EDITORIAL

As we go to press, the year 1941 is just coming to its end, and it may be of interest to compare our situation now with what it was a year ago.

At the end of 1940 the British Commonwealth stood almost alone against the Germans as a fighting nation. In Albania the Italians were being severely handled by the Greeks and in Northern Africa by the Imperial Forces, and the Italian Navy had received some heavy blows from the Royal Navy, in the Mediterranean.

The credit side of Germany's balance appeared to be high. She had disposed of two of her three opponents—Britain, France and Poland. She had overrun Norway, Holland and Belgium. Denmark, Bulgaria and Rumania had given way to her threats. Practically the whole of the European continent was under the heel of the Nazis, and the acquisition of the coast line from North Cape to the Bay of Biscay had given Germany air, submarine and invasion bases which covered the whole of the eastern and southern waters of Britain, very greatly facilitating her attempts to prevent the arrival of supplies of all kinds at British ports, and vastly simplifying an air offensive on Britain.

That the Germans were taking full advantage of the opportunities they had gained was shown by the fierce air attacks on London and on others of the big English towns, resulting in many casualties and much damage, and by the increased shipping losses in the Atlantic.

Let us look at the situation now, at the completion of 1941.

Last year ended with two nations, Britain and Greece, fighting against the Axis. Greece, after a most gallant struggle, was forced to succumb, but to-day we find, lined up against the powers of Nazism and Fascism, the British, Dutch, Russians, Chinese and Americans, with the whole weight of the enormous resources of man-power and production of the latter thrown into the scales. Germany has gained one active partner, the Japanese, but on the other hand, her ally, Italy, has received very heavy reverses and is not now the active helper she was expected to be when she entered the war.

The operations now being conducted against the Axis powers are taking place, broadly speaking, in four areas—the Atlantic, Russia, the Mediterranean and the Pacific.

In the Atlantic, owing to the measures now being taken to protect our convoys and to the gallantry and endurance of our merchant seamen, losses of ships have been very considerably reduced. Large numbers of cargoes are being delivered daily at ports all round the British Isles, and in this zone we can fairly claim to have got the better of the enemy and to have reduced his interference to a very large extent.

Our Allies in Russia, forced as they were to fall back for some months, succeeded in holding the German attempts to capture Leningrad and Moscow and to drive a way through the Russian positions in the south, and now have turned round and in their turn are beating the Germans back in retreat, inflicting on them enormous losses in men and material. The Germans call this straightening their line according to plan, a story hardly borne out by the now daily tale of Russian successes. In this long, battle-field, in spite of his earlier gains, Hitler can hardly claim success now.

Events in the Mediterranean area are going strongly in favour of the Allies. After months of preparation, the Imperial land forces, backed by our Naval and Air Forces, have driven the combined German and Italian army practically out of Cyrenaica, taking a huge toll of men and machines in the process. Further south, the last stronghold, Gondar, in the former Italian colonial empire has been taken, and that empire, founded by the seizure of an inoffensive kingdom, has now crumbled to nothing.

In the Pacific, at the moment, we cannot claim that things are going well for the Allies. Japan has succeeded in gaining great advantages at the outset. By attacking before war was even declared she has been able to inflict very serious losses on the Navies of both ourselves and the United States, she has come dangerously near to Singapore from more than one direction, she has succeeded in capturing Hongkong, and has been able to land large forces to threaten the safety of the Phillipines and other islands of strategical importance. By forcing Thailand to give way to her, she has now succeeded in getting into direct contact with Burma, and has brought that country, and, indeed, parts of India too, within range of her air attacks. It will take time and considerable effort to fight back to a position where we can say that these initial gains have been offset.

What turn events will take in the immediate future and what fresh blows the Axis powers will endeavour to deliver—and there is every likelihood of their making early efforts in fresh directions—we are unable to forecast. There is no doubt, however, that we may expect more of the "blood, toil, tears and sweat" promised us by the Prime Minister, Mr. Churchill, in the early days of the war. Still, the general situation is undoubtedly such as to allow us to face the coming year—to quote Mr. Churchill, again—"with sober confidence."

