval between the two wars.

Curiously enough, Russia, in spite of her unenviable reputation for military ineffectiveness, was the first great power to remodel her army. By 1935, she was able to show visitors from the British Army that she had taken the lead both in mechanization and in air support for land operations. In fact she seemed to have developed two parallel armies—one the old-fashioned 1914 model of horse, foot and guns, and the other a very highly mechanized armoured and mobile force, air-supplied, air-supported and backed by a large force of air-borne troops whose advanced guard in landing was found by parachute battalions. The underlying tactical theory of the mechanized flank attack or the armoured break-through followed by the rear attack aided by the air arm, air landings and air support, had been very elaborately developed. We shall probably never know how much Russian development owes to German thought and assistance, though there is plenty of evidence that before the rise of the Nazis, the Germans were prepared to collaborate with Russia to defeat the Versailles Treaty.

But this early development of Russia along lines afterwards adopted by Germany is very significant and it seems logical to believe that long before the Nazi revolution the German army was busy absorbing the lessons of the war in the hope of a comeback and working out the practical details in Russia. The Germans had, however, to be careful not to come too clearly into the open; but as early as 1927 the German High Command had formulated their tactical ideas about the next war and based them upon a violent offensive developed at speed, regardless of loss and of what was happening on either flank of the attacking unit or formation.

In General von Seckt's book, "Thoughts of a Soldier," you find the idea of a highly trained and equipped army as the offensive spearhead of a "follow-up" army less mobile and less elaborately equipped. At the same time the Germans resuscitated their air forces, and, when they did so, they went a very long way to harnessing their air power to the land offensive. It now appears that Hitler's offer to drop no bombs beyond 50 miles of the military front was entirely logical and a definite pointer to his intention in war. They also produced with considerable secrecy a tank powerful enough for a frontal break-through against any anti-tank resources of the French or Polish armies and yet sufficiently mobile for a campaign of movement against the rear of the enemy. To accompany these vehicles they had motor-cycle and light infantry divisions, and there is no question but that air supply had been prepared to maintain these spearhead forces. To make the rear attack more sure they had several airborne divisions with parachute-advanced guards, and as with the Russians, it appears that the bulk of the mechanized land force was created independently of the remainder of the army under a separate inspectorate. Quite logically they put a large portion of the anti-aircraft troops under the air arm. The rest of the army, which was by no means allowed to rot, was designed for holding, occupying and following-up. It was mainly infantry with horse-drawn pneumatic-tyred transport, strong in anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons and amply provided with close support and medium artillery. The proportion of the mechanized and airborne forces to the remainder of the Army was 1 to 8. But though the German war machine was primarily designed for offensive warfare, they did not neglect defence. The design and layout of the "West Wall" and the depth of its defensive zone seemed to indicate that they were aware of the connotations of a modern armoured break-through and were determined not to be taken that way themselves.

Thus in Germany, the army and the air arm developed logically and thoroughly for modern land warfare with none of the vacillations and inconsistencies produced by political instability, financial sabotage and inter-service jealousy, which wrecked the armies of the western democracies before they reached the battlefield. Lastly, the Germans did not neglect seaborne mobility as a means of rear attack. They had considerable successes with combined operations in the Baltic in the First World War; the Baltic is ideal for combined sea, land and air training and Germans worked hard to perfect landing operations before war began.

Interestingly enough, Japan is the other modern exponent of the art of combined land, sea and air operations. The outstanding military feature of Japan's war in China—the only one which is new or genuinely modern—has been her highly developed organization for landing troops including a very wide range of motor landing craft launched at the points of landing from special transport ships designed to carry and release them.

At the end of the last war France was left with the largest army in Europe. She had 2,500 tanks, 3,600 aeroplanes and 12,500 cannon, but France had suffered war casualties of over 2,300,000 killed or disabled, and these not only reduced her fighting strength for the future but in some way broke her offensive spirit. The fact that she might yet again have to face the Germans without the help of powerful allies led her to look for assistance from the chain of weak nations on the Eastern flank of Germany; and, when it became clear that these were unlikely to be of any real value, she started to build an expensive line of frontier defences behind which she would mobilize her Field Army. That, of course, was never finished. It stopped where the French, Belgian and German frontiers met. Had it been carried on to the sea, things might have been very different. The French Field Army, as far as one can see, was simply the army of 1918, with increased infantry fire power, a number of heavy tank brigades, a powerful artillery partially mechanized, and a weak mobile arm of some three light armoured divisions and some horsed formations. The tactical idea was based on the frontal battle, a rigid and inflexible line of infantry formations, maintaining a constantly intact front with marked disinclination for sudden or unsupported advances and flank movements. This was the 1918 idea of the wall of men which might become the trench of men if things went wrong. It does not seem to have occurred to the French that this slow-moving, cumbersome and rigid machine, forming under the

protection of an incomplete frontier barrier lacking in depth, even if it were sufficiently large to fill any front which the Germans might attack, was an ideal target for the German army organized on the tactical idea of the unregulated violent offensive designed to drive a rear attack to great depths. Lastly, the French neglected to organize or defend the civilian population in the rear of their armies.

The Polish Army, as far as its field army went, was a bad imitation of the French army. Furthermore, Poland had no frontier fortifications, no modern mobile arm, and a very small air force.

Britain stood committed by the Locarno Pact to support France if attacked by Germany or vice versa. We had a land army which, though responsible for Home defence, the defence of Egypt, the British commitments in the Middle and Far East and the defence of the great naval bases, was the poor relation of the Defence Forces. The restrictions imposed by the rigidly interpreted Cardwell system which tied the home army to the notoriously conservative and obsolete army in India, the increasing age of the senior officers and their dislike of novelty, the dead hands of the Treasury and party politics in England combined to prevent any radical remodelling of the British army. In consequence two years before this war began there were in England four regular infantry divisions, one armoured division, all only partially equipped, and 12 to 14 Territorial Divisions untrained and unequipped. Equipment to arm our air and fortress defences was provided grudgingly. Furthermore, the Treasury obstinately refused to re-equip the small forces in the Middle East, and the army in India was only fit for tribal warfare. With such a hopelessly inadequate army it is not surprising that our tactical ideas were left over from 1918. We reckoned on employing the infantry divisions made more mobile by the substitution of motor transport for horses, supported by an armoured mobile arm in a war of movement in Western Europe. This was and remains the theme of Field Service Regulations, which still puts the infantry before the tank. Just before the war the army in the United Kingdom began an expansion on the lines described in order to fight alongside the French, although this expansion was mainly in the infantry element. There was, however, a strong but submerged feeling in official and non-official circles that if we had to send an army to France it should contain the elements lacked by the French, i.e., armoured and mobile formations. In the end we managed to

place ten modernized infantry divisions alongside the French for the northern battle and we lost everything except the personnel. The armoured divisions did not take part in that fighting; they arrived in France too late. Our failure to produce a modern Field Army was to some extent offset by our care for fortresses such as Singapore. There our grasp of fundamental principles was right. But as soldiers we feel that by far the most noteworthy deficiency was the lack of military air support: the army had no air transport for troops or supplies. There was no possibility of an air-landed rear attack and no air-craft to deliver a tactical bombardment for a follow-up if we outstripped our land artillery.

So in northern France we had the pathetic spectacle of two indifferent armies: one obsolete, the other semi-modernized aligned against a Modern army which combined in its organization the best principles of the art of war and the most up-to-date equipment and technique.

In the circumstances, it is difficult to see how the Allies intended to fight the war on land. We know what happened in Poland. That campaign was finished perfectly logically in about three weeks, and we in the west did nothing to help Poland but awaited our turn for defeat. When it came, Germany, with 13 armoured, 7 mechanized, 3 air, and approximately 160 ordinary divisions struck the Allies, totalling some 2 armoured, 91 infantry and a few mechanized divisions at a moment when they had left the fortifications which they had been building for six months. The German armoured forces broke the Meuse Front, drove in behind the fortified belt in the north, developed the rear attack against the northern group of armies, turned south against another weekly-held and over-extended battle-front, pressed home the attack, broke through again, made another rear attack towards the Swiss frontier and that was the end. Still, it is interesting to note that, apart from the rear attack by parachutists, the Germans produced no new development beyond what was latent in the 1919 tactical idea. It is also very noteworthy that, whereas the victors of the first world war were content to relax their efforts, the nation whose armies had been completely demolished was not only foremost in building up its resources on really modern lines but made full use of the advantage of starting with a clean slate.

Before we close this lamentable chapter let a soldier say that the destruction of the land forces of the democratic powers arose

inevitably from the abiding vices of democracy, pseudo-intellectualism, parsimony and a middle-class dislike of fighting men. It was a sound instinct which put the Cenotaph in Whitehall.

PART III

The destruction of the French Field and fortress armies and the ejection of the B.E.F. from Europe has left the Axis and Russian land forces in control of Europe and Northern Asia. It also leaves the British Commonwealth, behind its sea and air defences, free to reorganize its land forces in the light of the war's lessons for whatever operations may be in store in the future. In this we are helped by the fact that we are no longer required to conform to the tactical and strategical ideas of a continental ally. Sir W. Robertson when he hoped that "next war we'd have no bloody allies" was not far wrong.

2. The question now before the commonwealth is, "What are we going to do with our new found freedom of action bought at a price of £100,000,000 and many valuable lives?" Our first action must be to review the lessons of the war up to date and correlate the experience of Flanders, North Africa, Somaliland and East Africa to the fundamental principles of war and the new weapons and equipment which are now coming to hand. In doing so we must free our minds from all preconceived or residual tactical ideas and strive to remodel our land forces objectively firstly for the immediate tasks in hand, and secondly, for the future. In so doing we land soldiers must recognise that just as in the past, success in seaborne operations derived from sea supremacy so henceforward, on land, success in land operations will derive from air supremacy.

The first necessity is to make certain that any of our vital bases which are liable to attack are sufficiently fortified. As things stand now the bases which may be in danger are England, Malaya, Egypt and India. But the forms of attack which these may receive differ. In the case of Egypt and India it takes the form of a land attack by modern armies, but armies separated from their objectives by great distances and deserts—supported by modern air forces. England and Malaya can only be attacked from the sea and the air. Where modern forces may approach us on land we must be prepared to meet them with modern defences. These defences must be so organized that wherever the terrain does not admit of our holding a continual fortified barrier we are in a position to meet deep thrusts against our L. of C. This dictates "fortresses" in depth, a good example being Mersa Matruh

in the Libyan Desert. Furthermore in populous areas wherever rear attacks from the sea and air are likely to develop they must be met by something akin to the *levee en masse* such as the HOME-GUARD. It is nowadays essential to organize and control the non-military population within striking distance of hostile air or land armies.

We must also create modern field armies, adequately equipped against air attack and armoured assault and yet capable of developing a rear attack in combination with a frontal attack. This requires a powerful armoured mobile arm and a line of battle element well supplied with armour and supported by modern assault tanks and modern artillery. Modern artillery now includes the bomb from the air. Incidentally the greater the mobility of the field army in comparison with its adversary the less need is there for fixing the enemy frontally before delivering the rear attack. Immobile armies are fixed by their very immobility. Hence our final aim in organizing a field army for mobile action in Africa or Asia is the 100 per cent. mechanized force, air-supplied, operating in conjunction with forces landed from the sea and the air. In the course of our operations we may meet the strong places of the enemy. We must be prepared to destroy them scientifically by air and land attack without wasting our field armies in adequately supported assaults.

The mobility of our new model field armies must be adequate to their tasks. So it is permissible to guess at some of these tasks.

First, there are the important channels of communication to keep clear. Among these are: the English Channel and the Red Sea. To clear the English Channel it may be necessary to re-occupy the areas Calais—Boulogne; the Cherbourg peninsula; the Finnisterre peninsula; and the Channel isles. The mobility required for this task is amphibious. Land mobility need not in the first instance be high. Forces strong in local assault power will cross on wide fronts on an agreed plan and endeavour to form connected bridgeheads. Air supremacy will be an essential preliminary to this operation. This will be the real task of the Royal Air Force; but under the cover of this air supremacy the armies will require air support for bombardment, transport of troops and supplies, evacuation of wounded, etc., the provision of this support will largely free them from the incubus of cannon and land transport.

The capture of Massawa and Assab would clear the Italians from the Red Sea coast, thereby removing any threat to our sea

traffic between the forces in India and Egypt and releasing our warships for other duties. This again is an amphibious operation requiring sea and air supremacy and air support to the landed force. This amphibious operation on the Red Sea coast is not, however, the main task of the Eastern group of armies: our armies in North Africa, Western Asia and India. Until the Eastern armies are ripe for the grand counter-offensives it is necessary to defend a strategical front stretching from Kashmir to the Western Desert of Egypt and the Ethiopian Frontiers of the Sudan.

Now the characteristics of this vast front are surprisingly uniform. From Quetta westwards there are thousands of miles of desert lands rarely broken by fertile river valleys or highlands. From the south the sea thrusts two great arms into this block—the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea. To the north-west is the Mediterranean. Railways and roads are few. The land is barren and waterless. The characteristics of this very extensive theatre dictate the characteristics which modern armies should have for operations within its borders. Field Armies operating anywhere from North Africa to India must be fully mechanized and must be supported and supplied by air. But given mechanization, armour and air supply such armies will bring back to land warfare the technique of Ghengis Khan's army, which combined the line of battle, the artillery and the rear assault in an army of one mobility.

The main elements of modern armies will therefore be Armoured Divisions, Mechanized Infantry Formations, Army Air Forces and the Maintenance Element.

Anywhere in the Middle East such an army would become even more decisive if certain specially organized and equipped divisions of infantry were available when required to develop the rear attack from the sea, which in these areas is so conveniently placed for us. The final requirement for our modern army is one or more airborne divisions which can initially be modelled on the German or Russian formations but should eventually be modified for the special circumstances of eastern warfare.

The new model Eastern army we require should have defensive forces to hold areas in which it is not intended to operate offensively and also our main bases. In some places this defence will be mobile, in others fortifications will be possible. Our main defensive areas are Malaya, the Western Frontier of India and Palestine. Our offensive areas will in time become the Red Sea and the Sudan, the North African littoral, the coasts of south-east Europe and possibly the Balkans.

Now for the counter-offensive.

Assuming that our fortresses, seaways and land corridors are secure—what then? Consider the Germans' position; a large and efficient land army, a weak ally sitting on a peninsula in a sea in which he is not predominant, a doubtful Balkan situation and a more doubtful Russia. Hitler is much in the position of Napoleon from 1808 to 1812; with much the same need to obtain a quick and final decision. Our business is to refuse him that decision and to stretch him to the limit of his resources. In Napoleon's day we chose Spain for a "stretcher." To-day we have the choice of the Balkans, South Italy, the Mediterranean islands and Libya. We may even eventually have Spain. We have also for the matter of that Norway and the French coast. Everywhere the sea lies between us and our enemy; we must make its shores an area of ever-present menace.

So the next task of our field forces is to become amphibious. We should, I feel, organize and train, everywhere for combined operations and let the enemy know it too. The army has got to grow webfooted. But before we can develop an amphibious strategy in the Mediterranean it looks as if we ought to remove Libya from Italy. If so, that involves a desert campaign mainly of armoured divisions supported and sustained by aircraft and backed by motorized troops to hold the bases in rear. Given a properly organized army, say four Armoured Divisions and four Motor Divisions, the task should not be insuperable. And having involved Italians and Germans in that campaign for which they are, I feel, ill-equipped, the moment may come for the attack on South Italy. But since for some time to come initiative on land rests with the enemy, the trouble is to foretell from where the counter-attack on land will start. It may even start from Iraq, Southern Arabia or Central Africa.

Without venturing too deeply into conjecture we can, I think, see the broad lines of our return match taking shape into two main armies, west and east, both amphibious. The west to operate on the Atlantic coasts. The east to secure the Middle East, clear the North African coast and gradually mop up the northern Mediterranean coast until the Balkans, Italy and Spain detach themselves from Germany. For this we land fighters will need modern fortress-holders, a modern field army and perhaps modern siege troops. We may need all of the 4,000 tanks ordered from America and all that we can make ourselves. We will need our wings, something approximately to an army air arm, at least

an air detachment, to serve the land battle, bomb where we need bombs, parachute where we need parachutists, transport where we need to be transported. We soldiers must be prepared to help in the evolution of that arm. We must get forward with our own evolution towards speed and mobility on land and at sea. The marching soldier is an anachronism in open warfare in the vast distances of the Near East and North Africa.

We have got the cause, the time, the men, the money and a clear-cut target. We have world industry behind us. There is nothing in the world to stop us winning the third round in land warfare except the relics of that ignorance, timidity and financial turpitude which has cost us so dear in the last twenty years. And in organizing the army of the Eastern comeback, India must take the major part.

AN INTERLUDE IN THE CAMPAIGN IN NORWAY

By An Indian Army Officer

There must have been few, if any, officers in the Indian Army a year ago who ever dreamed that they would have a chance of seeing active service in a country so remote as Norway. Yet towards the end of April, 1940, twenty of them received orders to report in Lahore immediately and, from there, to proceed to the United Kingdom by air. They were to "act as advisors to Officers Commanding battalions which might be required to operate in mountainous country." These officers assembled in Lahore on the 22nd April, and from the fact that a large proportion of them were carrying fishing rods it was apparent that they were men of acute deductive ability!

Lahore brought an issue of gas-masks and a lecture from an officer of Army Headquarters. At Karachi they embarked in a new Imperial Airways flying-boat designed to carry seventeen passengers. Three extra seats had been installed in the luggage compartment aft; this was noisy, smelly and dark, and was soon given the name of "Black Hole of Cathay." "Cathay" was the aeroplane. It was changed for the "Champion" at Alexandria, and in this aeroplane the journey to London was completed.

The morning after arrival the twenty officers met General Massy and Brigadier Bruce who described the situation as it then was and explained the future intentions. The British forces had been evacuated from Namsos and Andalsnes, but operations for the occupation of Narvik were still continuing. The importance of Narvik is well known as an iron-ore port, though its future in German hands may disclose other uses for it. It was realised that the Germans would almost certainly continue their advance northwards, and it was the intention to harass their lines of communication by the adoption of guerilla tactics. For this purpose special independent companies had been formed, and five of them were ready for service. They were under the command of a colonel with a staff approximating to that of a brigade. Each company was about 300 strong, all volunteers from different divisions. With the exception of some officers all were Territorials. The company included sappers, signals and interpreters as well as infantry; it also had a support section of four Bren guns. It was

divided into three platoons of three sections, each of the latter commanded by an officer.

In addition to the normal articles of clothing and equipment the men were issued with Alpine ruck-sacks, snow-shoes, arctic boots, leather jerkins and sheepskin coats. The ruck-sacks proved to be extremely useful, but as no one knew how to use the snow-shoes and there was insufficient transport for the sheepskin coats these were soon abandoned. A reserve of 30 days' rations and a special five-day mountain ration of pemmican, together with a S.A.A. reserve of 100,000 rounds were also included in each company. The final gift towards independence was a large sum of English and Norwegian currency, which was to buy local supplies, and particularly to hire local transport.