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In our last issue we made some remarks on "Combined Warfare." Since then, the world has seen two excellent examples of how the three Services of the sea, air and land can combine to bring about the desired object of the defeat and destruction of the enemy's forces.

After months of the most careful preparation, the Imperial Forces in North Africa have now driven the German and Italian army practically out of Cyrenaica, inflicting enormous losses of every kind on them, and as we go to press, it appears that the final battle to complete the work is about to take place.

All three Services have taken their full share in this operation. The Naval forces have kept the seas of the Mediterranean open for the movement of our own ships, they have prevented a large proportion of the enemy vessels which were striving to carry greatly needed supplies of men, machines and material to North Africa from reaching that country, and they have assisted the land troops in their actual operations by bombardment from the sea.

In the air, our Air forces have held superiority from the outset. By bombing hostile aerodromes they have interfered very considerably with the air activities of the enemy. Air attacks on ports and on columns of supplies and reinforcements in rear of the actual battle areas have been most successful, and they have played a very full part in the fighting operations by their close support of our attacking troops, keeping off hostile attacks and themselves delivering fierce assaults on the enemy ground formations.

The results of this close co-operation, coupled with the dash and courage of the land troops and the skill of their commanders, are to be seen in the rapidity with which the hostile forces, led as they were by a commander reported to be one of the most capable German leaders of armoured formations and comprising

among other troops two specially selected German armoured divisions, have been driven back so far in so short a time.

The second example is the very recent raid on Norway. Here again, all three Services were working in very close co-operation. The safe landing and, later, the withdrawal of the land troops was ensured, and several enemy ships were sunk or destroyed by the Royal Navy. Protection from air attack was provided by the Royal Air Force by air fighting, attacks on the nearest enemy aerodrome and by providing smoke screens. The Army, when landed, carried out a considerable amount of destruction, and killed and captured an appreciable number of enemy.

The whole operation was completed with very few casualties to our forces.

In this connection we have recently heard some discussion on the desirability of having "commandoes" permanently composed of units of all three Services. This would be the ideal. It is an accepted fact that the best results in war are obtained when units are trained together, getting to know each other well, and by this mutual acquaintance gaining complete mutual trust in each other. It is a question, however, if, with the many calls that have to be made on the sea and air forces, it would be possible to take away from the multifarious tasks for which they are daily required any units of the Royal Navy or the Royal Air Force and keep them solely for work of this nature. It would appear that whilst this object is one which it would be most advantageous to gain, it must be kept as something to be aimed at in the future when the number of available ships and aeroplanes has increased far beyond what it is now.

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Perhaps, the most important event in the last three months has been the entry of the United States into the war.

A year ago, President Roosevelt promised that half the production of the United States would be sent to Britain.

Later, came the Lease and Lend Act, by which the material assistance given by the United States to the forces of the British Commonwealth was very greatly increased.

On the 7th of November, 1941, the American Senate passed a Bill permitting the arming of all United States' merchantmen and allowing them to enter belligerent ports and "zones of combat." After a debate lasting some days the House of Representatives gave Congressional Approval to this measure on the 13th of November.

The results of this decision, which tore away the last remnants of the legislature by which the American republic, six years ago, strove to avoid becoming involved in the world crisis which it clearly saw approaching, would be far-reaching. It ensured that ships and men would be available to deliver materials for aiding the war effort at the points where they were most urgently needed, and would relieve the British Navy of part, at least, of its great responsibilities in bringing the Battle of the Atlantic to a successful conclusion.

Now, on December 8th, by the aggressive action of the Japanese the United States has been plunged into war.

The results of this on the American nation are easy to see. Previously, the Isolationist policy had a large number of supporters who were against President Roosevelt's efforts to give material support to the opposition to the Nazi and Fascist aggressors. The national industry itself met with frequent checks from strikes which had a serious effect on production, and which required severe measures to bring under control. Now, the whole nation is united, and we can say with certainty that their production, immense as it was before, will yet increase very largely and will no longer be hindered by such things as strikes, and that the great assistance given heretofore to Britain and her Allies will grow even greater still. Indeed, President Roosevelt himself has promised this. The expansion of her Navy and Army began immediately, and although, as in the case of Britain, it may be some little time before it reaches its peak, with the resources at her disposal we may confidently expect that time to be short.

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We have to record a most interesting and impressive ceremony, the presentation of the Victoria Cross to Captain P. S. Bhagat, Royal Bombay Sappers and Miners, and to the widow of the late Subedar Richpal Singh, 4th Battalion (Outram's) 6th Rajputana Rifles.

These Victoria Crosses, the first and second to be gained by members of the Indian Army in this war, were both won in the Abyssinian Campaign.

The ceremony took place in the forecourt of Viceroy's House, New Delhi, on November 10th, in the presence of a large number of spectators. A Guard of Honour was provided by the 6th Rajputana Rifles.

THE WESTERN DESERT

By Major G. T. Wheeler.

The Western Desert is indescribable to anyone who has not seen it. This is because its nature changes about every mile, and each change brings something that does not exist elsewhere. If a Matabele asked: "What is England like?", it would be necessary to describe grass fields, ploughed fields, crops of all sorts, tarmac roads, moorland, factories and so on, and at the end the Matabele would be dizzy, but without the knowledge he sought. So with the Western Desert. There is hard "put," sand-dunes, rock flats, tufty "ghots," scrub of many sorts and stony wastes—and many, many other varieties of barren land. From a military point of view it is sufficient to regard it as Salisbury Plain with the trees and grass scraped off and the undulations flattened to half their present relative height—or, alternatively, to the barren land between Rawalpindi and Khushalgarh. Tanks can cross most of it as fast as they like, wheeled vehicles will average 12 m.p.h. over most of it. In places they can go 50 m.p.h. without risk, in others 5 m.p.h. with acute discomfort from the stones or grassy tufts. Two impressions must remain. First, the desert on which we fight is nothing like the desert of "Beau Geste" or the desert round Cairo. Secondly, it is stony, not without vegetation and deceptively undulating.

The desert on which we have fought most, and still do, is on either side of the Sollum Escarpment. This is worth describing. It is about 500 feet high at its highest and is a steep, but never vertical cliff. *Wadis* run into it continuously, so concealment is easy, and although a man could walk along it half-way up, it would be a very tortuous and tiring journey, for he would go up and down, and in and out without ceasing. It is a complete vehicle obstacle except where roads have been made at Sollum, Halfaya, Halfway house and Sofafi. Infantry can climb it where they will.

Maps of the desert mark tracks, and possibly before the war these tracks existed as such. The desert track is not good going, it is a place where previous traffic has removed the soft top soil and exposed the loose stones thereunder. The wise driver, therefore, drives parallel to, but not on, a track. There are many

wise drivers and, consequently, many parallel tracks. The whole desert is in fact intersected with tracks, and those that connect main centres may well be two miles in width of parallel tracks. A new Corps Headquarters arrived in the desert and, presumably from some forgotten manual, produced an order to "signpost all cross-roads and report completion." Cross-roads are not places, they are vast areas; and the idea of completing the signposting of a track-infested area bigger than Yorkshire was novel. They were a good Corps Headquarters and explained that the order was signed in a "Khamsin"—the hot wind which makes all men feel stupid and all motor radiators boil.

In theory, an attack during a duststorm is a very desirable military event, but in practice it is risky because if the attack goes down-wind—and the wind veers fast—there is a chance of having every vehicle stranded for lack of water to refill the radiator. A Ford V-8 going down-wind will do three miles to the gallon of water, a figure no supply system can face in a waterless desert. The Germans have attacked in a duststorm, and so have we. Both attacks were successful, but since those attacks took place we have advanced towards each other and met just as a duststorm began. When the dust died down and the Tac R. went up it reported an empty space of 24 miles between our troops and theirs. Both sides had gone back 12 miles, which suggests that there are two subjects on which we and the Germans agree: it is not good to fight in a duststorm, and it is good for a German to die for his Führer.