The stated intention to use the Indian Army officers as advisors to battalion commanders was out of the question, as there were by this time few battalions left in Norway. They were used as attached officers to the independent companies. Eight were ordered to stand-by at twenty-four hours' notice; the remainder were given one week's leave. Since only eighty pounds of kit had been allowed on the journey Home, the eight spent two busy days buying essential uniform and equipment, and enjoyed the novel experience of sending the bills to the India Office for payment. Had one stopped any of them in the street and asked him what he was doing, he would have replied: "What I've wanted to do for fifteen years."

On May 1st, they received their summons to report on the following day. Here they met the commander of the Independent Companies and left with him the next evening, arriving on the Clyde the following morning. They found two ships from the Liverpool-to-Belfast run, which were to take them to Norway. They were comfortable enough, and to a schoolboy would have been heaven, because they had been requisitioned at such short notice that no refitting had been done; in consequence after a day or two water became so scarce that all washing was forbidden. No. 3 Company was in one ship, and Nos. 4 and 5 in the other. They sailed with an escort of four destroyers. The plan was for No. 3 Company to go straight to Bodo and secure that area, whilst Nos. 4 and 5 Companies landed further south at Mosjoen and establish contact with the Germans. Bodo was important as the chief port in that part of Norway, the seat of the local government and the headquarters of the Broadcasting Company. It was also hoped to find ground in the vicinity suitable for the

construction of a landing-ground. It was realised that until a landing-ground was made our force could have no air support, as the area of operations was beyond the range of fighter aircraft based at Harstadt.

The voyage was uneventful, and was spent in overhauling kits and studying maps of Norway. There was a constant stream of conflicting reports from London which could not be queried because wireless silence had been ordered. It was apparent that there were no British forces between the southern landing places and the Germans, so Nos. 4 and 5 Companies made plans for an opposed landing.

It is necessary here to consider the country. Norway is a delightful place in which to spend one's leave, but it is a nightmare for the conventional soldier who uses F.S.R. as a background to his daytime thoughts. The coastline is covered by literally thousands of islands, and is broken by deep fjords which run miles inland; into these the mountains drop precipitously. Between Mosjoen and Bodo there is one main valley along which runs a metalled road, passable by motor transport once the snow has melted. This road crosses a high snow-field on the line of the Arctic Circle, which is between Mo and Bodo, and further north it crosses a fjord by a ferry. At Bodo it stops. The broad gauge railway from the south ends at Namsos.

When the venture began the hills were covered by snow, but it had all melted by the beginning of June. It was bitterly cold and damp at first but became delightful later, and before the end of the operations the Norwegians were sunbathing in the open. They are a remarkably fit-looking people, though they actually suffer from a high incidence of tuberculosis, due to the necessity of keeping their cattle indoors during the winter months. They are simple and kindly folk, who refused our soldiers no help, but the prevalence of Fifth Columnists among them made these very traits dangerous and deceptive. In May and June there is no darkness; one can read a book indoors at any hour of the twenty-four, and this fact prevented relief from enemy air observation and attack, and introduced a new problem into withdrawals.

To resume the story of the operations: Nos. 4 and 5 Companies landed at Mosjoen shortly after midnight on the night of 8/9th May. It was snowing at the time, which kept off German aircraft. A party of Chasseurs Alpines, about a hundred strong, who had been guarding Mosjoen, met the Companies and explained the situation. The Germans were advancing rapidly

and were only a few miles to the South. It was decided to send No. 5 Company southwards to support the Norwegians who were still resisting the Germans, and to leave No. 4 Company to defend Mosjoen. The Chasseurs Alpines embarked on the ship which had brought the Companies and departed northwards.

The next day reports were received that a German troopship was steaming northwards from the south of Mosjoen. The Navy were not prepared to work on unconfirmed reports—there were too many of them—and so the Germans were able to effect their famous landing at Hemnes, opposed by only one platoon of No. 1 Independent Company. The troopship was sunk by destroyers, but only after it had succeeded in landing its force behind our troops. There was no alternative to a re-embarkation and withdrawal by sea. The commander of the Independent Companies used almost every known means of travel in passing the orders for this withdrawal round his command; he moved unceasingly by car, by bicycle, walking and even swimming in order to reach all detachments. Before the companies left, the Germans were made to pay the price of speed. It was their practice to send cyclists ahead of their advanced guards; one Indian Army officer, remembering the Pathan, laid an ambush on the road, into which these cyclists fell. All sixty of them were killed—the first burst of fire killed many and the rest, shouting "Heil Hitler!" rode jinking through the dead to their own destruction. They were admired by our men and buried by their own. A small ship was found which was intended to carry 150 men; on this 600 of our troops embarked and left safely. A small number of men were left behind; they were guards over dumps with whom it was not possible to establish contact. They arrived in Bodo fourteen days later, having marched over the mountains after destroying the dumps they had guarded. Their arms and equipment were complete.

Meanwhile No. 3 Company had landed unopposed at Bodo, where they were met by a detachment of regular British infantry from Harstadt and two dejected-looking Royal Air Force officers. The cause of their sorrow was soon told. They had arrived two days before in two flying-boats to reconnoitre suitable landing-grounds and begin construction. The flying-boats had not been at anchor in the harbour for more than a few hours when a German aeroplane, the first that had been seen in that part, arrived and sank one of them with a bomb. The other was then towed up a small creek and carefully hidden. The next day

the German aeroplane returned, made straight for the place where the flying-boat was hidden and destroyed it. This efficient spy service was not the least of our enemies. The event hastened the disembarkation of No. 3 Company; they had no desire to remain in such a well-informed neighbourhood longer than was necessary. They went into peaceful billets in a hamlet at the head of the fjord. These days of peace were made more delightful by a rapid improvement in the weather, the country shed its snow and became strikingly beautiful. The only signs of war were constant rumours of enemy landings from parachutes, boats and seaplanes, and a regular air traffic northwards to Narvik. The Germans were reinforcing their beleaguered garrison with supplies.

By the middle of May Nos. 3, 4 and 5 Companies were holding positions round the edge of the Bodo fjord as far south as Rognan; No. 2 Company had arrived and was holding the Bodo area. No. 1 Company, which had arrived before any of the others, was holding Mo and was in contact with the Germans. It was now apparent that the Germans intended to push northwards as fast as they could; accordingly a brigade of regulars was ordered down from Harstadt to reinforce the area. One battalion of this Brigade went south to join No. 1 Company at Mo; the remainder were to stay in the Bodo area. The laborious task of making a landing ground at Bodo was begun; the ground was so soft that it needed almost complete resurfacing, and even wooden house doors were used in making the runway. At this time things began to go wrong. The remainder of the brigade, which was due for Bodo, met with two disasters. The first battalion was in a transport when the Germans attacked with aircraft and inflicted material loss on it. It was decided to send the other battalion with more precautions, but it too met with misfortune and had to be sent back to Harstadt to refit. The delay in its final arrival at Bodo was a very serious factor in the course of the campaign.

The expected German advance from Mo developed, and the first regular battalion and No. 1 Company were forced to give ground. The hills along this route are covered with thick pine forests in which visibility is often only ten or twenty yards. When the Germans met opposition on the line of the road, they were quick to deploy out on to the hills on either flank. In these flanking moves they were helped by the knowledge of the country which many of their officers had gained as "tourists" in peacetime;

they were also helped by good modern maps and, of course, by their complete mastery in the air. Nevertheless they owed their success to other causes of more general application. Their men were very fit and hard, and were used according to their special aptitudes—those that were accustomed to hills and to snow were used widest on the flanks and so on; they do not delude themselves that all infantry are equal, or even that all men given equal training will make the same type of infantrymen. Their men were specially armed for forest and hill fighting; in place of heavy automatics (and a Bren is very heavy half-way up a steep hill!) they had machine-carbines; in place of artillery they had grenades and numerous mortars. Our men were outwalked, outweaponed, outnumbered and finally outflanked.

No. 3 Company was sent south to relieve No. 1 Company, as the latter had suffered heavily in three weeks of continuous fighting. The relief took place at Krokstandt, some thirty miles north of Mo. The second regular battalion to arrive was sent south to take up a position at Pothus. Whilst preparing the position they discovered a dump of German ammunition, which is rather a surprising find in an allied country as yet unoccupied by the enemy. Our "Q" staff are taught to think ahead—perhaps they now need post-graduate training!

The first regular battalion withdrew slowly through the Pothus position and were then sent back to Bodo to rest. No. 3 Company remained with the other Battalion and No. 2 Company who were already at Pothus. Up till this time it was expected that further reinforcements would come to drive the Germans south. It was now known that they would not come. However, the day that the Pothus position was abandoned was the first of two red-letter days for the British. Three gladiator fighters had landed on the newly-made landing ground at Bodo and now appeared in the air. One unfortunately crashed when taking off, but the other two put up a typically marvellous R.A.F. performance. One or the other was kept continuously in the air over Rognan, where a tricky withdrawal into ferry-boats was in progress. They played ducks and drakes with the Germans, and in their two days of glorious action accounted for more than fifteen German planes. The effect on the troops was electric, they cheered at the sight of them and became different men; but it was not to last. A large force of Messerschmidts-110 arrived, shot one down and the other had to leave for Narvik; the pilot was badly wounded in the plane that was shot down. Just before this action the Germans dropped

leaflets on Bodo which read: "Thank you for building the landing-ground. We will not bomb it, we will take it." A sinister quip, and not quite true, for shortly afterwards about a hundred German bombers arrived and razed Bodo to the ground. High explosive and incendiary bombs spared nothing except, of course, the brewery; even the hospital, clearly marked with red-crosses and standing apart from the town, was reduced to ashes. The town consisted largely of wooden houses, and this fact may have been a blessing, for the smoke that they gave off as they burnt covered the inhabitants and garrison as they evacuated the place.

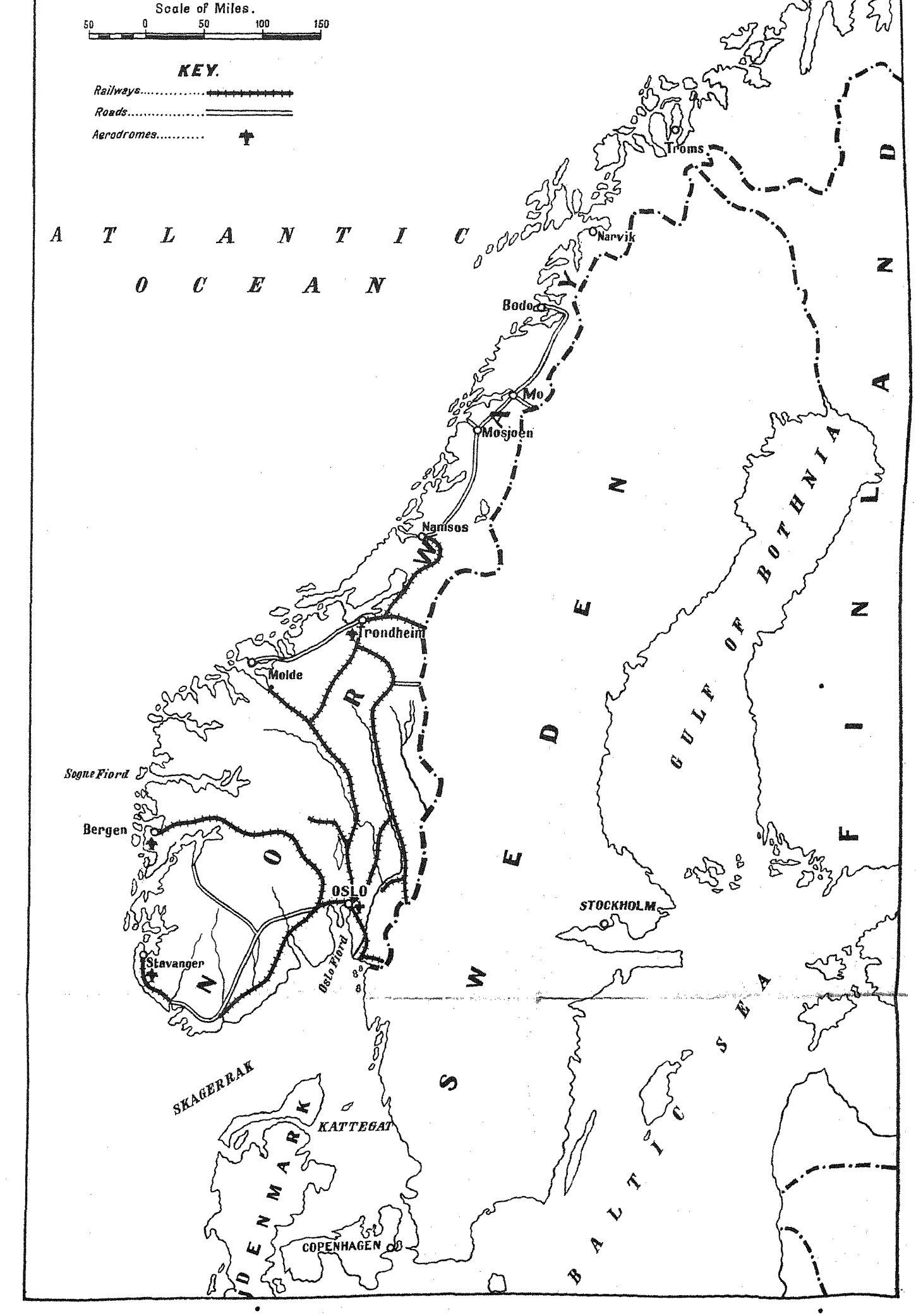
The withdrawal by ferry from Rognan to Landset was successful but with nothing to spare. The last boatload embarked as the Germans entered Rognan village, a sapper lit the fuze which was to blow up the jetty and—the engine of the boat stopped! The engineer who tinkered with the engine had considerable moral support from his passengers in his desire for success, and he achieved it in time for the boat to be some fifty yards from the jetty when it went up. The explosion knocked all the troops over on to the deck, but none was hurt. It was hoped that the destruction of the jetty and removal of all boats would place an effective barrier in the way of further German advance. They had an arm of the sea between them and our forces. They attacked the next day. They had found a bridle path round the head of the fjord, and with amazing energy and determination they had marched all night and were on our tail again, not, however, in any strength.

Complete evacuation had been ordered, but with Bodo destroyed and German forces still in contact with our rear parties it looked to be a ticklish operation. In the event it was entirely successful, largely because the Germans suspended air action for the three vital days. The first echelons had left by cruiser and were taken to a lonely camp in North Britain to prevent all communication with outside; it was essential that the evacuation should be kept absolutely secret from the start. The last echelons left on destroyers, and went in the first instance to Harstadt. Harstadt was evacuated a few days later, and the operation was marked by an event which deserves credit. The Air Force pilots of the Hurricane Fighters which were there were ordered to destroy their machines. This they were so loth to do that they asked permission to fly them on to an Aircraft Carrier. Permission was given, though the feat was extremely dangerous, as a Hurricane

was never designed to land on anything but a large landing-ground. They all succeeded.

So ended an adventure which has many counterparts in previous and subsequent British military history. If our civilians are a race of shopkeepers, our soldiers are a race of plumbers—they come, and then go back for their tools. It was, however, the first campaign which proved certain fundamentals of this war: One cannot fight without air equality, one shouldn't without air superiority. The battlefield is no place for any man who has not been trained to take a pride in his endurance, his hardness and his independence of all comfort. Infantry is no longer a generic term for an armed soldier who has no horse, nor can infantry be armed and trained to fight successfully everywhere. The German infantry, who needed machine-carbines, had them; those who had snow-shoes could use them, they were specialists in Norwegian warfare, not just "P.B.I." These basic facts are well understood at home and no one on the Continent need doubt that when we come back we shall have our tools with us.


BODO
Hopen
Salt Fjord
A T L A N T I C
O C E A N
Krokstandt
Bellanies
Mo
Hemnes
Mosjoen
Kilometres.
0 10 20 40 60 80 100 120
Miles.
0 10 20 40 60 80


Scale of Miles.
50 0 50 100 150
KEY.
Railways
Roads
Aerodromes
ATLANTIC OCEAN
Troms
Narvik
Bodo
Mo
Mosjoen
Namsos
Trondheim
Molde
Sogne Fiord
Bergen
OSLO
Oslo Fiord
Stavanger
STOCKHOLM
SWEDEN
FINLAND
GULF OF BOTHNIA
NORWAY
SKAGERRAK
KATTEGAT
DENMARK
COPENHAGEN
BALTIC SEA

LEARNING GREEK

BY "KARSHISH".

I am told on reliable authority that the number of Army officers who "did" Greek at school is extremely small and that the number who have any respect for or want to know more about Greek is even smaller. So I hasten to inform my readers that I am going to write principally about Modern Greek or Romaic, and also that I once heard quite an interesting lecture on "The Theory of Rifle Fire."

Greece has now been forced by Italy to enter the war and her political and military significance will probably loom large during the next few months. This is my excuse for producing a few scattered reminiscences about a language and people of which not very much is generally known.

Modern Greek is both surprisingly like and surprisingly different from classical or even Hellenistic Greek. The written language (ἡκαθαρευουσα γλῶσσα) seems very familiar to the scholar of classical Greek, while the spoken tongue is completely unintelligible to him on account of its pronunciation, its vocabulary and its construction.

Although the language of the Athenian newspapers bears such a close resemblance to the Greek of Thucydides it is nevertheless a mistake to think that the written language has passed down the ages practically unchanged. In actual fact, at the time of the Greek War of Independence in 1820, written Greek was really a dead language and its resurrection was artificial, the result of a national revival largely brought about by the efforts of Adamantios Korais. The spoken vernacular, however, has been evolved from the Attic Greek by a natural and regular process and is spoken universally. What Korais did was to fabricate a written language where none existed and instead of producing a polished version of the spoken dialects, a virtually impossible feat, he went back to classical Greek, either reintroducing ancient literary words or coining new ones according to a fixed principle. Later tendencies in Greek literature have deplored the fact that the modern written language is artificial and thus unrepresentative of modern thought. Most modern novelists and poets prefer to write in the ἡκαθομιλουμένη γλῶσσα or popular tongue. The formal language of korais, however, still persists in the press, in official language

and in serious literature. It is remarkable for the fact that a foreign word is very rarely found in it. All the Greek world calls a bootblack "λοῦστρο," but to the Greek newspaper he is "ὑποδηματοκαθαριστής." In English, an egg is an egg no matter how erudite the writer. In Greek everyone *says* "ἀυγό," but the newspaper and the restaurant-keeper write "ὠόν." In spite of these curious anomalies, perhaps even because of them, I have always found that the Greeks have an ardent respect and love for their language. A single word of Romaic addressed to a waiter in a Port Said café will usually produce a cheerful torrent of demotic Greek interlarded with Turkish, Italian and even Albanian words. I well remember an occasion when I was benighted on the road between Firuzkuh and Teheran in North Iran. We stopped the car at a small hut built where some road repairs were in progress. An elderly man emerged and spoke to us in fluent but obviously foreign Persian. I was tired out, but not too tired to ask him his nationality. He was a Greek and my "περίεργον πρᾶγμα!" opened the flood gates. We sat up half the night while I laboriously dug up the relics of my knowledge of Greek acquired so assiduously six years before. We both knew Persian far better than I knew Greek but it was impossible to persuade him to speak anything but his own language.