The climate of the Western Desert has been maligned through one suspects, the desire for sympathy of its military inhabitants. Soldiers write home and say: "Dear Mother, We've just moved again. It is very sandy here and hot, and there are no trees to give shade;" and so the reputation of the "scorching desert" grows. It would sound wrong to say "there is a lot of sand here, no trees, and although the sun shines all day it is never as hot as Delhi is in October;" yet, such is the case. The months of April, May, June, September, October and November are perfect from a temperature point of view. Men wear sweaters in the morning and evening and shirt-sleeves in the middle of the day. The nights are cold but not uncomfortably so. July and August are fairly hot in the middle of the day, much the same as in Delhi in early November, and cool enough at night. From December to March it is cold by day and really cold at night. These facts should be better known, for high military circles still

insist that the winter is the desert campaigning season. It is not. The nights are unbearably cold in the open and duststorms are frequent. The summer is the proper campaigning season, particularly June to October when duststorms are very rare. In those months men can sleep in the open with either one blanket or a great-coat, and can fight by day without anything that our troops would call discomfort. The German, on the other hand, is not so accustomed to even mild heat, and reckons that he is in a "sweltering heat"—which is good for him. The campaigning season of the desert may be in the winter by elimination of other theatres, but for no other reason.

The course of the war in the Western Desert has been told, so far as it may be told, in the daily press. No historical account is yet possible, but it may be useful to build a framework of the war's course and hang thereon anecdotes which depict the conditions of modern desert warfare.

The day after Italy declared war our mobile forces in the frontier area captured Fort Capuzzo and, with it, 500 Italian soldiers. Graziani regarded this early start as a flagrant breach of military etiquette and sent a large force to recapture it. The force was allowed in with little opposition, and then given a very harassed life. Fort Capuzzo lends itself to being shelled, and shelled it was. On one occasion the gunner O.P. established itself due west of the Fort whilst the guns fired from due east. Increases in range were given cautiously. The Italians tried a tank sortie against the guns and came out in line ahead. The front tank was hit. The rest halted and finally withdrew. Tank manœuvre was still a closed book to them.

In August, 1940, the might, majesty and Lybians of the Italian Army swarmed down Sollum Pass and advanced on Sidi Barrani. Our forces withdrew to Matruh, leaving mobile troops in contact. The Italians built dry-stone breastwork forts round Barrani, south of it at Tummar and Nibeiwa, and far south at Rabia and Sofafi. These breastwork forts are well built and worthy of the descendants of Balbus and Hadrian. They probably have some military value, other than as land marks in a featureless desert, but we have not yet found it. They have never been used by us, though the Italian airman still saves their builders' faces by bombing them at infrequent intervals.

Matruh was defended on an all-round basis, and 20 miles east of it the Baggush Box was made on similar but less elaborate lines. Between these two the Nagamish Nullah position was

made. No one knows why. Matruh and Baggush both contain good and plentiful water. Nagamish does not.

The air situation during this period was unfavourable. At the start we had nine Gladiators. They flew daily to rain death on the Italian Air Force, and death they rained. But like the ten little nigger boys, there came a time when "then there were two." The Italians reinforced their Air Force until they were able to bomb Matruh daily and nightly with very unpleasant strength. At last our Hurricanes arrived.

British, Dominion and Indian troops were given a first-class view of an air battle with Italian planes falling like ripe plums all round. Day raids on Matruh stopped. Night raids continue regularly to this day. They do some damage occasionally.

The mobile troops that remained in contact with the Italians were set the task of keeping an open gap in the enemy's defences. The selected spot was between Nibeiwa and Rabia. This task caused the birth of the "Jockcols," named after Jock Campbell, the gunner. A Jockol accepts the fact that the field gun is the true patrolling weapon in the desert. The rifle has not got either the range or weight to be effective. The A. Tk gun is a one-purpose gun, and also short of effective range for that purpose. The field gun can engage tanks, vehicles or men at a range from which it can withdraw in safety if rushed by a superior force. The F. O. O. has to be well forward and so needs some protection; this is provided by armoured cars and/or motor infantry. If the enemy decides to rush the column with tanks he must be delayed whilst the F. O. O. and his escort withdraw, and possibly whilst the field artillery step back. For this A. Tk guns are interposed in the area between the field guns and the F. O. O.

The whole force is known as a Jockcol and has stood the test of time. The columns hurried and frightened the Italians without ceasing, and the gap was kept open. It was used on December 9th, 1940, when Nibeiwa, the Tummars and consequently Barrani were captured. Fascist bubbles were pricked at Bardia, Tobruk and Derna. The remnants of the army surrendered to us at Beda Fomm, south of Benghazi. The seasoned troops who had made this wonderful conquest were taken elsewhere and replaced by new troops, armed and briefed as an army of occupation rather than as a spearhead of the Empire.

The price of this misconception was paid in April, 1940, when one German Light Motorized Division attacked and retook Cyrenaica.

The main infantry force and a few mobile remnants were rallied into Tobruk. The Germans attacked Tobruk almost at once, but the defenders by then understood war. They allowed the German tanks to over-run the forward infantry, which lay low whilst the tanks passed inwards. The infantry concentrated on the lorry-borne German infantry which followed, or rather tried but failed to follow. The tanks ran into the artillery area without support. They paid their toll and left. So began the siege of Tobruk, the place where British Empire troops first said a successful "No" to the Germans. The siege has lasted many months and the initiative has passed to the defenders, whose patrols are a constant dread to the enemy besiegers.

We have learnt much about defence in Tobruk, and one of these lessons is that an infantryman in a small parapetless firing-slit is safer and more effective than an infantryman in the approved "section defended post" of complicated layout. In his firing slit he cannot be seen from the ground and is no target from the air. All defended positions in the desert now depend on minefields watched by infantrymen lying, kneeling or standing in a trench about 4 feet deep, 2 feet wide and 4 feet long, it may be longer if the men would sooner fight in pairs. In each trench is stored water and food for the day, S. T. No. 68 and Mills grenades, and rifle and ammunition. There is no need to store more than a day's supply for the men can replenish at night. These are the battle positions. In normal times the men live further back in something that may well resemble an approved section post. The resemblance should be sufficiently good to deceive the enemy artillery and airmen that it is the right target.

After Tobruk had failed to fall the German came straight on and occupied the line that he virtually holds to-day—Sollum, Halfaya Pass to Sidi Omar. There he stopped for the same reason that we stopped after Beda Fomm. He had run his limit. We left weak mobile troops in contact with him and re-occupied Matruh and Baggush. The mobile troops re-started Jockols and life returned to what is now regarded as normal. (A fuller definition of the word "normal" will come later.) This was at the end of April, 1941. During the summer of 1941 there were four occasions when normal routine was interrupted. They will be described in such detail as is allowed.

On May 15th an infantry brigade supported by a few tanks and artillery moved up the escarpment from Sofafi and by direct assault captured Capuzzo, Sollum and Halfaya Pass. The left

flank battalion was in Capuzzo and suffered heavy casualties from a German counter-attack with tanks. Otherwise the positions were captured and held with few casualties. If this action is regarded as the first of three dreams, like those of Duffer's Drift, then we may say that the lessons learnt were that Halfaya Pass is easier to take from above than below, and that infantry must have A.Tk guns available at once in considerable numbers if they are to hold ground after it is captured.

On May 31st the Germans attacked Halfaya Pass with a strong force of tanks and infantry, well supported by artillery. The Pass was lost and our infantry suffered some unnecessary casualties by delaying their final withdrawal until after daylight. Their line of withdrawal was on the plain below the pass, and the Germans took advantage of the observation afforded by the escarpment to shell and machine-gun them as they went back.

On 15th June the second dream took place. Capuzzo, Sollum and Halfaya Pass were again the objectives. We deployed two brigades of infantry supported by 'I' tanks, with cruiser tanks to guard the left flank. The plan was to attack Halfaya Pass with an infantry brigade supported by artillery and some 20 'I' tanks. One battalion and two-thirds of the 'I' tanks were to attack from the top, the remainder from below. The other infantry brigade with the remainder of the 'I' tanks was to attack Capuzzo and Sollum from the south-west.