It was with an open mind and in complete ignorance that I sailed up the Aegean Sea in June, 1919, and went ashore at Salonika. The town was in an extraordinary state of turmoil and excitement and, while our ship lay in the harbour, the Versailles Treaty was signed. Once ashore, almost the first thing I did was to buy a Greek grammar. It was a French book and the declensions and paradigms seemed to bear a striking and not wholly agreeable resemblance to my Sixth Form Greek of only five years before. I soon found, however, that this book, like many other so-called Grammars of Modern Greek, dealt with the stilted written language only and that it was practically useless for speaking purposes.

During my short stay in Salonika I hardly got beyond using the numerals and a few odd words, though I soon began to read the newspapers with ease. Within a few weeks I was installed at Chanak Kale and began to take lessons from a Greek interpreter. I at once found myself up against a grave difficulty. Socratis, like most poorly educated men, had a positive veneration for long words and pompous phraseology. He himself was a Thracian and could use the καθομιλουμένη with picturesque and

telling fluency. He positively declined, however, to teach me anything but the literary language with the result that I made little practical progress.

In the autumn of 1919, the depot with which I was serving was transferred to Bostanjik, a few miles along the railway from Haidar Pasha, the Istanbul terminus of the "Berlin—Bagdad" Railway. Here there were plenty of Greeks to talk to and there were frequent opportunities for visiting the capital and particularly Pera which, at that time, was largely populated by Greeks. Many people are apt to forget the essential Hellenism of the old Byzantium. The very names ISTANBUL and PERA are of Greek origin. The Greeks have always called Constantinople simply ἡ πόλις "the city." When the settlement of Pera was established on the East of the Golden Horn, they would speak of going over "to the city," εἰς τὴν πολιν or in the spoken dialect στην πολι. This was pronounced "stimboli" for "π" after "ν" is always pronounced as "b." The Greeks remaining in Istanbul, on the other hand, spoke of going ἐκεῖ πέρα, or "over to the other side." The Turks changed "stimboli" into ISTAMBUL (now written Istanbul). Pera, however, they have always called "Beyoglu."

Work at the Indian Base Depot was spasmodic and my visits to Pera were frequent and often lasted over the week-end. Although I was learning Turkish at the same time, I always insisted on speaking Greek in Pera and began to make rapid progress. I obtained a good deal of useful practice at Bertha's Bar and I must digress for a moment to say a few words about Bertha. She had, I understand, first come to the Balkans before the War with a troupe of dancing girls called the "Eight Lancashire Lasses" (she herself came from Blackpool). This troupe rapidly dispersed and, at the outbreak of the War, Bertha was doing a song-and-dance turn at the Petits Champs open-air cabaret in Pera. At her last performance before leaving Turkey for Greece she astonished her audience by accompanying her final bow with a fine display of Union Jack which she had concealed in her capacious bosom. After spending some time in Athens, Bertha went to Salonika where she opened Bertha's Bar. Although fantastically generous and highly unbusinesslike, she managed to make a good deal of money out of this enterprising venture and set up in Pera shortly after the Armistice. Her first establishment in Shishli was a grand affair with a lovely garden and a gambling hell which she refused to allow British officers to enter. In the winter of 1919, she had a fine bar off the Grande

Rue de Pera. Her easy-going ways, her generosity and her habit of allowing people to sign for drinks soon got her into difficulties and she began to move into more and more modest premises. But the drink was always good, the prices moderate and Bertha always cheerful. I never knew her age or her surname, but she was a good friend of mine. When business was slack she loved to sit down and talk and I never met anyone who understood Balkan peoples and problems better than she did. Through sheer necessity she had acquired an excellent knowledge of French and Greek and was always interested in my linguistic studies. After the evacuation, a very famous regiment, faithful to a long-standing promise, paid her way to London by the Orient Express and entertained her most magnificently at Frascatis. I was honoured by an invitation, but unfortunately was unable to accept it. I never heard what ultimately became of Bertha. She was a genuine patriot and a most generous-hearted woman.

I had few dealings with the Hellenic Greeks until at the end of 1920 I was sent to Smyrna as Assistant Liaison Officer to the Greek forces there. Occasionally, I was employed as interpreter between British and Greek staff officers at places on the Bosphorus where Greek troops were stationed, and once managed to prevent an imminent quarrel between an irate Greek colonel and an exasperated British officer by pointing out that they both possessed a remarkable medal presented by the Panama Republic. Inspired by this unusual bond of union, they both quickly composed their differences.

At the end of 1920, the political and military situation in Turkey was deplorable. The sponsoring of the Greek occupation of the Aidin vilayet by the British Government had already shown itself to be an almost irrevocable mistake. It was a striking example of a phenomenon which is happily of infrequent occurrence in the conduct of British foreign policy: the handling of problems by politicians as totally ignorant of their nature as of the history and character of the peoples involved. Lloyd George's plan of backing the Greek occupation of Anatolia, and later of Thrace, had in theory much to recommend it. On the one hand, it freed the Allied armed forces from the task of policing a disorganized Turkey up to the Russian Frontier, and on the other it would eventually provide a much-needed buffer between a potentially menacing Soviet state and the Eastern Mediterranean. Indeed, had the Greek forces been allowed to overrun Anatolia before Turkish resistance was organized, part or

all of Llyod George's plan might have materialized. The number of factors which the Prime Minister, acting largely without the advice of experts, appears to have ignored was startling. He had failed to take into account the French and Italian attitude, the resistance of the Turks, British and Indian Moslem public opinion and last, but by no means least, the political instability of the Greeks themselves. Anyone who knew the history of the Greek minorities in Anatolia could have foretold that the landing of a Greek force in Smyrna would involve a massacre. The only point which was uncertain was how widespread the massacre would be. Actually it was a small, almost a gentlemanly massacre, but the whole "civilized" world threw up its hands in pious horror and the Greek force, which was supposed to advance quickly to the Marmora and the Black Sea, was ordered by the Allies not to advance at all. In June, 1920, alarmed at reports of Turkish reorganization, the Supreme Council, or rather the British Government, ordered, or, at any rate, encouraged, the Greeks to advance again. This they promptly did and executed a series of brilliant operations which clearly demonstrated the efficiency of the Greek General Staff and the stamina and morale of the troops.

When I was ordered to Smyrna in October, 1920, I had not examined the military or political situation in any detail. Generally speaking, British army officers sympathised with the Turks rather than the Greeks. Members of the Anglo-Levantine colony also favoured the Turks but for different reasons. They liked the Turk largely because he was easy-going and unbusinesslike. They did not want to see him supplanted by the Greek who had an unpleasant reputation for commercial acumen. Personally, I took a line which has more than once called forth the wrath of my seniors and the pitying contempt of my more successful contemporaries. I formed my own opinion, which was that the Greeks were Christians and much more civilized than the Turks and therefore superior to them. Later, I was obliged to modify this opinion, but by holding it in the first place, I was able to sympathize with and understand the Greeks better than many others.

I went from Istanbul to Smyrna in a North Sea trawler with a Greek captain and crew. The weather was very bad and the voyage took four days instead of twenty-four hours. I know little of the sea, but I was impressed by that captain. He had no chart and cared nothing for the compass, but being a Greek islander

he seemed to be completely familiar with every island and every foot of the coast. Time after time, when the seas became more than the ship could stand, he would slip between formidable and jagged rocks into comparatively calm water. He was only twenty-five and was obviously enjoying himself tremendously.

I arrived in Smyrna to find the British Military Mission under General Tom Bridges packing up to leave. They were to be replaced by M. A. B. Johnston, author of "450 Miles to Freedom," as Liaison Officer, myself as Assistant Liaison and Intelligence Officer and Paddy Coghill (now Colonel Sir Patrick) as Cipher Officer. Our work was by no means easy. The work of Liaison was complicated by the uncertainty of Allied policy and by the reproaches of the Greeks who saw clearly that the longer they were held in leash, the greater would become the resisting power of the Turks. They also knew that the morale of the army was being steadily undermined by inactivity. The work of Intelligence was rendered difficult primarily by the fact that those controlling it, though probably able Staff Officers, were without experience of the peoples with whom they were dealing and were largely ignorant of their problems and languages. They were frequently influenced by Anglo-Levantine residents and by business adventurers whose motives were not always disinterested.

After I had appreciated the situation in Smyrna, I strongly recommended that I should be allowed to co-operate with the Greeks in the matter of intelligence. This was not approved with the result that I was only able to achieve very little. But life in Smyrna was full of interest and amusement. On the departure of the Military Mission, we moved to a place called Boudja, about six miles from Smyrna. Here we took a beautiful English house with a magnificent garden. We lived in very great comfort, going into Smyrna every day and entertaining a number of Greek officers and their wives and other foreigners. We were most hospitably received by the local British residents, most of whom had large families including some remarkably pretty and attractive daughters. Most of them had been expensively educated in Europe, but their complexions and their natures remained "full of the warm South." Our circle of acquaintance was very large and we were usually visited by any travellers who touched at the port. I remember returning from Istanbul one evening and on driving up to the house, being surprised to see it brilliantly lit up and to hear extremely festive sounds issuing from it. On entering, I found not less than fifteen young and attractive girls of

varying nationalities being entertained by Johnny and Paddy. They were members of a theatrical touring company called "Autour du Monde" which had just arrived. Most of the girls were English and a pluckier and more cheerful collection I have seldom met. Their situation was unenviable for, having had a considerable success in Pera, the manager and leading lady had gone off to Paris to make whoopee with the proceeds. In Smyrna their show, though far from bad, was a complete frost and they were soon without any funds. We helped them as much as we could and so did a number of Greek officers, Turks and others. The small crowd which saw them off, when they left travelling steerage in a Greek cargo steamer, was one of the most mixed I have ever seen.

My frequent visits to Greek Headquarters and my social relations with Greek officers enabled me greatly to improve my Greek and also to learn much of the character of the Greeks and something of their army. I found that the Hellenic Greeks spoke much better and clearer Greek than their Anatolian cousins, though, from a racial point of view, the latter were the more authentic descendants of the ancient Greek people. A very large proportion of the Anatolian Greeks spoke no language but Turkish though the Greek nationalist movement had greatly encouraged them to learn Greek. I should say myself that the outstanding characteristics of the Greeks were intense patriotism, excitability, sense of humour and a marked tendency to be hypercritical and hyperpolitical. Greek patriotism is something akin to the racial cohesion of the Jews; it is based on the fervid admiration of the achievements of their forbears. It moves them to great sacrifices of which I may quote the example of a friend of mine who was the son of a wealthy Greek domiciled in Egypt. He himself was British-born and had been educated in England, being a scholar of Eton and Balliol. On the outbreak of the War in 1914, he renounced his British nationality and joined the Greek army as a private soldier. He scarcely knew Greek and outwardly he was an Englishman, but his spirit was essentially Greek.

The social outlook of the Greeks is extremely democratic. I remember a Greek General telling me with pride how he had once had occasion to visit a Staff Officer in order to impress upon him a certain point of view. When he had left the room, the sentry on the door, who had obviously been listening intently, sprang to attention and said to him: *Στρατηγέ μοῦ, δὲν συμφώνω με τὴν ἰδέα σας*, "General, I disagree with your point of view." Of the excitability

of the Greeks we had abundant evidence at the return of King Constantine to Athens at the end of 1920. The whole population and the considerable garrison were in a high state of tension. The King was believed to be coming to Smyrna and the cry everywhere was " ἔρχεται " "he is coming." This developed into three taps made on any hard object. The cafés resounded with these taps and the streets with Royalist songs which quickly ousted the panegyrics of Venizelos. I still remember one:

Με τετοιο Κονσταντίνο, με τέτοιο βασιλεά'
Θα πα'ρομε τὴν πο'λι καὶ Ἅγια Σοφιὰ'

"With such a Constantine, with such a king, we will take Constantinople and St. Sophia with it."

One evening Paddy and I came into the town for a supper party we were giving at one of the hotels. We had brought some of our own champagne with us and in handing this out of the car dropped a bottle on the cobblestones. It went off with a loud explosion and we were immediately surrounded by a considerable crowd. Those in the immediate vicinity saw at once what had caused the noise and were duly amused, but those behind shouted and pressed forward in an alarming manner until the voluble explanations of the others had convinced them.

As a fighting machine, the Greek army gave a very good account of itself until its efficiency was undermined by political dissension. Commanders and staff were good up to the return of Constantine, but no army could have stood the wholesale changes which then ensued. Some of the Royalist officers were undoubtedly able men but the C.-in-C.—General Paraskevopoulos, his C.G.S.—General Saryannis and his D.Q.M.G.—Colonel Botsaris, were not suitably replaced. The rank and file were excellent and a match for the Turks in courage, endurance and morale. As often happens among intensely democratic armies, the regimental officers were weak, caring very little for the welfare of the men. I was not in Smyrna when the final disaster took place, but observed it from the Olympian heights of Allied Headquarters in Constantinople. The expulsion of the Greek army from Anatolia was lauded to the skies as a brilliant military operation on the part of the Turks. Undoubtedly the action was conducted with skill and courage but it must be remembered that the Greek army was disheartened by the political bungling at home and by the vacillating policy of the Allies and rendered less efficient by the changes in commands and staffs. Before the Turks delivered their decisive stroke, there were rumours that the

king intended to cut his losses and withdraw the Greek forces from Asia Minor. Few armies will fight to defend territory when they believe their government is ready to surrender that territory without a struggle.

After the decisive defeat of the Greek army and the final miscarriage of Allied policy vis-à-vis Turkey and Greece it became obvious that the only solution to the minorities problem was to be found in an exchange of populations. Such an expedient proved a ruthless but none-the-less effective cathartic. To uproot thousands of innocent peoples from their homes and transplant them to a far country, there to gain a living by methods of which they had never even heard before, sounds unlikely to succeed. Indeed, the current generation involved in such an upheaval is not likely to settle down at all comfortably. Succeeding generations of Anatolian Greeks and Thracian Turks, however, have a far brighter future than if they had stayed in their own homes. An example of the eventual benefits of transplantation can be found in the Armenian Colony at Julfa near Isfahan. The ancestors of this now thriving settlement hailed originally from the Southern Caucasus, once part of the Persian Empire. Despairing of settling their interminable quarrels with the Tartars, Shah Abbas, in the 16th century, ordered the entire community, numbering many thousands of families, to be forcibly driven to a place 800 miles from their homes. Thousands died on the way but the present colony represents one of the most prosperous communities in Iran.

Actually, the Turks of Thrace suffered more than the Greeks in most cases. The Greeks at Panderma had lived by fishing and the growing of cherries. These Greeks who, before their departure, not unnaturally destroyed all their boats, were replaced by Turks from Thrace who had never even seen the sea and knew nothing of fruit-growing. Perished with cold during the first winter, they cut down all the cherry-trees for fuel. I have avoided all mention of the tense situation at Chanak Kale and Ismidt during 1922 as it has no bearing on the Greek situation. The Greek threat in Constantinople was averted by diplomatic means and the Greek people finally laid aside the μεγάλη ἰδέα and began to tackle the enormous problem of putting together the broken pieces of their nation. The Greek people decided that six men, among whom were Gounaris and General Hadjianesti, were responsible for the catastrophe and they were accordingly executed. The British Government regarded this as an "act of

barbarism", and broke off diplomatic relations with Greece—a gesture of seeming hypocrisy which had, however, a deep political motive.

I remained in Istanbul until the end of 1923 and kept in close touch with the Greek community. In the course of my work, I had to peruse a large number of Greek documents on military and other subjects. The work was of absorbing interest and I gained a voluminous knowledge of the written language, now—I regret to say—largely forgotten. Socially, I saw far less of the Greeks than when I was in Smyrna, though I still talked with Bertha's Greek lady friends in her Bar and went to an occasional dance. At one of these I was by way of being the guest of the evening and on my arrival ten buxom Greek maidens were lined up for me to take my choice. I was greatly embarrassed and threw myself with bashful abandon upon the superb bosom of the nearest candidate for my favours.

During my last months in Constantinople I made an effort to systematize my study of Greek. I took a number of lessons at the Berlitz School where I found an excellent and painstaking teacher in Madame Vadhakhi. My work gave me sufficient practice in the written language, so I concentrated on learning to speak something between the literary language and the Anatolian dialect. I am thankful that I left Istanbul some weeks before the final evacuation. The Greek and other Christian minorities were tortured with apprehension as to what vengeance the Turks would wreak on them. Their fears were largely baseless. As in 1453, the Turk showed himself a wise and generous conqueror and comparatively few years passed before Turkey and Greece were on the most friendly terms, an almost unbelievable phenomenon when the history of the last century is considered.

My connection with the Greeks in Turkey was over, but eighteen months later, having obtained four months' leave from Palestine I found myself wandering about the Balkans again. After a month in Yugoslavia, I went on a walking tour in the Trentino and then took ship from Trieste to Peiraeus. I had never been in Athens before and was visiting it at an interesting time. Over a million refugees had come to Greece from Anatolia and about half of them had been settled round Athens. The city was already overpopulated and there was nothing for the refugees to do except take in each other's washing and live in the really remarkable settlements which were built for them. It is significant that, in spite of the sinister rôle which England had

played in the Greek catastrophe, the first of these settlements was named after Byron.

I spent an interesting five weeks in Athens. Accommodation was a grave problem. The only hotel at which I could get a room was the Grande Bretagne which was ruinously expensive and subject to the same shortage of washing water as the rest of Athens. Eventually, I went to Neon Phaleron and went into Athens every day by the electric railway. Every day was completely full. I took Greek lessons in the early morning before going to Athens where I roamed the streets or sat in cafés reading Plato's Dialogues and Aristophanes translated into Modern Greek (a unique literary experience which I shall never forget). At night I visited night clubs or the refugees' settlements in company with my friend Maroussia Harin of the Near East Relief. Now that I come to think of it, she was the real reason why I had gone to Athens at all. I also went over to the Acropolis and other established "sights" but they seemed to me to be of small importance compared with the vast human problem presented by the refugees.