The attack of Halfaya Pass was a failure because the 'I' tanks were trapped both above and below the escarpment. On the plain they ran on to an unlocated minefield and were knocked out by German 88-mm. dual purpose guns. On top of the escarpment they met a low dry masonry stone wall, as each tank reared up on this wall was shot through the belly by an A.Tk gun sited just the far side of the wall. The 'I' tanks brought away two things: the lesson that manœuvre is necessary even with their thick armour, and one 'I' tank. The rest had paid for the lesson. The remainder of the force prospered on June 15th and 16th. They captured Capuzzo on the 15th, and Sollum Barracks (which are on top of the escarpment) during the night of 15-16th June. On the 16th June the German tank counter-attacks on Capuzzo began. There was one at 5-30 a.m. and two more before 9-30 a.m. They averaged about 50 tanks each. As the day went on they became less frequent but more powerful. They were beaten off by 'I' tanks, A.Tk guns and field artillery, but without heavy loss. The range at which A.Tk fire should be opened had

not been decided, so the German tank commanders were given timely and long-range warning by the 'I' tanks who opened fire at 2,000 yards. This fire tended to turn them, so the field guns opened too for fear of not getting a shoot at all. It was only on the extreme left flank where one battery of A.Tk guns was alone that any damage was inflicted. This battery held its fire until the German tanks were within 800 yards. By the end of the day 16 German tanks lay dead before this battery. The other batteries of A.Tk artillery only lent ammunition to the 'I' tanks as they expended their own.

The day of the 16th closed with ominous reports of German tanks moving in strength in the Sidi Omar area. This was a direct threat to our left flank and rear. The threat developed early on the 17th June, and withdrawal became inevitable. The force withdrew by Halfaya House with little loss except the heavy material loss of tanks left on the battlefield. Recovery of damaged tanks had not been effected. One incident marred this day, it was the dive-bombing of a field regiment as it came into action. Three guns and some 30 men of one troop were knocked out. It is fashionable to say that the effect of dive-bombing is moral rather than material. This may be true in soft countries where the bombs burst below ground level and where slit trenches can be dug. In the desert slab-rock areas it is not true. Men cannot dig, so must lie down on the level ground. The bombs burst right on the surface, a 250-lb. bomb is unlucky if it makes even a 5-inch deep crater, and splinters fly around with unfortunate results. Twenty-five per cent. casualties from a dive-bombing raid in the desert are not abnormal.

So ended the second dream; and the local Backsight-Forethoughts learnt much. Let us summarize:

1. No amount of armour is a full substitute for manœuvre. 'I' tanks must look before they leap and, if necessary, wait for the support of other arms.

2. Consolidation must be immmediate against tank counter-attack, and the A.Tk fire policy must be decided, known, and enforced. To shoot at a tank at over 800 yards is a waste of government time and ammunition, and, incidentally, a high road to the grave, since some German tanks carry a 75-mm. gun which is highly effective at ranges up to 2,000 yards once it has located a target.

3. Everything is easy in a withdrawal except recovery of damaged tanks. So avoid getting tanks involved in a withdrawal, and if there are tanks strain every recovery nerve from the earliest possible to the latest possible moment.

The troops which had fought returned to rest areas, and Jock columns took over their former role. The third dream is yet to come, but there is confidence that all the essential lessons have been learnt in the first two.

It used to be customary in the desert to use the words "Nilrep" or "Sitnor" in the Sitreps (Situation reports) which are sent rearwards four times daily. The words meant "nothing to report" and "situation normal," respectively. The latter word has since been abolished on the ground that there is no such thing as a normal situation in war. In the desert there is. The enemy holds a strong position below Halfaya Pass, where liberties cannot be taken by patrols except when Italians have relieved the usual German garrison there. Even then defensive fire is well disposed and the advantages are too heavily with the defender for patrols to penetrate into the position.