The political history of Greece during the past fifteen years has not been particularly inspiring. Within a short period the three principal Greek statesmen died. They were Venizelos, Papanastasiou and Michalopoulos and the poor quality of the remaining political leaders was largely responsible for the present almost totalitarian regime to which the last oppostion died away in 1938. A taste of dictatorship has done Greece no harm. She was suffering from an overdose of democratic politics and the present regime, by disposing of the nuisance of party intrigue, has enabled the nation to oppose a united front to Italian aggression. The love of the Greeks for the British is almost touching. It began, perhaps, with Lord Byron, but this sentimental connection is now reinforced by a genuine admiration for British power and institutions and, above all, for the British Navy. It is disturbing to hear Englishmen criticising the Greeks in the light of a few glimpses which they caught of them in Salonika twenty-five years ago, when Greece was in a state of hopeless political turmoil. It is to be hoped that the military, naval and air missions now in Greece are not made up of this sort of person.

* * * *

Can officers of the Army honestly be encouraged to learn Modern Greek? The answer is, emphatically "No." A knowledge of languages is, generally speaking, not at all conducive to

a successful military career but a knowledge of Greek is positively fatal. A friend of mine told me the other day that now that Greece had entered the war on our side, he was hourly expecting to be appointed as S.S.O. in Trivandrum, for he was, he believed, the only qualified interpreter in Modern Greek in the army. He doubted, however, whether he could be more inactive in Trivandrum than he was in his present appointment. "No matter," he added, "my new plan of concentrating on amateur dentistry, fretwork and polo will, I feel confident, at length obtain me the post in Middle Eastern Intelligence which twelve years' experience of the Middle East and the Balkans and a knowledge of half a dozen languages have so far failed to do." My friend showed, of course, most reprehensible flippancy and I am sure I hope that he was exaggerating.

Trivandrum has, however, its points, so I will proceed to make a few observations on how to learn Greek. Of books on Greek there is quite a number but many of them are quite unsuitable. The best which I have seen so far is "Modern Greek Grammar" by Petraris, translated from the German by Rouse (Otto Sauer Method). This is quite a safe book for the spoken and written langauge. "Greek Self-taught" in the Marlborough Series is a most useful little book for the more formal vocabulary and is particularly sound on commercial terms.

The best dictionaries are "Modern Greek Dictionary" by Jannaris (John Murray):—This is an English-Greek dictionary and an invaluable book for anyone visiting Greece; it distinguishes carefully between words which are purely colloquial, purely literal or which are used in both speaking and writing. An excellent Greek dictionary for those who know Italian is "Dizionario-Greco-Moderno-Italiano" by E. Brighenti (Hoepli, Milan).

The pronunciation of Greek is easy but the intonation staccato and peculiar, and must be learned from a native. Modern Greek is particularly weak in phonemes or sound values. The alphabet has no symbols capable of expressing the common sounds of 'b', 'd', 'sh', 'ch', 'j' (as in English or French) or 'h.' The letter Beta is now pronounced as 'v' and Delta as hard 'th.' Pronunciation is according to accent which is always written and follows the same rules as are taught in English public schools where pronunciation is according to quantity or, more often, taste. Why accents are taught in schools I have never been able to find out. There is no evidence to show that they were ever written in classical Greek, for all manuscripts or inscriptions dating from classical times are in

capitals without accents. Personally I feel sure that, when speaking, the Greeks always observed the tonic accent, but when singing or intoning poetry they reverted, as they do now, to quantity. Of one thing one can be certain: the Greeks did not pronounce their language like British public schoolboys.

The Romaic language is exceedingly rich in idioms which they have borrowed from many different countries. The language is spoken at a tremendous pace but is usually very clearly enunciated. A very peculiar and interesting feature is the use of the indeclinable relative "πού" "I saw the man whose horse you stole" becomes in Greek "I saw the man (πού) you stole his horse." The curious thing about this construction is that it is not found, so far as I can discover, in any other European language nor in classical Greek. It is, however, found in Arabic and Persian. It is not found in Turkish though Greeks speaking Turkish often use the Persian indeclinable relative "kih" exactly as though it were "πού".

THE PROBLEM OF FORCE TO SPACE

By 2nd-Lieut. M. E. Cooke

"The soldier may be excused if his mind is not settled.
He cannot be excused if it is set."

To say that war is in a transitional stage is to be trite. War always is. Yet in no other way is it possible to sum up the epochal changes of the last few years. Mechanisation has set in; and though the moment of full cycle may not yet have dawned, there can be little doubt that we are moving—probably by bounds as our text-books say—towards an army of machinery as complete as navy and air force, or indeed as civil life.

Nevertheless we must avoid precipitancy. It is no more true to say that the defeat of the French was due to the dive-bomber and the tank, than to assert that the victors of the last war were the Americans, the tank, the blockade, or Lord Northcliffe. Victory is always the result of many factors; a truism as sound to-day as when Tiglath Pileser conquered; little as the Assyrian chariot may resemble modern weapons. Military history has too often lost its reputation in the eager choice of "keys to victory," for to oscillate between extremes is to oscillate between defeats: the French views of the Offensive in 1870, 1914 and 1940 forming the classic example. Let us examine, therefore, weapons which are ephemeral in the light of problems which are eternal.

Let us begin with the problem of force to space. Here we come up against a distinction which, at least in its present sense, is new—that between extensive and intensive warfare. It had its origin in 1914. Then for the first time armies bestraddled—not a mere battlefield—but a whole theatre of war. There were no flanks.

It is probable that this will never happen again. It arose from three things: bulk, dispersion, the tactics of attack. The growth of population, transport and medicine had produced armies of phenomenal size; the bullets had spread them out; the then tactics of attack failed to penetrate; for to concentrate numbers was but to concentrate casualties. Concentration had, as it were developed a low boiling point. To cram more than a limited number of bodies on to a given frontage produced no increase in military effect. Artillery had a higher boiling point; but at Passchaendale even this was reached under the special conditions

there prevailing; but it was too unwieldy an instrument to do more than bite a front. It could never run it through.

But the boiling point of tank concentration is on a cavalry scale. If heavy assault A.F.V.s are used, machine-guns—and hence volume-fire—are useless against them. Aimed weapons, in an army whose main armament is the L.M.G. and the field gun, are of necessity few and these few, forced to disclose their position by skirmishers, are still further reduced by bomb and shell. In default of the all-too-rare obstacle, an attack in force must nearly always succeed.

Consider the infantry man's point of view. In France and Belgium he had the same front which, in 1918, with larger forces, had strained him to the limit. True it was to some extent militarily reduced by the Maginot Line; but against that must be set the problem of area defence. Area defence is all-round defence which, in plain terms, means four fronts for one. But area defence also means depth and the greater the depth the greater the area; thus the ratio of force to space is relatively reduced. The attacker's power to concentrate is, however, quite unaffected. Then we come to the question of how much depth. We used to solve this question by reference to the advancing power of infantry during the hours of daylight and to the possibility of their receiving artillery support. So depth remained comparatively small. But what depth is necessary to stop tank attack? The mobility and endurance of tanks are comparatively so vast that they may exceed all present calculations. The very idea of depth may have to yield to defence in zones as extensive as provinces.

So the position of infantry is this—deprived of volume-fire, they must defend four fronts to a depth incalculably swollen and against the weapon which is assaulting them they can employ only a fraction of their power. Compare the number of bullets which, over a given area in a given time, a division can hurl at infantry with that it can hurl at tanks of the heavy variety. It is armed against infantry with a broad sword, against tanks only with a penknife. It is true that the total number of such tanks may be few, but the numbers at the decisive point are likely to be overwhelmingly many.

Think also of effective range. Long-range artillery and aircraft should have little effect against an armoured column—not so against their supplies and special carrying trucks—so that not until within 500 yards of the position are they in real danger; and 500 yards at twelve miles per hour is 125 yards at three miles per

hour. Moreover, the A.F.V., however inaccurate its shooting, is in mass far from the helpless target offered by the advancing infantryman.

But while the infantry frontage is thus magnified his (the infantryman's) numbers are diminished. To say nothing of the time necessary to train these masses, the absence of a French bulk army as a pivot, the numbers required to maintain the fighting soldier are growing almost visibly. Even in 1918 the need of shipbuilding, shellmaking, etc., began to make itself felt on the drafts to the B.E.F., and to-day, with the requirements of the air force, of anti-parachute defence, of back area garrisons, of A.R.P., the infantryman has ceased to typify national service after the 1914 fashion. He has so many competitors that he is becoming a mere drop in the bucket.

But where is this army going to fight? In the East, on the plains of Poland, in North Africa? All these areas are spacious without limit. Even in England in the unlikely event of numerous landings at diverse points far apart, the total "front," in comparison with the available force, will be exceedingly large. It is useless, then, to explain defeats as due to "fantastic fronts." "Fantastic fronts" are now the "normal." Extensive warfare has come to stay. This implies that once again there are flanks and once again there are cavalry to take advantage of the fact. But can we, in the eighteenth-century style, rely on cavalry to guard them? It remains to be seen. Several factors have, however, to be considered.

On an eighteenth-century battlefield, most of which was under the direct gaze of the commanding generals, cavalry movements were usually tactical. Not so the wide sweeps and deep lunges of their modern successors. The rear, the communications, the bases, the industrial centres, the civilian population, are all projected on to the battlefield. So innumerable, therefore, are the targets and so great is the attacker's power of dispersion and reconcentration that the defending cavalry may well be thought to have a hopeless task, more especially in the probable event of their being inferior.

There is, of course, an answer. Bases, industrial centres and communications must all be fortified. They must. But how then are we to provide a field army? The resources of even a modern state are not illimitable. In the eighteenth century only frontier zones had to be protected, yet the drain was hard felt on the battlefield—and remember the side with the initiative need

worry far less about fortresses than his opponent—so that if in addition to passive and active air defence, to air attack, to the navy, to shipping, to agriculture, to industry, to supply, to road-building, to maintenance, to gas protection, to anti-parachute protection and all the rest of it we are to provide a large infantry garrison to each of the majority of our important towns—and the "frontage" of a large town is not measured in yards—our field army will just disappear.

And here is demonstrated the falsity of the anti-tank arguments. It is true that the exposed surface of the tank is large, that its carrying power is small, that its requirements are many. It is true, therefore, that under equal conditions the gun is more powerful than armour and far cheaper to produce. But all this is not in point. So long as infantry remain a striking force, so long must their major weapon be the machine-gun and the mortar, and for all except organisational purposes we may add artillery, for in their present form they are part of the infantry battle. Yet so long as these weapons are required on a lavish scale, so long must the anti-tank power of this arm be but a fraction of its potential and for so long in consequence must armour defeat gun at the decisive point. Were the infantry division (though perhaps the brigade may be the strategical formation of the future) armed primarily with anti-tank weapons, it would no doubt produce fortresses impregnable to present methods of attack; but in so doing it has ceased to be a sword and become a shield. Valuable as a shield may be, we must couple an arm which can win victory with one which suffices only to avoid defeat. Thus an increase in anti-tank weapons involves, in measure according to its degree, not merely the mending of establishments, but the gradual metamorphosis of field force into garrison, and while this is happening, the striking power will grow elsewhere.

Thus we are returning strategically to Marlborough, tactically to Belisarius, and the change, however delayed, is irresistible. The army of the near future—how near will depend upon the length of the present conflict and the foresight of the combatants—will consist of a punch of A.F.V.s striking from a guard of fortresses. It will be supplied partly by road, to a small extent by rail, to an increasing extent across country, and it will protect itself at rest after the manner of a hedgehog. It will roll itself into a ball and stick out spikes. The spikes will be the anti-tank guns of the motor troops.

Its vehicles will be of many orders. There will be motor-cars impressed from civilian service who, like the Confederate volunteers of Jeb Stuart, will smell out the enemy and harass his movements. There will be a heavier vehicle upon which these are based; so that they shall gain in confidence and openings be exploited by fighting power. There will be skirmishers to locate weaknesses in battle and to cover the tactical manœuvres of the weightier arm; there will be the "tank of the line," and the cavalry tank to exploit and to pursue success.

To all these must be added tanks that swim—to the nation which commands the sea these are an essential—a siege train of heavy cannon, of assault tanks and of weapons yet unborn. Supply and protection offer problems there is here no space to discuss, the air is overburdened with possibilities and question marks. Control and generalship, with their concomitants of orders, will be utterly changed in technique; even the use of gases must be revised.

Yet in all this welter of revolution the art of war will persist. Mobility, surprise and concentration remain the methods of victory. The eye for ground, the subtle stratagem, the logistical brain and, above all, the moral qualities of courage, aggressiveness and endurance make the soldier of to-morrow fellow to the soldiers of to-day and yesterday and grant that cord of unity which binds the aeons. Weapons change but the art of war rolls on; the great general none-the-less is he who blends the principles of war and fighting in their pristine proportions; for war is a side of humanity; and humanity, for all its diverse dresses, is as unchanging as the hills.

SPAIN

By Captain E. J. Tomson-Rye

The recent visit of Herr Himmler to Madrid, and the more recent meeting between Herr Hitler and General Franco on the Franco-Spanish border, must have caused many people to wonder what course Spain will adopt in the next few months. To some people the meeting may have been reminiscent of another meeting which took place between the ruler of Spain and another military dictator at Bayonne about a hundred years ago. That meeting heralded much bloodshed and fighting and a period of close co-operation between the Spanish people and ourselves, finally ending with the expulsion of the French and a number of victories which are still celebrated to-day in song and story throughout the country. The recent meetings may justify some remarks on the Spanish people, their temperament and their potential fighting value.

As a general rule, English people know little about Spain or the Spaniards, and are inclined to associate them with civil war and the bullfight. As a matter of fact, they are as unique a people as are the British themselves and possess certain outstanding characteristics which should be taken into account in any military operations in which they may be engaged either as friend or foe.

The blending of the Iberians with the Moors, who occupied the greater part of the country until the fifteenth century, produced a hardy and adventurous race of people with a great culture and power of artistic expression. The conquest of Mexico and Peru followed the expulsion of the Moors. Spanish soldiers occupied the Netherlands and Italy, and it was not until the defeat of the Armada off the coasts of Britain, and the loss of the battle of Rocroi some years later, that Spain ceased to be the paramount naval and military power in Europe.

The rest of the mighty Empire gradually disintegrated, but it has left its mark on the people of Spain. Foreigners may regard Spain as a second-class country, but every Spaniard likes to consider himself a "hidalgo" or nobleman, and he will resent it if not treated with the courtesy which he considers to be his due. El Cid, Ferdinand and Isabella, Philip II and the Duke of Wellington, who as a grandee of Spain and Duke of Cuidad

Rodrigo is regarded as a national hero, all go to make that innate racial pride which renders the Spaniard so touchy and easy to offend. As a corollary to this, all Spaniards without exception are individualists. Noblemen do not like to play second fiddle to anybody, and this is without doubt one of the reasons for the number of civil wars which have been waged in the country durin the past hundred years, and which are of almost annual occurrence in Mexico and South America. This leads on to another outstanding characteristic of the people; for if wars between nations are futile, wars between two parties of the same nation must be even more senseless, and there must be some reason to account for their frequency in Spain. The answer lies in the lack of compromise. Having once made up his mind no Spaniard will willingly give way or cede a point to his adversary.

History is full of examples of this national obstinacy. The Inquisition, the Carlist Wars, the loss of the American Colonies, and finally the recent Civil War are but a few examples which have spilt oceans of blood and prove only too clearly that a Spaniard would rather die than "agree with his adversary while he is in the way with him." If individualism and lack of compromise are the two outstanding characteristics in the make-up of the Spaniard there are still others which should be given consideration when dealing with him.

There is probably no race in the world which has a greater command of courtly language and pretty phrases. Although these generally mean nothing, an answer in the same phraseology is generally expected. The poverty of the English language on these occasions is most noticeable, and no Englishman can begin to understand Spaniards until he has learnt the idiom of the language. A working knowledge is not enough. No doubt Hitler was paid some very pretty compliments at the Spanish frontier. The future will tell if they can be taken seriously.

Procrastination and delay are rampant throughout the country. Englishmen who know Spain have frequently stated that the motto of the country is "manana," which means "tomorrow." The greatest lover of Spain must admit that this is true, and no doubt this failing coupled with the national dislike of taking orders has contributed greatly to the poor organizing abilities of the nation as a whole.

In this respect it is most noteworthy that in the recent Civil War both sides co-opted technical advisers and troops from other nations. When left to their own devices in Morocco disasters

were frequent. At Monte Arruit a Spanish force suffered the greatest reverse ever inflicted on European regular troops by tribesmen during the twentieth century. However, it is in the field of civilian industry that this lack of organizing ability and drive is most noticeable. Although Spain is rich in mineral wealth, before the Civil War there was hardly a mining concern that was not in the hands of foreigners. South America is predominantly Spanish, yet there is no Spanish-owned steamship line to connect Spain to her former colonies.

Coupled with the courtly manner and the leisured atmosphere which pervade Spain, there is an underlying strain of cruelty and barbarism. The saying "Scratch a Russian and you will find a Tartar," may be equally adapted to: "Scratch a Spaniard and you will find a Moor." The bullfight which is the national pastime is a bloodthirsty sport. Although it has an inner and artistic meaning which is unknown to English people it is undeniably crude, but in his heart of hearts every young Spaniard, no matter what his station in life, would like to be a bullfighter. There are tales of terrible cruelties to Frenchmen during the Peninsular War, and no doubt these were again perpetrated during the last Civil War. In Morocco Abd el Krim, the Moorish leader, made a long journey to surrender to the French rather than to the Spaniards, because, as any Spaniard will say with a smile and a significant gesture, "He knew we would cut his throat."

There are other factors which have all played their part in the make-up of modern Spain. The Church, illiteracy, poor communications, the lack of a middle class, a feudal system of land tenure and absentee landlords all have played their part, but the basic outline of the Spanish character has been portrayed in the preceding paragraphs. Briefly it may be summarised as intense individualism, unwillingness to compromise, poor organizing ability, mixed with a laughing indolence through which runs a strain of cruelty.

Militarily, Spain has a great tradition which has persisted in spite of many defeats. In the army the glories of the past are kept alive; regiments are named after famous victories, some of which were fought before Britain had an army at all. At one time the infantry of Spain was renowned throughout Europe, and even to-day the Spanish word for foot soldiers has been taken into use in nearly every European country.

No doubt the Civil War altered the Spanish army to a great extent, but the officers and men must be the same. Like all conscript armies, it consisted of a corps of officers who were posted to units for a tour of duty, in the same way as our naval officers move from ship to ship. Warrant officers and N.C.O.s were the same, and were originally conscripts who had decided to make the army their profession. A few of the junior N.C.O.s were intelligent conscripts, who held the rank for their term of service.

The artillery were considered to be the Corps d'élite and got the pick of the men, the cavalry and the infantry getting the leavings. The men nearly all came from country districts and were of a very fine physique, though the level of intelligence was very low, seventy per cent. being entirely illiterate. This, of course, had a very great effect on training, and by British standards the men were poorly trained. Equipment was also poor, and little effort was made to keep it at a high standard of repair or working order.

In spite of all this the Spanish soldier is not a man to be despised. The Civil War has shown that he is extremely brave; he is very frugal, and being used to a hard and rough life can make do on little and does not present the same administrative problem as the British soldier. The officers have all had war experience, not only in the Civil War but also in Morocco, and although they may lack technical ability and organizing power, there are no doubt plenty of potential allies who would be ready to help them.

In addition to the conscripted units Spain has also got a force of regular soldiers. This consists of the Foreign Legion, commonly known as "El Tercio," and the Moorish battalions known as "Regulares." The Foreign Legion is really a misnomer as it consists principally of Spaniards. The men enlist for a term of years for service in Morocco. They are well trained and disciplined, and imbued with a tremendous *esprit de corps*. Their officers are seconded from the army in Spain. The "Regulares" are similar to our own and the Italian native African units. The personnel are drawn to a great extent from those Moors who have in the past been such a thorn in the side of both France and Spain. They are considered to be of high fighting value. It was the existence of these forces which made the Civil War in Spain possible, as a great part of the early success of the Nationalists can be attributed to the fine fighting qualities of the Legion and the Moorish troops.

In any war in which they were fighting with allies the defects of the Spanish character would at once become apparent. During the Peninsular War Wellington found the Spanish generals and the Spanish authorities impossible to deal with. To-day it is doubtful if matters have improved. Their allies whoever they be, may put up-to-date weapons into the hands of the Spanish soldier, and help his officers to plan and organize battles, but they may find that an old and proud race does not take kindly to foreign domination.

THE ARMY AND CIVIL LIFE—A COMPARISON

By E. C. O.

As a civilian I used to sell steel and, although I was an unimportant employee of my firm, I was provided in my office with a Dictaphone into which I could breathe an odd letter or two or some routine report in the matter of a few minutes whenever I came in. Now this was provided not because it was an amusing toy but because of this fact: my firm paid me at a rate which worked out to some 6/- or 7/- per hour and, in order to be able to do this, it was necessary for me to bring in to them some £5 or £6 worth of business per hour. For every hour that I wasted inside the office, therefore, they were losing about this sum of money and it was cheaper to make use of the combination of a machine and a typist who was much more lowly paid. Moreover, it was much more efficient, for I could not have typed as well or as quickly as the typist, and I feel a certain amount of doubt that she would have been able to do my job, although that is by no means so certain.

As a contrast to this, I was walking down Whitehall one day in January last, when I saw through one of the windows of the War Office a Major, sitting before a large desk, very laboriously tapping out a letter on a typewriter. The moral is obvious. If you employ a man of highly trained executive ability, then every moment that he is not using that ability is wasted. It is extravagant and inefficient to employ a highly skilled man in tasks which can be accomplished by one of lesser (and therefore, cheaper) parts.

Let us look at other cases. Every company or squadron has a clerk who is drawn from its ranks. When, as often enough happens, he has to be transferred to other duties, another man must be brought in and trained, and a good deal of time and trouble is wasted. Now if we had squadron secretaries, who were not fighting men at all, they would be able to deal very much more quickly and capably with the routine, and Squadron Leaders, who are executive officers, would be released for other tasks which could only be undertaken by them with their special training. Under the squadron secretaries would work quartermaster-clerks who would also be non-combatants. At present, Army accounts are made clumsy and difficult because they are

over-simplified in order to enable ordinary soldiers to understand and work them. By employing specialist personnel, it would become possible to use the less obvious but very much more efficient and smooth-working system which is in use elsewhere.

In exactly the same way as it has to find its clerk, a squadron has to provide itself with cooks. These are trained soldiers who have done a short course in cookery. They are not specialists, and they, again, are subject to being frequently changed around. They work under the supervision of the Messing Officer, who is himself at the best only an amateur "dauber." Try to imagine the horror with which a large firm of caterers, such as J. Lyons & Co., would greet the suggestion of putting such people in charge of one of their branches. Before they will entrust even a small part of one of their kitchens to a man, a concern such as this make him spend three or four years learning his job, and we may be quite sure that they only adopt this course because they find that it is well repaid in greater efficiency and economy. Once again why not non-combatant specialist cooks, working under the supervision of a proper centralised department?

Is it not a waste to employ executive officers in administering justice? After all, they know as much about this as they do about cooking. The whole business of courts-martial could surely be done better, quicker and more economically by specialist Judge-Advocate-General-Department officials working on the lines of the Metropolitan Stipendiary Magistrates in London.

In opposition to all this, of course, it will be said that in the field, one cannot have a great cluster of non-combatants about, that clerks and cooks must be soldiers in order to carry on under service conditions, that they must be able, in the last resort, to defend themselves. True, but one has to weigh against this the greater efficiency of organisation and the consequent improvement in the powers of the actual fighting men, and to achieve this, I think it would be worth risking the possibility of the cooks and the clerks not being able to defend themselves on the very few occasions when they might be subject to attack.

In a similar way, among the actual fighting ranks, there is a lack of specialisation. Each man is made to train himself in the use of every weapon with which his unit is equipped—to know less and less about more and more until he knows very nearly nothing about anything, instead of to know more and more about less and less until he knows practically everything about almost nothing. The other two Services do not work on this system.

The Navy has its highly specialised and sharply divided branches. Both have schools where apprentices are trained for specialised employment. The German Army has specialised troops—assault troops, with special training, and special equipment and weapons. It does not seem necessary that the man who drives a tank should be a highly skilled gunner as well, or vice versa. Admittedly, all the crew should know sufficient about each other's work to "get back home" if any of them get killed, but this does not demand a very great amount of knowledge, and their greater efficiency as a crew of really highly trained specialists will very much decrease the chances of any of them getting killed in the first instance.

Highly trained personnel of this type (drawn from apprentice establishments) would not only improve the actual handling of the vehicles, but it would relieve the workshops of a large volume of small repairs which could be undertaken by really skilled drivers. Furthermore, with the introduction of larger guns into tanks and the placing of bigger weapons into the hands of the infantry, specialised training of a high order in gunnery is becoming more important. The supporting Arms have already, of course, a very considerable degree of specialisation. But here also this has not been carried to anything like the same degree as it has in industry, and until it has they cannot hope to achieve a comparable degree of efficiency.

Perhaps the most important aspect of this question, however, is that the man who offers himself to the recruiting office does so because he wants to become a soldier, and we may therefore assume that he will be of a type more suited for this than for being turned into a clerk or a cook or a storekeeper. When it is possible to enter the Army as a specialist non-combatant, we shall get more suitable men with more suitable qualifications to do these jobs.

The other great factor, which has so much assisted industrial development, is the system of free exchange—what we can summarise in the one word "competition." Upon this depend the laws of supply and demand, and the keynote of the system maybe said to be this: "The price at which I sell this article to this man is so much because I cannot get more for it from anyone else," or "The wage which I pay this man is so much because I cannot get another who can carry out the same work for less." By this system, only the most efficient survive, by it is the stimulus for enterprise given. Competition and the law of supply and demand keep the employer and the employee "up to scratch" because both of them know that they can survive only by putting out their maximum effort.

Now, of course, in the Army this factor is entirely absent. A branch of the Service can go on being inefficient for a long time because it is competing with no one, and it will not be ousted by a better because of this. In the same way, officers are still promoted more upon seniority than upon ability, although competitive examination has provided a limited answer. Rarely is the sustained maximum effort obtained from officers or men, because they have not the stimulus of knowing that failure to produce it will mean loss of employment or loss of money. Certainly, in wartime the competitive element is there, and the cost of failure or partial failure more grim. But then it is too late. The time at which it is necessary is whilst training in preparation for battle.

Another example is provided by mechanisation. Under the present system of repair and maintenance, it is better for a lazy driver if his vehicle is "off the road," for while it is he has only to wait around the L.A.D. and give what limited aid he can, instead of spending three or four hours a day driving and another two or three hours in maintenance. He has a much easier time of it and he loses nothing by it. Consequently, no matter how good the spirit in the unit, nor how strong the discipline, some vehicles spend a length of time under repair which would seem fantastic to a commercial vehicle owner.

But can this competitive spirit be introduced into military organization, and would it bring good results? I think it could. It would involve principles which are revolutionary, but nevertheless workable. For example, units could be given an efficiency grant for which they would qualify by undergoing annual examination and inspection in all their activities. This would be distributed as a bonus upon the pay of all officers and men within it. Manœuvres could be organised upon a competitive basis, and promotions based upon individual performance in them and upon records of the proficiency in training generally throughout the year, length of service not being essential for the attainment of any rank. Technical pay could be made dependent upon results—for example, a driver mechanic's trade pay would depend upon the number of hours his vehicle was on the road, or upon the number of hours driving he actually carried out.

This may sound far-fetched and impracticable, but problems of payment by results are worked out in very much more complex conditions than this in industry, and with considerable success. It would no doubt disturb the ordinary peacetime tranquillity of Army life, but we are at war and we must get results. Such

methods have been tried for many years in civil life, there is nothing at all new in any of them and they have got results and they have got results in a big way.

Long after Al Capone had done such great execution in Chicago with sawn-off shotguns and Tommy guns, the Army (whose interest in such matters might well be thought to be more justifiable) was still havering with experimental types of automatic weapons and training with "Great War" Lewis guns. Our enemy finally taught us the value of the submachine-gun. No doubt if field guns had any use other than in the hands of soldiers, our present types would have been outshadowed years ago by their non-military counterparts. As it is, the Army cheerfully, nay proudly, produces its 25-year-old cannon for service to-day. It would perhaps hardly be progressive to offer Economy as one of the advantages of payment by results in the Army.

OFFICERS' MESSES

BY "MOUSE"

In the last number of the Journal a scribe, signed "Balu," delivered a hot, persuasive, logical, cogent and powerful attack on the grand old Institution of the Officers' Mess with particular reference to the Indian Army Messes.

Always ready to absorb new views on the antiquated customs of the Indian Army, especially when expressed courageously, I have re-read "Balu's" criticisms with profound interest. If I say that—after mature consideration—I think he is talking through his hat, if I express my candid opinion that I have not read such entertaining drival in the *U. S. Journal* since I used to write for it—I feel I might give "Balu" a sore head.

But, seriously, I must say I disagree strongly with all the arguments produced in this article for the abolition of the Mess. I am, however, delighted to see that the Journal is prepared to allow unorthodox and revolutionary proposals to be aired in its somewhat air-conditioned pages, proposals which may offend the prestige, prick the conscience, or even quicken the intelligence of those who rule over us. That is what the Journal is for.

General de Gaulle has been sentenced to death by the Vichy Government because he advocated quicker and bigger mechanization of the French Armies long before the French went to war. Because his opinion was right and was proved in the eating of that horrible pudding, now being masticated by Petain, Gamelin & Co., this revolutionary soldier has been declared an outlaw by his country.

I don't think "Balu" deserves such ostracism for his idiotic article, which we might now examine.

In the first place "Balu," with the hit-or-miss complacency of all junior officers, places all the blame on the "senior" officer. "Our senior officer," he writes, "does not perhaps realise that it is his insistence of the spirit of "Mess life when I was young" that has helped to make the average officers' Mess the unpopular institution it is to-day." Later: "There are, however, still a number of the old school who consider that a very strict Mess discipline is the hall-mark of a good regiment."

I believe I could preach a sermon on either of these texts, but I, unfortunately at the moment, have got no available Church. The reader will see—and I hope understand sympathetically—the author's obsession with the bugbear of all Junior Officers—the "senior" officer. To most Second-Lieutenants their Majors are Hindu-God Ganeshas; to most Majors Brigadiers appear (quite wrongly in several cases) as Founts of Wisdom; to many Brigadiers a Military Secretary to a Governor (or even the Comptroller of the Viceroy's House) appears as an answer to his maidenly prayer.

This inferiority complex of junior officers towards those senior in rank is ridiculous and, both from my personal experience and from observation, I am quite convinced that it is their own fault. I (as a Subaltern) had a Colonel Blimp once to deal with; he was a Dictator, impervious to all argument and extremely violent in his opinions. We were a small mess on the Frontier (not half so big a mess—the Frontier, I mean—as it became since I left) and I then discovered the Great Secret of the Diplomacy of Housekeeping: always keep your powers wet and your curry powders dry. That is a simple principle of mess-dieting which any young Mess Secretary, worth his morning Salts, knows.

I admit I chafed a little at having to "click heels" each evening in the middle of an instructive article in "The Bystander" which I might be reading or in the middle of some unnecessary story which I might be telling; but, looking back, I don't think the exertion of rising from my chair to say good-evening to a Senior Officer in my battalion ever did me any harm, except, perhaps, when he offered me a drink which I accepted always on principle.

As regards mess uniform I agree with "Balu." It is an expensive, unbecoming and unnecessary item during war time; but I feel sure that every regiment entertaining their friends in their Mess would like to wear Service clothes, either patrol jackets with overalls or Khaki. For ordinary nights dinner jackets, a practice adopted now by most thinking battalions, should be easy to wear.

I disagree most emphatically with any slipshod idea of making a Mess into a "chummery," either from the economical or sartorial points of view. I remember at the end of the last war being ordered by my C. O. (I was a temporary Adjutant suffering from infantile paralysis) to administer a raspberry to the senior Subaltern (a delightful planter, aged 50, suffering from Gordon's or Booth's disease) for being improperly dressed at Mess last

Sunday night. I delivered the rebuke, feeling rather like a choir boy ticking off an Archdeacon, but the admonishment was received intelligently, and the Archdeacon patted me on the head and said "there there."

Later, several months later, I heard the story. The C. O. had given the concession on Thursday and Sunday nights for officers to dine in mess in ordinary clothes, lounge suits or dinner jackets. Gradually this concession became abused—officers appeared to think they could sit down to dinner on these two hot nights in casual garments— and the storm reached its peak when my planter-senior Subaltern-friend slipped into dinner one Sunday night in 1918 wearing tennis flannels! He admitted that he would never have done so if he had not seen others doing it before. He didn't know that this was the opportunity for which the C. O. was waiting (and for which I was the miserable secret weapon), to use this incident as an example to improve mess conduct. Thereafter our mess was a model; after a bath we appeared in appropriate and clean clothes, we were punctual, we didn't stand each other any drinks, we arose (with a chorus of silent blasphemy) to our feet when the C. O. and Second-in-Command came into the anteroom, we ate our food—the harmony amicably spoilt by side-references to the cook, the Mess Secretary, the C. O.'s latest "Training Memo," and speculation as to whether 2nd-Lieut. Snooks was on the tiles again to-night with the local body-snatcher, Miss Gwendoline Tool.

We were, in fact, a small party of men, composing our differences, examining each other, arguing with our "Seniors" with the greatest freedom (I was once threatened with arrest in the last War for telling my partner at Bridge that he was a damned fool) and making and moulding ourselves into a unit. It is impossible to know anybody until you live with them; but it is vitally important that, for a unit to bring its full power into war, the officers and men of that unit must be bound as closely as possible, knowing each other's strengths and weaknesses, knowing all the prejudices, beliefs, thoughts and character of each other.

You won't get that spirit in a boarding-house or in a chummery. You need a Mess. You need discipline among officers as among the rank and file. In a recent training pamphlet from the War Office I was impressed by its insistence on close-order drill parades, even when the officers and men were tired, as a method (proved and tried, for instance, by the Guards' Brigade

and the Baluch Regiment) to make a unit a solid, whole and responsive instrument in the hands of its C.O.

What the rank and file have to do is the same job exactly, as their officers must do. And, therefore, I cannot see why "Balu" ignores the messing arrangements of the bulk of the unit, which are organised and controlled on a regimental basis, for the economy and good of the whole. Why should the officers of the same unit be granted the special privilege of being permitted to mess about in chummeries and cafés?

At the witching hour of dinner-time, sounded by all the bugles, are no officers of a unit to be present? Are they all to disappear into their scattered bungalows, flats, cafés and what-nots just because the flag outside their Quarter-Guard has been lowered at early sunset?

The proposal just does not make sense to me.

For the economic point raised by "Balu," I have sympathy. Deep sympathy, as I have had bitter arguments, and listened to bitter discussions regarding the allocation of Mess subscriptions to unnecessary and expensive entertainments. But Mess economy is, and is meant to be, the concern of all officers, and the latest joined subaltern has the same right to express his opinion as his C.O. Quite rightly, the C.O. need not necessarily accept the majority opinion and may overrule it if necessary—but the good C.O. encourages free expression of opinions from his juniors and, if from his experience he has to disagree with them regarding the important questions of buying a ham for the next visit of the local and unpopular General, or changing "The Field" to "Life," he disregards his temporary unpopularity.

The bad C.O. (who, likes his ham and his "Life"), bows to the dictum of his flippant and extravagant subalterns and the impoverished have to pay their share. It is that mentality which makes a Mess unpopular with the ordinary hardworking decent regimental bloke—and makes it popular with all sorts of unnecessary visitors.

Napoleon, I think, said that "there is no such thing as a bad regiment; there is only a bad Colonel." I think this axiom might fairly be applied to Messes and Mess Presidents.

I would not have gone to the trouble of writing these personal opinions if I had not noticed "Balu's" article taken up in The "Statesman" of the 28th, October, in a second-heading article headed: "Scrap the Mess."

Quoting almost verbatim "Balu's" delightful attack on Mess customs The "Statesman" (who ought to know better), has this final paragraph to reinforce the Editor's ideas on this subject:

"Vast social changes have been wrought already by the war; more will surely come, and it is unlikely that the Army will be able to survive these stirring times unchanged. The Blimps who are too prone to say, "Mess life nowadays is not what it was when I was young," forgetting that their grandfathers probably said very much the same kind of thing, are passing, and with them perhaps one of the most distinctive traditions of a military career, the Regimental Mess. The infiltration, since the war, of large numbers of emergency-commission officers into regular units may hasten the process of dissolution. If this happens there is no need for crocodile tears. Too long has the Army remained aloof from common contact with the civilian population, and if the war makes new bonds of respect and sympathy between the two it will have done some good. For if the present struggle teaches anything it is that war to-day is the civilian's concern as much as the professional soldier's and any development which serves to remove old prejudices and give wider horizons will compensate for anything lost in trapping. The glorious traditions will endure whatever the outward changes."

It makes me angry. I may (Heaven help me) be an embryonic Blimp, but there are so many misleading statements in each sentence of this article which are not worth bothering about that I will concentrate on one only: "Too long has the Army remained aloof from common contact with the civilian population, etc. . . ." Is that true? What does "common contact" mean? Who are the "civilian population" who make "common contact" with British soldiers and officers in India?

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

I

In April, 1915, the Battalion had been three months or more in France but it had spent the time learning the routine of trench life. Although there had been a fair number of casualties and considerably more hard work performed by way of field fortifications, it had not up to that time experienced a large battle.

On this particular night it was obvious that a big battle had started. From reserve billets the battalion had marched at short notice up a refugee-thronged road and not long after nightfall had halted off the road near a farm house. The halt was a long one but the evening was warm and the ground was dry so that, in spite of certain misgivings as to what the next few hours were going to have in store for us, we enjoyed the rest. The night was lit by a half-moon but, owing to the amount of cloud, for the major part of the time it was fairly dark. The constant rise and fall of Very Lights on all sides added to the general visibility.