Activity in the coastal plain is therefore largely confined to artillery sniping. A gunner officer goes forward before dawn and establishes himself in one of the O.Ps. that are in sight of Halfaya Pass. He waits and watches. One or two 25 prs. have moved forward into a position from which they can engage the Pass. The range is known and registration has been completed, maybe weeks previously. As soon as the F.O.O. sees traffic on the Pass that constitutes a target, he starts the day's sniping. As a rule the enemy reply with artillery fire at either the O.P. or the gun position, or both. As the day goes on the mirage starts and the sun moves out of the East, so visibility becomes bad. The day's sniping is then over. On some days nothing further happens, on others the enemy send over fighters who dart in from the sea and shoot up any vehicle they find on the move, and then go off westwards. Provided they hit nothing the day will be described as "Sitnor."

On top of the escarpment the enemy holds a series of defended localities from just south of Halfaya Pass, through Sidi Suleiman to Sidi Omar, thence south to Sheferzen. The latter is held by day only. His patrols of tanks and armoured cars move a few miles south of this line. Not many miles, for the Jock columns are jealous of their shooting rights in the wide No Man's Land, and are rough with poachers.

Before dawn each day the columns move out. First go armoured cars. It is their task to secure the O.P. which has been selected for the day. They move cautiously forward for it is always possible that the enemy has got there first, though they never do. When it is reported clear the F.O.O. takes up his position and the armoured cars move forward to make contact with the enemy. Then their reports start coming back:

"Three enemy met* moving southeast at 521360; four enemy met stationary at Kinibish."

Then later: "The three enemy met previously reported at 521360 are now identified as one tank and two armoured cars." The light is getting better.

"Four enemy met in the watch-tower area, believed to be armoured cars, have been smartened up and withdrew into dead ground to the West." The enemy has offered a target to a F.O.O. who has taken the offer.

Then towards 9 a.m.: "The four enemy met at Kinibish are moving north out of sight. Otherwise N.M.S." (No movement seen.) The mirage is up and the morning patrols are over. It is useless to patrol in the mirage when bushes, men, tanks and trucks all look like hazy shadows of about equal size.

At mid-day the previous night-patrol reports start coming in. Small parties have moved deep into enemy territory on foot; studying his minefields and his defences. His minefields are surrounded by a single or double strand of barbed wire, so are easy to locate. In any case the Tellermine can be trodden on by a man without exploding. One patrol from the coast has visited the *wadis* in front of the enemy position around Halfaya Pass. They were unoccupied; but the enemy were heard talking German in the next *wadi* forward. That is interesting, for sometimes the Italians hold that area. Another patrol has visited Sheferzen. There were no enemy but some new trenches have been dug. A Booby trap was set in one of these and the patrol returned without hindrance. A third patrol encircled Kinibish, located a new minefield, were shot at, and returned without loss but carrying one Tellermine, in case it was a new type. The Sappers will examine it alone with carefree joy. There were no other patrols that night.

At 1 p.m. a distant drone is heard. It increases into the unmistakable noise of a Me. 110. He is known to some as "Lonely Bill," because he always comes alone, without escort. He is the

* "Met"—Enemy M. T. Perhaps an abbreviation for Motor Enemy Transport. Originally used by the R.A.F. Now universal.

German Tac R machine, and comes over daily to see that everyone is in the right place. He is never rude, and no longer causes any real animosity. There may be some of our fighters going up or already up, so his position, height and course are reported to Fighter Command, but that is routine.

In the afternoon the columns prepare for the evening work, which is the same as that of the morning. The night patrols prepare for their tasks. The sappers continue to lay mines (they only laid 20,000 last week, so the work is getting behind), and the signals continue to lay cable, they have 180 miles down in the divisional area and are running short, though their commitments are still only half met. The infantry division held some four miles of front in the last war, and had about 40 miles of cable. It now holds 50 miles or more of loose knit front, and the Signals say that they need more cable, and the case seems good.

The evening reports of the columns' patrolling come in during the evening, as they did in the morning, except that the last one is always very final. "Three 'met' at Bir Nuh were not seen to move north but are now out of sight in the dark. N.M.S. elsewhere." The columns and the armoured car patrols move back into their night laager positions and the day is ended: "Sitnor."