At about eleven o'clock the word was passed for section commanders. I being a corporal went off to hear the platoon commander's orders. It was to be a night attack on a wood which, from where we were, looked merely an indefinite smudge in the distance. It was a very simple plan. Companies were to be in single rank in line. Two companies were to be in the front line and two in the second line which was to be about fifty paces in rear. Behind our battalion was to come the Sixteenth Battalion who were also to be deployed into single rank. Direction was to be by the centre. Our company was to be in the front line. We were to take the wood, go through it and rally on the far side. That was about all there was to it. It was something of this sort that we had been expecting and it did not take long for me to explain the operation to my section.

In due course the battalion moved out to take up its starting line. The deployment was done very deliberately. When the advance started one's chief preoccupation was to keep some sort of dressing. All went uneventfully until a brushwood fence with a wire was reached that went at an angle across the front. This could not be crossed in absolute silence and an enemy party that was lying out somewhere just in front fired a few rounds and must have then fallen back. Once across the obstacle we quickened our pace but almost immediately after this a few Very Lights went

up from the edge of the wood, which was now about 100 yards away, and hell was loosened. The whole edge of the wood was lit by a line of flame and the noise was louder than anything I have ever heard before or since.

Rifles and machine-guns seemed to occupy every inch of the front. It just took one's breath away. Every one dropped on their bellies instinctively. I doubt if any training could have kept men advancing without pause in face of the shock of that fire. Everyone started firing. In my case my rifle jammed after five rounds which, by the way, was quite a common thing to happen with the rifles we had. This gave me time to think. I looked at the line of fire in front. Then at the forms of my comrades around me. Some of these were obviously dead. One of the latter I could recognise. He was an excellent fellow—an old regular soldier who had become a corporal in my platoon. The ground thudded with the strike of bullets. I can remember the sequence of thought. It was: "We can't stay here or we'll all be laid out. We can't go back. The only way out is to go forward. Why doesn't somebody realise this and get people going?" Then: "Perhaps the Officers are all laid out. Perhaps it is up to me to do something as I am a corporal." I had just decided and was getting on to my feet when from behind I could see a few figures from one of the rear lines advancing. This strengthened my resolution and my "Come on boys!" was effective enough to get the remainder of the men around me on to their feet and we continued the advance at the double and with a yell.

As we advanced, the fire in front miraculously lessened and soon we were at and across the German trench. A sound of movement in the undergrowth of the wood prevented us from halting and into the wood we followed. Here one got separated and, as one pressed on, being torn at by brambles and stumbling over low branches, each man called out, "Come on the Tenth!" or "Sixteenth!" as the case might be, to avoid being attacked by one's own side. Just inside the wood were some guns which, it turned out afterwards, the Bosch had captured from us that afternoon.

It was a fairly deep wood of about 150 yards and those of us who got through seemed very few. However, those who did had forgotten about the orders to halt at the far side of the wood and on we went, first across one field through a gate and on to the far side of the next field. This was a long one and by the time I got there I found myself with one or two others only and there was not a German in sight. I suddenly remembered the orders to

stay on the far edge of the wood and so we retraced our steps. Not unnaturally perhaps we were fired on by our own fellows when we neared the wood again.

Along by the wood a remarkable sight could be seen. Men were standing about in little groups chatting, lighting cigarettes, showing off German helmets and other trophies and recounting their experiences. Even I with my limited military experience knew that this was all wrong. I began to look around for someone to give orders about consolidation. I couldn't find anyone senior to myself, however, and, once again, feeling rather bored with this N.C.O. business and the responsibility entailed, I decided I had to do something about it. I decided to dig in on the line of the first hedge beyond the wood and collected about twenty men of both battalions and put them on to the task. We had only the hand entrenching implement or grubber but it was remarkable how soon we made some kind of cover and cleared away the grass and undergrowth at the bottom of the hedge to allow rifles to be fired through it. My military knowledge did not rise to the giddy heights of sending out a patrol in front to locate the enemy or even to the more elementary need for putting out a covering party.

By the time I was beginning to take a pride in the defences we were constructing, an officer arrived. He was no one I knew and it was too dark to see his badges but I imagined he was a Staff officer. Much to my disappointment he said that the line I had chosen was no good for it would be enfiladed from the German position on the left as soon as it was daylight. He then led us all away further right and got us to fill a gap in the line to the right of the original German trench we had taken. Here we dug in again and we had to work hard for it was just about daylight. The night attack was over.

Looking back, the pause that took place in front of the German line could not have been a very long one. The official history talks of it as being a momentary pause. However, it seemed a long time and next day one could see easily where it had been made. It was well marked by the line of bodies lying there. I think myself that it must have lasted for about thirty seconds at least, but that was a good deal too long. As soon as we did move on the Germans' resolution faded and they went. This proves that every second's delay meant the loss of more men. That night the battalion lost all but four of its officers and fifty per cent. of the men.

"KANUK."

II

I had forgotten it until, the other day, someone talked about area defence and tactical gaps.

The scene was near Hooge in the summer of 1915. We were due to relieve a famous Irish battalion in a part of the line which was new to us. I went up with the reconnaissance party. The guide took us up the shell-torn Menin Road which was easier going than the communication trench. We were at the apex of the salient, and star-shells and Very Lights were illuminating the night sky on all sides. A sudden concentration of "crumps" on the road forced us to take shelter in a culvert. I was looking for landmarks, and somehow two stuck in my memory. One was a typical blasted tree, the top half of the gaunt trunk torn down until it made a triangle with the ground, with one bare branch pointing up to the sky like a beckoning finger. The other was a whitish jumble of ruined wall and sandbags about 200 or 300 yards away, which was pointed out to me as a bit of the German front line. When the shelling died down, we moved off to the left into our own line.

The relief was delayed and it must have been two or three weeks later when I went up again, this time with a tactical advance party going up one day before the battalion. An Irish guide met us. My company commander and the guide led the party of some ten or so N.C.O.s and I brought up the rear. We moved along the Menin Road for a while and then got into the communication trench running more or less parallel on the left-hand side. The going was slower here and eventually we left the trench and moved forward in the open. It was a black night. Desultory machine gunning was going on in the distance but around us it was very quiet. Our advance was checked for a moment, and I think by the light of a star-shell, I saw the blasted tree with the beckoning finger a little way ahead on our right. We continued our advance, moving slowly over old trenches, shell-holes, derelict wire and so on. To my surprise, we did not strike off to the left but continued straight on. This surprised me and for the moment I thought the line might have changed. After another hundred yards or so, however, I began to get suspicious. I tugged at the man ahead of me, sent up an order to halt, and followed it by passing up a message up to the company commander to say that I thought we were going in the wrong direction and should have moved over to the left. A minute or so later came back a curt reply telling me, none too politely, to mind my own business. And on

we went—but slower. Fifty yards and a halt. Fifty yards and a halt. By this time I was getting alarmed, and sent up another message. No reply came back, but our progress got still slower. Finally we were halted and crouching on the ground, when back to me came a message "Guide has lost the way. Does any one know the way?" Several of the N.C.O.s had been up with me in the reconnaissance party, and I was surprised that none of them appeared to know where they were. I was thoroughly alarmed, as I had a suspicion that we had blundered through the Hun line. I whispered back, "About Turn! Follow me and no noise. We are behind the Hun line." I tried to steer a course straight back. After we had gone about fifty yards, however, a rocket went up followed by star-shells on our right, and a German machine-gun opened on us. It could not have been more than a hundred yards away. We lay doggo—not daring to move. After a minute or so, the machine-gun stopped and off we started again. We had not gone very far, however, when the Hun put up a regular Brocks' Benefit of Lights, the machine-gun opened up again and rifle fire came from close at hand on our right and from some distance away on the left. We dropped into a trench, which seemed to lead in the right direction. Just about then, up went some Very Lights from our own front line, and in the general illumination I saw momentarily, several hundred yards ahead and slightly on our right, something which leapt into my memory—a whitish jumble of sandbags and wall. I had my bearings—more or less. A whispered colloquy—"Yes! I know roughly where we are. But this trench probably leads into the Irish front line. They will know there are none of their people in it and they'll bomb us to hell if we get too near. And you know these bloomin' Irishmen. They've probably got some pretty scheme of their own invention for dealing with any Huns who try this line. No. It's nasty outside, but it's probably safer." And so out we got. And what a night! Both sides by this time thoroughly aroused. We were well in rear of the German front line. Their fire seemed to come from more or less the same positions, so we got back again into the trench and moved carefully forward some 200 or 300 yards. It wasn't easy; the trench was an old one, full of shell holes and odd wire and muck. When I judged we were about level with the whitish wall position, I got them out. There was a bit of subdued grumbling and some vile language in undertones. But I was feeling better. Danger lends variety to the vocabulary and I remember whispering hoarsely to a war-worn sergeant, something

to the effect of "For—'s sake, do as you are—well told; I didn't get you into this—mess, but I'll get you out." By this time the Irish were firing. Everything went high, of course. Several men were wounded sometime—I never quite knew when. It was a slow progress crawling to our own front line. A few of us went a bit ahead and shouted when we reached the wire. Our lurid language, I imagine, finally convinced the Irishmen that we were genuine, and they told us to move to our left a couple of hundred yards, and then they would guide us in. We did so. The German line was about 150 yards or so away. Ours was a slow and painful progress as the whole countryside by this time was thoroughly alarmed. I think one or two of the N.C.O.s were hit here, but we got them all in. Half an hour later I was squatting in the Irish trench outside their company commander's tiny dug-out with a double rum.

Irish company commander: "I'm damn sorry. Our C.S.M. was to have brought you up but he had another job and this man said he knew the way."

Irish guide: "I did, sorr, but it all looks quite different at night."

My company commander: "Why the hell didn't you stop us, Pieface, when you knew we were going wrong."

The rum burned in my throat and the thought burned in my brain—"It all looks quite different at night!"

DUFFER IN ASSAM

By John Helland

Pick up any reasonable atlas you like, look along the eastern border of Assam and there you will find the little Valley State of Manipur with its capital at Imphal. Only a few years ago, its people worshipped devils: to-day they are most untouchable Hindus.

The strip of country I speak of runs south past the Loktak Lake, that great swamp where the roar of the rising duck and geese is as the roar of a medium bomber: past the east of that lake to the tangled mass of hills that bar Assam from Tammu on the Burmah border. Your atlas should show you Tammu.

A smooth-cheeked subaltern of twenty-three summers, one John Griffin by name, just arrived in Imphal, led a small column of two hundred Gurkhas of the Assam Rifles south along the road from Imphal towards Tammu. The day was hot; the dust rose from the rough earthen track and sauntered across the green paddy fields; the string of six hundred Naga coolies chorused their one-to-four-note chant. To this magic rhythm the little force swung along its way.

At Thobal that evening John Griffin halted his men and bivouacked under the open sky by the muddy, deep-banked river, to wait the arrival of another column under a seasoned captain whose advice he sought.

That night, by a camp-fire whisky in hand, our romantic urchin listened to this advice, to the wisdom of age untinged with imagination:

"Now, look here. Chuck aside everything you've ever learnt in Mespot and start afresh. Fighting these primitive Kukis is quite simple, really. Put your flankers out like this:" He put matches on the ground; "in front of your column, like two horns, and move like that along the path. It's

slow, half a mile an hour, but sure. If you bump into a stockade across the path, the points of the horns will reach round the two flanks of the stockade, turn the enemy flanks and force him to clear out. That's all there is to it except to keep your eyes open for *panjis*. They're pointed bamboos hardened in the fire,

buried with an inch or two showing. They'll pierce the leather sole of your boot and they're often poisoned with aconite."

"What arms've the Kukis got?"

"Muzzle-loading tower muskets of about 1815, bows and arrows, spears and *dhaos*. Arrows are poisoned with aconite too. The *dhao's* the universal chopper of the country. Kukis are a sort of Nagas, but the trouble is their villages are scattered here and there all over the Naga Hills. They're an idle, naked, treacherous and unbelievably dirty crew."

Pause and puff, puff at his old black pipe, his sunburnt face and neck red in the firelight.

"The Kuki story is that God dared the three races to jump from one peak to the other. The Manipuri fell into the stream between; the Naga dropped a foot in it, but succeeded; the valiant Kuki jumped clear. The Manipuri's very clean; the Kuki never washes and is just lousy and proud of it."

"I s'pose you've killed a good many of them, haven't you?"

"I don't know. One never knows, for their pals take the wounded and their old guns off before you can get at 'em. One jolly seldom captures them. Well, well." A hearty yawn. "You'd better turn in now."

"Tell me. Do you go in for night work in this sort of fighting.?"

"No. It's too damn dangerous. Lose your way in these thick jungles and hills and get cut up. No, no. Don't try it. Good night!"

John peered across the moonlit fields to the hillock a mile away about which Grant had won his V. C. thirty years before, employing bluff and stratagem. He gazed at the black cardboard-like profile of the wild hills he was soon to enter and he pondered the advice he had been given.

Could he deceive his enemy like this? He supposed there must be some magic in those horns of flankers of which he, a recruit to the job, knew nothing. Grant had moved by night from Tammu to Thobal. Times had changed; it was "too damn dangerous" now.

He turned in.

At dawn the two columns parted, the one for home and rest in Imphal, the other for solitude, endeavour and the savage green hills.

That night John's column bivouacked at Pallel near the foot of the mountain barrier. The men rammed in a thick carpet of

panjis all about their camp to stop a rush, for only a few riflemen had .303 magazine rifles, the rest had the single-shot Martini, a brute of a thing that kicked one's shoulder off.

Darkness fell and the oppressive atmosphere of those pagan hills seeped out over the plain into the sleeping camp. John shivered with the foreboding of disaster, pulled himself together with an effort, groped for and regained his hatred for these grim head-hunters, lay long awake beneath the moon, and at last slept fitfully with his men. In the twilight of early morning, Gurkhas and laden Nagas stood ready to march.

"Devilish long column in single file on a hill," John thought. "Never mind: nothing'll happen to-day. Political said there was no enemy about here, all friendly villages. Odd sort of cuss that Bengali doctor baboo: white shirt, white dhoti, umbrella. Damn sight too fat, too. Calves that only a cow could take a pride in. He'll die on these hill paths. However, he's the only being I can talk English to for the next month or two."

"Move off!" he called to the Gurkha officer commanding his advanced guard.

Out went the flanking horns the Captain had spoken of, thirty men on each side of the path. In a few minutes the horns had entered the high, thick grass and the dense jungle at the foot of the hills. John, shotgun over his shoulder, followed the advanced guard; the rest of the column came behind him in single file. The silence compassed him about as he passed into the woody aisle on that narrow path. Very, very slowly the column mounted by the winding track. At a clearing a thousand feet up, the Column Commander looked back and saw his rearguard still on the plain two miles away. The column must have been nearly three miles long: three miles of flanks exposed to an enemy to hit where he liked, with only the baggage guards and a few pairs of men that he had, on his own, dispersed throughout the length of the column. The pairs had orders to halt just inside the edge of the jungle, off the path, on equal terms with their enemy.

His column stopped for a rest and he stood, leaning peacefully on his shotgun, looking back over the watery plain of Manipur, set as an emerald in the dark ferocity of its tumbled mountains. Bit by bit, as always to the exile, the tinkle of the little wind in the bamboos, the scutter of the partridge, faded from him; England and its sweet fields and hedgerows flowed over him in a heavy day-dream.

"Crash!" The echo splashed from hill to hill into the blue distance and back again.

He started round towards his advanced guards: his coolies looked up questioningly at him: the riflemen about him knelt up, weapons ready. A minute passed: a runner came from the front and knelt down by him to report. Three men had started up from a dense cane-brake in front of the flankers: Rifleman Chandradhoj had fired, but he was a small man and, facing up the hill, the kick of the Martini had bowled him over backwards. The spears had whistled over his head.

"Advance!"

Slowly again the column crept on and up, the jungle denser and denser, the path winding hither and thither through thick grass along the ridge. John was well up just behind his advanced guard commander. The path now cut along the side of a hill, across the spurs and into the re-entrants.

An hour dragged by, the flankers cutting their way with kukris through the close-matted cane, their whistles, like the cheep of birds in the forest, telling one to the other of his movements. Scalding sun: a light shower of rain on his bare arms: the scalding sun again: both his forearms in one huge water blister, literally boiled by the heat.

Twelve-bore under his arm, he stole round each corner with a section of riflemen before him. As he turned a sharp corner, there was a roar from the opposite spur two hundred yards ahead; great clouds of white smoke in the jungle; a buzzing about his head like bees. Uselessly he fired his choke bore high above the smoke. He heard, among the thunder that cast itself up and down the valley, the staccato belching of his flankers' Martinis ahead of him—another and another roar: greater and more clouds rolling out of the trees and over the path.

The whistles had ceased. Martinis answered muskets. Slugs hummed about him. What *was* happening? Why did no one report?

"Take your platoon up and help the advanced guard," he snapped at the nearest Gurkha N.C.O. "Send me news."

He started to go forward himself with the platoon, then remembered the miles of humanity behind him for which he was responsible. He staggered back between the thick trees: there was a roar in his ear: blinded with smoke he turned again. A flash of steel, a glimpse of red and he shot.

The fight raged before him but he could see nothing: again he turned and then behind he glimpsed the trees and the path; a leaping black figure or two; from the edge of the forest, the bark of muskets and more clouds of smoke. They were in among the coolies; those three miles of useless humanity spattered only too lightly with his Gurkhas. This was disaster: disaster at his first attempt. Disreputable disaster for which Assam was famous; he too had added his count.

He *must* see: he *must* get back control of the situation. Back, back down the three miles the fighting went. He hastened through the smoke, his gun at the ready. Again he fired at a shadow close-by: another flashed across the path and knocked him reeling against the bank. He ran on. The smoke was clearing: less firing: bunches of his men were kneeling by the path facing outwards to right and left, occasionally shooting. Here and there, a bleeding ruin marked his wounded.

At the head of the baggage column he saw the coolies' loads lying helter-skelter about the track and but a few cowering porters to be seen. The baggage was as good as gone. His column could move neither forward nor back.

Disaster . . . . defeat! Night and the headhunters.

His pairs of men in the jungle were still firing and he could see answering clouds of smoke: arrows hissed over but not a Kuki was to be seen on the path. That was one mercy. The day was lost but perhaps he could yet thrash the enemy in front of him so that they would keep away through the night. Once more he made upwards to the fight in front. The smoke hung heavy all about. He fell flat on his face over a soft form—a dead body. He caught hold of its white shirt and rolled it over on its back.

It was the doctor baboo—dead—no, not dead—asleep! He shook him. He was awake and alive but terrified to death, umbrella in hand.

"Get up and do yer job, damn you!"

"Sahib, I cannot; I am greatly afraid."

"Get up! There are wounded in front and behind. Get up!"

"Sahib, may I open my umbrella?"

John, perplexed, "Yes, you fool! Of course you can."

The pallid and trembling baboo sat up, opened his umbrella and held it above him. He picked up his instrument case and his pannier and walked swiftly forward along the path beneath his umbrella. John followed, too worried to smile, collected a dozen riflemen as he went, rounded the corner where he had first

been surprised and into the thick of the affair, the baboo ahead of him. Rusty slugs and arrows swished past like sea-spray, the musketry boomed about them; the Bengali doctor hurried on in front, knelt down by the path with his faithful umbrella and tended the stricken beneath its protection.

The advanced guard commander appeared from the gloom. He and John consulted as they crouched beneath a rocky bank.

"What's happened, Bahadur?"

"It's all right, Sahib. They've got a big stockade just ahead, but Hitman's platoon's got above them by now and they'll go soon. My men are stuck up against the stockade. Ground's sown with *panjis*."

All of a sudden the firing stopped.

"They've gone. Go back, Sahib, and collect those cursed coolies," Bahadur said unconcernedly. "They always bolt when there's a fight. That doctor's a brave man, isn't he? There aren't many people who'd sit out in the open like that being potted at from a few yards."

"Yes. He's got guts," John answered.

He rose and strode back along the path till he came once more to the baggage guard. Here and there Naga coolies were being driven by his men on to the path from out of the woods. He hailed the Gurkha officer commanding his baggage guard. Amar Sing doubled up to him.

"That's the worst attack we've had on the baggage that I know of," he remarked. "Yes, Sahib, we'll get most of the coolies back in about an hour. It was those pairs of men in the jungle who saved us. The enemy bumped them without seeing them and their attack broke up. I've pushed some more pairs in now all the way down the column."

The dresser was attending to the wounded. The doctor baboo came back for stretchers, his umbrella still open above him.

"All right?"

"Yes, Sir: they are none so badly wounded in front. I will now attend to these."

John went forward to the now empty stockade. His men had torn the great logs out from about their path and were pouring through the gap to meet their flanking platoon. Bahadur was getting his flankers out again ready to start the advance. Beyond a scrap or two of rag and a little cooked rice, the enemy

had left no traces; there were no signs of Kuki wounded, no guns. They might never have been there that day. It was just as the captain had said. John cursed himself for fighting his battle so badly.

"What's the time, Sahib?" Bahadur asked. "It'll be dark at seven; we've three miles to go."

For the first time the Column Commander looked at his watch. Half-past three! A six-hour trek before him! No water till he got to Tengnopal; thirsty men, rebellious and thirsty Naga coolies. His heart stopped beating as he heard another shot from far down the baggage column. Then two more. He walked back as fast as he could go. Where was Voya, his Naga interpreter? Fled, he supposed.

Where's Voya?" he shouted to a Gurkha.

The man pointed to a thick patch of high yellow grass at the edge of the jungle.

"Get up!" the Gurkha called.

Voya's pale face appeared above the grass where he had hidden, his neck still blowing in and out with fear, like the gills of a fish. John seized his arm and hustled the unwilling Naga along with him. Everyone seemed so self-possessed and quiet, even the coolies who were now being made to take up their loads again. It seemed that only he was worried. He felt ashamed of his inexperience and inefficiency. The baggage commander met him.

"All ready, Sahib, Two coolies killed by *dhaos*. I've given their loads to others. We've got five wounded men on the stretchers there. Doctor baboo's with them."

In amazement at the comparatively harmless outcome of the trouble, John passed the word up the column to advance, and soon the unwieldy centipede was on its way again. He stalked up to the front and urged on his advanced guard. There was an occasional shot from the forest ahead. Another wounded man claimed attention. Time was flowing by: the sun was declining. The situation was getting desperate. At this pace he could never reach Tengnopal before blind night with all its dangers fell upon him and his struggling column.

He turned a corner in the forest, to be met by three puffs of smoke and a hail of slugs from the spur ahead and above him. Three more puffs and a Gurkha sank beside him with a cough. The doctor, with his umbrella, knelt busily beside the man. A sudden fury took possession of John. This was nonsense, this fatuous flanker business; what a criminal fool was that unimagin-

ative captain who had advised him. He spoke to the Gurkha officer beside him.

"Take No. 2 Platoon up the hill; make a detour and come down on top of that spur and clear it," he ordered. "Quick's hell! I'll call in those wretched flankers so's they don't shoot you."

The platoon crashed off up the hill and was lost. John doubled forward to Bahadur and told him to close his flankers under cover ready to climb the hill and clear the next spur, then called up a third platoon and kept it ready to follow Bahadur to the third spur.

In ten minutes he saw No. 2 Platoon Commander standing on the road ahead, and jogged forward to meet him with the two platoons at his heels. He then sent the three platoons off in a covey up the hill to drop down and clear the next three spurs and so he went on, the advance now going faster and faster as the men got used to this odd way of doing things. Suddenly, half-a-dozen loud Martini reports. Three minutes later a knot of Gurkhas on the path a quarter of a mile ahead signalling him to advance. He and his men ran on. Bahadur met him.

"We came in behind the stockade and got a couple before they could hop it. Here are their guns, Sahib."

He held them up; two blackened blunderbusses of a hundred years gone by.

Half-an-hour before dusk John rounded a corner and saw a thread of water tumbling down the cliff into a shallow pool.

"Tengnopal," said Voya.

"Thank God!" said John.

The long column of porters came up at the trot, anxious to get to safety before dark. John sat by the track and watched them pouring in on to the flat space on the spur near the water.

Already Gurkhas and Nagas were at it; trees were falling right and left; trenches were being dug out and the butts of the great twelve-foot logs were being forced into them and packed tight. In twenty minutes the upper wall of his four-walled stockade stood intact with a mat of *panjis* outside it. He marvelled at the speed of the thing. There is no woodsman to touch the Naga.

As the sun fell behind the jagged western hills, the northern wall stood firm in position. Hurriedly, abatis of thick branches were placed to close the other two sides, piquets were called in and the noisy column settled to cook and chat and rest. The musical Aoh coolies struck up "Onward Christian Soldiers" as a tribute to their high civilisation and to their missionary teacher.

The subaltern sat down on the stretcher that did for bed, poured himself out a glass of beer and stared across the deep, black valley into the red west. He was tired: his nerves were frayed: he had lost a fight and, in an hour or two, one of his wounded would die for certain. All he had were two Kuki guns, poor enough trophies when one came to look at them at close quarters. The captain had said that one never got them, so he'd been a little bit lucky. But perhaps it wasn't all luck. He'd done things a bit differently in order to get them. His thoughts wandered off into the future. He'd got three days up in Tengnopal in order to finish the stockade. On Monday he'd leave Bahadur and his platoon there as a garrison, march back to Pallel that day, and then into the hills near Shuganu. He rebelled against another long, fruitless, wasteful fight. He'd found one simple way of turning the tables on the enemy. There *must* be others. A germ of an idea came to him. Lonely night drew in upon him. The beaten warrior ate little, lay awake long and at last slept deeply.

A loud boom rushed in upon his senses. He jumped from his blankets. It was dawn. What now?

He looked up at a huge belch of grey smoke, stealing through the trees three hundred feet above his camp.

"Take your platoon up and drive them off that ridge," he shouted to a Gurkha officer.

In five minutes they were off. In twenty minutes a runner came back with an evil-smelling blackened tube of bamboo, strapped tight with *mithun* hide, bound with *mithun*-hide thongs. It was a female bamboo of about three inches calibre with the base-piece reinforced with the knot of a male bamboo. And it stank to heaven. It was a Kuki cannon; filled with gunpowder, it had been touched off with a long, dry, smouldering vine by a No. 1 who lay under cover behind another tree in case the cannon burst. John strolled off with his orderly up the hill, to look at the gun position.

"Surprised again," he thought. "I ought to have had that damn thing and its gun-team before ever they fired it off. However, one can't work at night hereabouts. That captain-man said so. But perhaps. . . well, I don't care. As well be hung for a sheep as a lamb. We've been beaten anyhow."

Back in the stockade he sent for his Naga interpreter.

"Voya," he said, "the column marches from here at dawn on Monday. You can tell every Naga and Kuki you see round here

to let the enemy know that I'll have my revenge that day as I pass my column back along the track I've come up."

"Right, Sahib," and Voya shouted the news to two friendly Naga wayfares who were watering at the spring.

Ten minutes later Lieutenant John Griffin sent for his Gurkha officers and spoke to them in a secluded place.

"Tell the men and the coolies that we march for Pallel on Monday. But keep what I'm going to tell you now to yourselves. This is how we march. You, Gamar Singh, will take three platoons off after dark on Sunday night through the forest above the path. You will examine each spur and whenever you find a new stockade facing this way, you'll plant an ambush above it. You will yourself go as far as the fork of the path to Aihang village, where one drops down to Pallel. You will set an ambush there, but you will let all enemy pass through up to about two hours after dawn, for I want the enemy to go right through to man the new stockades to oppose us. There they'll be smashed up by the ambushes you'll have dropped at those places. I will bring the column on from here, leaving at two hours after dawn on Monday. All right?"

"Yes, Sahib. It will be done."

On Sunday evening the three platoons were at work cutting trees in the forest and, at dusk, collected concealed in a hollow. From then till the next day John knew no more of them. That night he slept not at all. He had sent men out on the dangerous and impossible; the old captain had said so.

At 4 a.m. he drank his cup of tea in the dark; the coolies and the one remaining platoon of the column got ready for the day's march. They stood about wondering why their commander sat so long over his breakfast. The sun came up and at seven o'clock he said "Good-bye" to Bahadur whom he was to leave with his platoon to garrison Tengnopal post. In broad daylight he marched at a round three miles an hour with no flankers, no protection except the occasional pair of men as a minute piquet just inside the jungle. As he set out he heard intermittent firing all along down the seven miles to Pallel, echoing across the valleys and on to the hills. Suddenly it stopped.

What a fool he'd been. There was a fight going on. His men must have been caught in the jungle by these wily devils. This was the end. He'd only forty men with him and his three

miles of coolies. He set his teeth for the worst. He took hold of himself to keep from running on ahead with his escort to go to Gamar Singh's help. The suspense was unbearable.

Suddenly he came on a stockade, its logs by the path torn away and thrown down. As he jumped through the gap, pistol in hand, he saw a dead Kuki sprawling by the pathside. Another stockade with a hole torn in it and another and another. Then, at last, five miles from camp, he all at once bumped into Gamar Singh standing with his back to him on the track.

"Thank God!" he burst out. "What's happened? Where are your men?"

The stolid Gurkha slowly related the story to his tantalised master. He had got into position and the enemy had come. Almost unwillingly the tale seemed to come out; it came so deliberately.

Then, "I've got some Kuki guns."

"Where are they?" impatiently.

The Gurkha officer walked steadily ahead of John to a little clearing. There, John looked on a scene he would never forget. A platoon of Gurkhas sitting idly about in the grass. Near them half-a-dozen Kukis, wrists tied with pullthroughs behind their backs. Close by, twenty odd Kuki guns lying dressed by the right on the grass.

"You. . . you got these?"he stammered.

"Yes. I call this fighting. I've had no casualties. That flanker game's just playing with a tiger for fun."

John stood and stared, too confused to speak.

"Come on! You and your men are tired. Let's get to Pallel," he blurted out at last.

A bare hour down the hill as fast as they could march, picking up successful and disappointed ambushes as they went. At ten o'clock they approached Pallel to see the camp already occupied by another column. Gamar Singh looked through his field-glasses at the scene just below. "It's the captain's column. I suppose he's brought out some more ration for our trip round by Shuganu." He grinned. "Usually a Gurkha officer comes out with the rations, but the colonel knows you're new so I suppose he's sent him out to see how we've got on."

John Griffin walked slowly into Pallel, shotgun over his shoulder. He felt abashed, resentful and humble: he'd lost a small fight and won a big one. He knew his captured guns and prisoners would have gone on into camp: that the captain would

have seen them and would have been surprised, perhaps envious. He hung back ostensibly to see his rearguard march in. At last he entered the compound of the one little thatched hut which did for resthouse and for everything else. His mentor rose and greeted him.

"Well, how d'you get on?"

"Oh, all right. Had a rotten time going and lost eight men and two coolies. One of my men died at Tengnopal. Better coming back."

"Never mind, old boy. Come and have some breakfast. How'd you get those prisoners and guns? Been disarming friendlies?"

"No," John replied, "they're enemy prisoners and enemy guns all right."

"Well done! The biggest single haul by far that we've had in this show. There's nothing like that flanker system. I told you it was the safest and best way to move and fight in these parts. We all do it now. I don't suppose the Kukis round here are used to it.

The captain drew the horns on the table-cloth with his fork in deep satisfaction. John gulped down his rage, looked hard at his cup and poured himself out some tea, vowing that he'd see himself to blazes before he ever tried again to move or to fight with those ill-starred horns.

"I—I think we ought to try a bit of night work," he ventured feebly.

"No. Leave that alone. We don't want any of these Assam disasters. We've avoided them so far," came the firm answer.

THE SORROWS OF MULLA KURBAN ALI

By Mirza Sayyid Muhammad Ali Khan Jamalzadeh

[*Translated from the Persian by G. E. W.*]

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

It will, of course, be realized by the intelligent reader that many salutary changes have taken place in Iran since Jamalzadeh's book was written. The deeply poetical and mystical nature of the Iranians has, however, changed less than is, perhaps, popularly supposed.

My name? Kurban Ali, your humble servant. What do I do for a living? Unworthy though I be, I am one who narrates the the death of the Prince of Martyrs. My age? God, He alone knoweth. Should I ever return to Sehdeh by Isfahan which is my native place, my Father (may God grant him His abounding mercy) has written with his own hand in the flyleaf of the "zád ul muád" the minute, hour and day of my entry into the world and—but my worthless brother has no doubt by this time sold this too ten times over and spent the money in riotous living. Thou, O God, shalt judge him, the cruel one. However, one way and another I must be fifty years of age. Ah! How swiftly does time pass! Verily, more swiftly than an Arab steed. Look not on my white beard. May God darken the face of the earth when grief and sorrow turn white the blackness of my eye. Ah, how men change! There was a time when men were Moslems and feared God. Now, unbelief has taken possession of the earth. Men cut off the beard given them by God and make themselves in the likeness of women and women wear moustaches to make themselves look like men. Very well, and may not that moustachioed woman who on the Judgment Day shall, from the roofs hurl pestles at the head of the imams (may they be blessed!) be either one of these beardless men with curled moustaches or one of those moustachioed strumpets, may God remove their spawn from the earth. No one remembers now the day when a royal maund of coal-dust could be bought for thirty-five shahis. By the two severed hands of 'Abbas I can well recall the time when a royal maund of the finest bread could be bought for seven shahis. A man with four wives and children who earned fifteen krans or two tomans a month could live like a king. O God! Be Thou merciful to Thy servants. Ah, let the cord of this my shrivelled neck be severed! Oh God! How long

must I stay in this life? Let me die and be at rest. But Thy servant is ungrateful and no servant of thine. O God! Thanks be to God! Thanks be to God a myriad times. Thanks for what Thou hast given and for what Thou hast withheld.

Well, to resume, I returned from my journey to Meshed, the shrine of the venerable Riza, whither I had taken the body of my dead father. When I arrived in Teheran, my money was all exhausted and I was therefore obliged to remain there and took service with an Isfahani "rozakhan." Gradually I began to take up "rozakhani" myself and as I had, by the grace of the Prince of Martyrs, a rich voice, I made brilliant progress. My master in due course died and I took to myself his wife who, besides modesty and chastity, possessed also a house and some slight means. For twenty whole years I gained a livelihood through the Prince of Martyrs. Some weeks I gave as many as ten or fifteen recitals. It is true, I had had no proper education but, by the bounty of the Al-i'Abba, I had a good memory and wit. I remembered an episode as soon as I had heard it once or twice and as time went on I acquired great proficiency in working episodes up to a climax, in anticlimaxes, in prayer and "fatihas,"* and on such occasions my congregations were moved to no small degree. There was hardly a house where as a result of my lugubrious recitals the noise of weeping was not heard at least once a year.

During Muharram one house in twenty used to raise its awning. Nowadays what has the most prominence is the newspaper which has a wider circulation than the godless wickedness of Satan. . . . But I am digressing from my subject and I have bored you with my rambling. You were asking me how I came to be here in prison and why they have put chains about my withered neck and fetters on this foot, would to God it were stepping towards Hades. It is a long, long story and I fear lest it may be the cause of wearying you. No? Really not? Very well. If you really desire, what harm is there in telling it?

When I had been a rozakhan for some years there came to live in our part of the town a cloth-merchant who was quite the most inoffensive person in the whole quarter. No one had ever heard Haji raise his voice above the normal pitch. Several times on Tuesday evenings, which was the day when the quarter received its water, I chanced to exchange a few words with Haji and it became known to me that he was a pious and God-fearing man. Early in the morning he said his prayers, donned his cloak and

* Prayers said at funerals.

went off to his shop. In the afternoon, he cleared up the shop, bought his bread, pulled his cloak over his head and, again saying his prayers, went home. From the time he left home in the morning until his return in the evening the door of his house remained closed. On Thursday evenings Haji again put on his cloak and went off on foot to the shrine of 'Abdul Azim.' By midnight or early morning he returned. He had his key, opened the door and entered. Before noon on Friday, he went to the baths after which he went straight off shopping and then returned home. And no one had ever heard proceeding from his house the sound of revelry or drinking or of wrangling and dispute. Yet all knew that Haji was married and had a family, though it is true that the latter consisted only of one daughter. Now it so befell that one day this daughter got ill. Haji took a vow that if his daughter recovered he would engage a rozakhan and for five months, in the name of the five members of the Family of the Cloak, he would hold a rozakhani in his house. And by the blessing of Abdullah, the son of Hussain, his daughter was cured and as we were his neighbours Haji one day made me undertake to go on Thursday evenings to his house and there narrate The Tragedy.

It was, as I remember clearly, the third week. I had learnt for the first time a fine roza of the marriage of Qassim. Softly and fluently I recited it and then said the prayers for the dead, for the fulfilling of our needs and for the kissing of the threshold of the Holy Shrines. After I had taken tea and smoked a pipe I rose to leave when I heard a pleasant voice behind me which somehow set me all atrembling. "Your Reverence," the voice said.

I turned and saw a figure in a prayer veil and a hand held out to me with a few krans in it. I realized that this was the money for three recitals and that Haji, for luck, had sent his daughter to hand it to me, the Zakir-esh-Shuheda. I held out my hand to take the money. It was trembling strangely. The two krans slipped from my grasp and went rolling towards the courtyard and the garden. The girl bent down. Still stooping, she went after the money to pick it up. All of a sudden her veil caught in a spray of deep red roses and fell away, leaving her head uncovered. She cried out "Woe is me!" and, as she wore no cap and her curls were loose, she tried desperately with her two hands to hide from shame the blossoming fairness of her face. It was as if my eyes had been dazzled by the sun. My heart began to beat furiously. Without waiting for the money I dashed from the house and, once outside, I leant against the wall, faint with

wonder. I stood there for a space in dire distress. At last, by the mercy of my Lord Hussain, I felt better and was able to walk. It was Thursday evening, I had several more recitals arranged and the sun was scarcely set but I was too upset and I went straight home. My wife (May she be united with fair Fatimeh—she was a wife without equal!) saw my condition and said, "You have caught a chill and I must get you some hot herb tea at once."

It was of no avail. I know not why, but my thoughts kept flying to Haji's house, to the rose-tree and to those waving curls.

Well, I know that this was nothing but the whispering of thrice-accursed Satan who would lead astray the thoughts of a servant of Hussain and, on this blessed Thursday night, would banish from the hearts of the disciples of Ali, all thought of his martyred son. Yet, however much I called down the wrath of God on Satan's head, all was useless.

"Do you know Haji, the cloth-merchant's wife?" I asked my wife (May the Lord make her of the company of the Noblest of Women! I never saw her like).

"Two or three months ago," she said, "When Haji received news that his brother had died in Kerbela, he held a "fatiha" and I went in neighbourly fashion to offer my condolences. That was the first time I saw Haji's wife. I have seen her once since at the baths.

"What is his daughter like?" I asked.

"What next?" said my wife in astonishment, "What business is it of yours? How can it affect you whether I know Haji's wife and daughter or not? You, who neglect your recitals and come loafing round the house and plaguing me."

"Wife," I said, "You know as well as I that Haji has engaged me for five months on account of his daughter's recovery. I want to know how old she is, so that I may know whether to take Sughra or Sakineh or Shahrbanu or the Marriage of Kassim as the subject of my recitals."

"The Marriage of Kassim will be the best, then," said my wife, "for she must be sixteen and, Mashallah, Mashallah, she is as fair as a moon that shines in Haji's house."

"It matters nothing to me," I replied, "Whether she is a moon or the smallest star." And again the rose-tree and those wanton locks appeared before my eyes and a bitter sigh came from the bottom of my heart.

My wife (God bless her! She was pure and chaste from head to foot) noticed how I was affected and she was not pleased. She

hurried through her prayers, ate our humble repast of bread, cheese and grapes, blew all round her, and, muttering a charm against snakes and scorpions, went to sleep. But no sleep came to me, for my heart was in a turmoil.

It was a still moonlight night. Two cats had been squalling on the roof the whole evening and showed no signs of stopping. My wife (May she find rest with Fatimeh, the Chaste and Loyal Spouse! She was the purest of all women), just as she was dropping off to sleep and without opening her eyes, muttered: "Spring's here and the cats are about again." This mention of the spring took my thoughts again to the rose-bush and those rebellious curls and this time, God forgive me, I recalled that beneath those curls had been a face which blushed like the petals of that same rose-tree which out of jealousy had torn the veil from the maiden's head and had driven a thorn of grief into my heart. That heart now began to beat so violently that I feared the noise would arouse my wife to pour abuse on me (May she be united with Fatimeh! She was without peer or equal). But no, the day's toil and her household work had tired her out and she was oblivious of everything. Not even a house full of drums could have awoken her.

In a word, I could not sleep and not even the Taubeh verse from the Quran, nor the prayer for sleep which I learned in my childhood could bring sleep to me. I was at my wit's end and at last I got out of bed, slipped on a shirt and a pair of loose trousers and with bare head and feet went up the stairs on to the roof. The neighbours were wrapped in slumber and no sound issued from them. The earth was bathed in moonlight and the walls and roofs looked as if they had been silvered over and shone out, white as milk. The dome of the Shah Mosque stood out in the distance like an egg, and the minarets seemed like two fingers which grasped it. One of the two cats slipped between my feet and disappeared. Every now and then, from afar off, came the gentle rustle of a breeze. A tipsy reveller came round the corner of the street and I remember how he bawled out in his raucous voice:

"It's a moonlight night and the clouds are flying.
"Gather round, lads, and drink again!"

The world seemed enchanted and a feeling of well-being began to steal over me when suddenly a cry of "O God hearken unto me, put an end to my musings." At this sound of the watchman's voice a small child in one of the neighbouring houses awoke

and began to cry and babble. I could hear the voice of its mother now crooning and cajoling, now scolding and abusing. As if to complete the tale, the dogs in the little bazaar below came to life and raised an endless storm of howling and barking. Aroused from my reverie, I saw that I was hidden behind a broken-down eave on the roof of Haji's house and that by looking through the gutter-hole I was, as it were, inside a stranger's abode. My eyes were staring into a room and on to a white bed, where lay a sleeping maiden, her tumbled locks lying in disarray on the pillow. I remember how I softly whispered a verse I was wont to use with much effect in my recitals:

"Thine eyes, enjoying sleep denied to all
"Mankind for love of thee, hold me in thrall."

I stood amazed at my madness and breathed some prayers for forgiveness. Then, just as I was, in shirt and trousers and with bare head and feet I passed through the beams and rafters and returned to my own house. I found my poor wife running hither and thither and crying out: "Mulla, Mulla, what has befallen you?"

"You foolish woman," I said (May Hussein, the fifth of the Family of the Cloak, intercede for her! She was a very jewel of a woman) "What is wrong with you that you wake the neighbours with your shrieks? I only went up to the roof to say my night prayer in the moonlight and to return thanks to God."

"You and your night prayer!" she muttered. She got into bed, drew the quilt over her head and uttered not another sound. I too went to my couch thinking that I might be able to sleep, but once again the image of that white bed came to my mind, the rose-tree, those waving curls, that flowerlike face and again I was rent with excitement.

Well, to cut a long story short, I could no longer bring myself to leave the house. My health began rapidly to leave me. My wife grew ill with jealousy. Gradually we sold all our belongings. Of all my weekly engagements for recitals the only one I kept on was the one in Haji's house and that only because it was so near. My wife's illness became worse and worse and early one morning she left this transitory life for the world to come and thus all her sorrow and anger ended. God forgive her, she was without a peer! From that day, I was alone—quite, quite alone.

When nothing whatever was left of my furniture and household effects I mortgaged half my house to the corn chandler of the quarter—a man to outward appearances holy and pious, but who

was a hypocrite whose idea of interest was one kran and ten shahis in the toman though he was commonly believed to be a reputable dealer in barley and wheat. By this mortgage I received three hundred tomans which paid my debts to the doctor, the chemist and the undertaker. With what was left over I eked out a precarious existence.

One night I was lying in my room in the depths of despair, and was saying, by chance, the verse,

"By day my shadow is my only friend
"And that, too, fails me at the dark day's end."

And in very truth, I wept as I thought of my loneliness when suddenly there was a great knocking at the door. I was much surprised and wondered who could have come to see me at that late hour of night. I dried my eyes and went to the door to find Haji standing there.

"Your Reverence," he said, "Gauhar Khanum's illness has returned and her mother is distraught. I have come to ask if you will come to-night to our house and pray. Perhaps at the sound of your voice God will again cure her." I agreed to go and, closing the door, made to go back to my room but my strength failed me and I sank sobbing on to the stairs. I turned my face to the dark sky and began in spite of myself to pour forth a stream of hate and abuse. Many blasphemous words were on my tongue (would I had been dumb!), each one of which merited a thousand years of hell-fire. God knows it was not my fault; anyone in such a case would have turned to heresy.

I remember how these words came to my lips: "O Thou, Whose existence I can neither affirm nor deny, Who hast created these stars that like a myriad of goggling, ogling eyes continually count the tears of unhappy man, winking scornfully at each other the while. Night after night they reappear to begin again their impudent prying. If this is the only purpose for which Thou didst create Heaven, Earth and Man, why, it is all a farce! O God of Kerbela Who didst create Imam Hussein, why didst Thou also create Zal Joshan? Thou who knowest that the talons of the falcon are as sharp as the dagger, why hast Thou made the sparrow with a body so delicate? If Thou dost approve of tyranny and power, why hast Thou sent prophet after prophet to the earth to perform good works? Thou who knowest how susceptible is the heart of a rozakhan, why didst Thou give to Haji's daughter those locks and those cheeks and then for no reason bring suffering to her fair body? Is this Thy reward for thirty years spent in recounting

The Tragedy? Dost Thou not regret that Thou didst not place that money firmly in my palm? What use was there in throwing two krans to the ground from the hand of an innocent maiden and why didst Thou deliver her veil to the thorn and thus darken my destiny? Thou hast taken from me my peerless wife and now, when Thou wouldst that my tears turn to blood, Thou hast again brought the maiden to a bed of sickness. Ah, Thou hast filled my cup of sorrow too full."

Yes, God have mercy upon me, torrents of such gibberish did I pour forth. It was but the ravings of a wandering mind and I know that God will forgive me. Thus I passed the whole night, sometimes in prayer and supplication, sometimes in reproach and contumely. When morning came I drew on my cloak and left the house in the hope of hearing some news of the sufferer. I saw the doctor's mule standing in front of Haji's house and the doctor's servant dozing on the bench with the bridle in his hand. Gently I awoke him and said, "Brother, do you know how the sick one fares?" He looked at me angrily. "You must be ill yourself, your Reverence," he said, "to wake a man up and ask how the sick one fares. Use your commonsense. If she were well, what would the doctor be doing in the house at crack of dawn?"

I saw that the fellow was right. Ashamed and sick at heart I returned home and locked myself in. That door should never open again except to the undertaker when he came to bear away my corpse for burial. I remember how I recounted The Tragedy to myself, how I wept and how I prayed for the life of Haji's daughter.

The day passed as before and not a drop of water nor a morsel of bread passed my lips. When night came I performed my ablutions and said my evening prayer, but I saw it was all of no avail and that soon I should go mad. I untied the clothes line which had one end tied to a withered mulberry tree at the corner of the house and the other to a peg stuck in the stable wall, and made it fast to a bough of the mulberry tree. I made a noose in the other end and started to put it round my neck, murmuring "We are of God and unto Him do we return." I would end this life of mental agony. Suddenly a voice was raised in the house. I kept silent but then I recognized the voice of Haji crying, Mulla Kurban Ali, Mulla Kurban Ali." Involuntarily, I leapt towards the door and opened it; ah, would that I had never done so! I heard that cruel Fate had plucked that newly opened

flower from the branch of life and that Haji was come to ask me to read the Quran over the body of his daughter, cut off in the prime of her youth. Her body had just been laid in the mosque and was to be buried the next day. I tried to tell him that I could not read but no sound came from my lips and Haji took my silence for consent. He went away and again I was left alone.

The moon shone with an eerie light and a soft breeze was blowing which swung the rope hanging from the mulberry tree slowly backward and forward. Its shadow on the ground seemed to me like the pendulum of a clock which was counting out the hours of life and death, and I fell to thinking of that moonlight night when I had first seen the face of Haji's daughter and the rose-tree and those tumbling curls. A sigh broke from my lips and I cried, "Come what may, I must once more behold that face a thousand times more fair than the moon." I threw over my shoulders the cloak that my wife (May God unite her with Fatimeh on the Day of Resurrection! There never was her like) had mended a hundred times and went to the mosque. Ah! You must understand to what a pass I had come. May God never visit such sorrows on another of His servants. At first, I stood silent and transfixed like a corpse for I could not believe that that slender body I had once seen now lay lifeless beneath this prayer veil and would to-morrow be buried beneath the sod. Then I remembered that it was to read the Quran that I had come there and I began to murmur prayers and passages which I had learnt by heart from the Quran though I could not read it. But my tears flowed too fast.

As God knows, the night was far advanced; no sound came from without. Sorrow and grief had made me mad. I began to recite indiscriminately all the verses of the Quran that I knew, but my weak voice was no longer supported by my gestures. I felt I should die on the very spot and my plight was worse than I can describe. Suddenly, quite close the sound of the evening prayer rose in the night air and this verse fell on my ear:

"Arise, for night is fall'n so dear to lovers,
"And round the Beloved's porch the fond swain hovers."

These lines so stirred my spirit that I sprang up as though I had received a new lease of life and cried, "Why, oh unhappy one, dost Thou not arise? How canst Thou be dead?"

I had to see that face again and involuntarily I put forth my hand and turned back the prayer veil, and the maiden's face with

its smiling mouth and tumbled locks was uncovered. I bent down, closed my eyes and pressed my lips to hers, to her mouth now like a faded rose-bud.

What happened then I know not. I felt a violent blow in my hinder part and lost consciousness. When I came to my senses I lay in a dark place with shackles on my hands and a chain around my neck. It appeared that the police patrol was going round the mosque when they saw a light in the shabistan where dead bodies lie awaiting burial. Thinking that some knave had come to pilfer a rug or some straw matting, they had come stealthily in, had seen what was happening and, after beating me cruelly, had bound me hand-and-foot and had dragged me outside with my turban round my neck. My beard was cut off, I was beaten with sticks and thrust into prison where, as you see, I still am. Nevertheless, no day passes but that rose-tree, those wanton curls and that smiling mouth take shape in my mind and I live again. But I have wearied you with my tale. Forgive me. It is now seven years since I spoke with living man.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

MESSES AND CLUBS

SIR,

"Balu" has certainly struck a blow for freedom and you, Sir, have undoubtedly performed a meritorious act in facilitating the ventilation of a long-standing grouse. Mess life is certainly not what it was. Hitherto the public discussion of such a topic savoured of sacrilege and "Balu" has earned the praise due to a pioneer. Pioneers also invite criticism. I offer mine with the hope that it may be constructive. Within limits I consider that it is constructive and possibly not too biased one way or the other. I who am married was once a bachelor. I was, moreover, often that poor wight—the Mess Secretary.

The general impression gathered from Balu's article occasioned the thought that they ask for bread and he offers them a stone. He boldly says "scrap the Mess"—but what is the substitute? "Balu" suggests the hotel, residential club or "chummery." The residential club sounds very attractive and the chummery even more so, but surely not the hotel! Has "Balu" lived for long in the hotel of a small station?

Putting aside the minor point of comparison between the "bare barrack of a room" of old and the boudoir of the modern subaltern, I would suggest that this is a matter of taste and not a fundamental argument against the Mess. "Balu's" main objections fall under two heads. Firstly, he objects to the atmosphere and secondly to the expenses of the Mess.

As to the first, it is for consideration if that indefinable thing "atmosphere" would change in a club or a chummery. In the hotel or residential club it is probably true that you do not necessarily have to pay such attention to rank *per se* or to the weighty matter of precedence of entry to the dining room. The fact remains, however, that the senior usually attains to a certain precedence anywhere and heaven help the junior who disputes the fact: you can't shout against thunder! *Primus inter pares* holds good among juniors as among seniors when it comes to who goes first. That rule applies in one's own home in all walks of life.

It is stated that many young officers rush into early matrimony because they are fed up with Mess life and want a home they can call their own. Hardly a compliment to the lady of their choice!

One suspects that the attractions of the chosen one should be the more positive incentive. Moreover, the alleged saving to be effected by not living in Mess will not finance the more expensive institution of matrimony, not on a subaltern's pay at any rate.

A further consideration, however, prompts the suggestion that living in Mess for a part of their lives is entirely desirable for all young Army Officers. Prussian discipline and old-fashioned etiquette are not essential or desirable but a certain minimum of ordered existence will do much to fit the youngster to take his place among his fellows and to smooth rough surfaces and remove corners. Slippered ease with beer and sandwiches in his room with the wireless going may be very desirable as an occasional change from dining in Mess but, like many other things which are pleasant, it is not always the best.

Now as to the second part of the objection, the main one, that of expense. The subscriptions undoubtedly vary considerably and there could be no objection to abolishing the monthly "Mess Subscription," at present levied by order, also the conditions on promotion should go; subscriptions should then be charged to cover actual needs which must be made to suit the modern times we live in. These overhead costs have to be met equally in the club, chummery or hotel as in a Mess and they are generally higher even though they may be hidden in the "inclusive charges." Papers and the illustrated magazines, etc., cost the same in any case but the more numerous the contributors, the lower the cost per capita. Again, furniture in a chummery will cost more to hire than in a Mess of even a small unit. In the case of the chummery there also arises the snag that absence on the inevitable courses for young officers, leave periods, etc., mean that the chummery will often be occupied by only one or two fellows. They still have to pay the same wages and overhead charges.

The club or hotel must also regulate its charges to provide for such incidental absences. They cannot be philanthropic institutions. Again the smaller stations that are alluded to by "Balu" are rarely able to contemplate the building and equipping of quarters at an economical rate to accommodate more than a fraction of the numbers who might use them. How are they to be financed when, as often happens, the station is emptied by a frontier campaign?

Entertainment is probably the most expensive item and on this topic there may not be general agreement. Is the present scale of entertaining—even in 1940—necessary? This becomes

very much a personal question and everyone must cut his coat according to his cloth. The average monthly bill for drinks is a pretty large one; "Balu" alludes to it without comment. I have no hesitation in saying that it could stand a very large and health-giving cut in the case of senior and junior alike. Few would lament the passing of the small club with its demoralising rounds of unnecessary drinks. Retain the "Gymkhana" club for your polo, tennis and squash courts and the golf course by all means but scrap the bar side of the club. It is a confession of weakness that its existence is dependent on drink profits. Entertain in your Mess as you would in your own home. Reform the Mess—make it more human where necessary—and make it more of a social centre. By all means cut out the heavy formal entertaining of past days and run it on far simpler lines. It has been done and is still being done by many Regiments. I would, however, suggest that an institution which has weathered many storms since it was first established in 1856 (in the Bengal Army) to meet a very pressing need may still have some value for the present generation.

Yours, etc.,
H. R. K. GIBBS.

REVIEWS

"TURKESTAN TUMULT"

By Aitchen K. Wu.

(Methuen. 12/6.)

Mr. Wu Ai Chen, or as he prefers to Westernise his name, Mr. Aitchen K. Wu, was sent to Urumchi by the Chinese Government after the Manchurian "incident" in 1932 in an endeavour to improve the relations between the Kuo-min-tang and the provincial government of Sinkiang. How this difficult mission was accomplished and the incredible adventures which befell Mr. Wu and his party in this inaccessible corner of Asia make "Turkestan Tumult" not only an exciting story but also a valuable contribution to history.

The book describes the frequent *coups d'etat* which harass the provincial government and devastate the country. For the most part these savage upheavals are caused by the religious fanaticism of the Moslems or Tungans, under the leadership of "Big Horse," a sinister and terrifying figure, who is eventually defeated, after the siege of Urumchi, by Governor Chin Shu-jen, and disappears into Soviet Russia.

The final chapter is devoted to a review of the future of Sinkiang, which Mr. Wu is inclined to view with optimism, provided the Chinese can rule justly the fourteen different races which comprise the population, and communications with the outside world can be kept open by regular airlines. He stresses the necessity for more direct contact between the central and provincial governments and points out that it is in the interests of Great Britain to help in maintaining Chinese integrity in Sinkiang as a means of counteracting Soviet influence and preventing the spread of communism into India.

G. A. S.