The 13th September brought news that the enemy was likely to be active very soon. That night the armoured car patrols reported the rumbling of tanks in the area south of Halfaya. The rumblings continued from 2 a.m. to 5-30 a.m. when the storm broke in the form of a rush of tanks and "met" southwards from Bir Nuh. They came in two columns; on the east a column of about 80 tanks moving south, parallel to and about 5 miles west of the escarpment; on the west a column of some 40 tanks and 250 "met" moving parallel to and 5 miles west of the other column. The tanks moved ten or twelve abreast with little more than 25 yards between columns. They came fast; "so fast," in the words of an officer with a close-up view, "that I had difficulty in going ten miles an hour faster than them. But my truck is unresponsive after 40 m.p.h." No one was paid to stay and stop them, and no one did. They halted after some fifteen miles and looked around. Then they decided to replenish. They always do that around mid-day. Unfortunately they chose a place within sight of our troops and collected into a very small area. The news went to the Air Force and in due course twelve Marylands arrived. It was not the dull "woomp—woomp—woomp" of the German bomb but a sharp, fierce, efficient-sounding "woomp." Just one. The news of where it had all landed was important for accidents are easy in

the desert where landmarks are not—the Germans dive-bombed their own troops at the top of Halfaya on the 16th June. The joyful news came back: "plumb on the target; there are bits of German still falling." After that the withdrawal became more cheerful. It was the first time that our men had actually witnessed the German tasting air power; and the effect was electrical. A German who was there, and subsequently captured, said that complete panic resulted and all their tanks and lorries that could, scattered wildly in the desert. The track marks confirm his remarks. The scene of this event remained a show place for long. One Mk. III tank had a direct hit over the driver's head and was just scrap-iron inside. Two ammunition lorries, four petrol lorries and one staff car were also left as complete wrecks. His recovery is good, so it is safe to put a handsome total on the number of other vehicles which must have been damaged and removed.

At 4 p.m. he made another dash, straight into the position that our rearguard held. His tanks drove through 25 pr. fire, thus proving themselves to be experienced, but turned from short range 2 pr. fire, proving themselves to be wise. None too soon the rearguard withdrew to the next position. It would be wrong to say that the Germans' tanks followed, for in fact it was a neck and-neck race and at times they may have led. They stopped after about ten miles and our forces took up the next position without any loss at all. The next day the Germans withdrew. Why they came is hard to understand, and all that is certain is that they paid dearly for no information and an insignificant dividend. We lost a truck with three clerks in it. They found stuff bursting around them, so got out and lay down clear of the truck. They had been bombed before and knew the drill. The bombs were, in fact, shells from an advancing Mk. IV tank's 75 mm. gun, so they were "captured through technical ignorance." Two men were killed too, both by the same A. Tk shell. That was about all we paid for his indiscretion. It cannot be called a proper dream, but, rubbing one's eyes, it is pleasant to have confirmation that a withdrawal is easy provided one has got elbow room and no tanks. The day after the Germans withdrew was "Sitnor," and "Lonely Bill" came over twice to be sure that everyone was in the right place. Everyone was.

A week later "Sitnor" had died. New arrivals came, the water ration fell from one gallon to three quarters of a gallon a day and the B.B.C. talked of "the campaigning season in the desert." The troops put on their great-coats to be ready for it.

The desert has changed the tasks and the values of many arms of the service. The gunner has come into his own whether he be field, A. Tk or A.A. Guns and more guns are always wanted to support and defend both infantry and tanks. Infantry have fallen in importance. In defence they are the guardians of minefields, which in turn are the guardians of all. In attack they take over what the 'I' tanks have secured.

A visiting Brigadier, new to the desert, was shown one of the forward defended areas. He went all round it and his first question was: "Where is the wire?"

The Infantry Liaison Officer who was showing him round said: "There is no wire, only a continuous minefield."

"But supposing infantry attacked?" he asked.

The Liaison Officer gazed forward with joy into the desert. "Oh, supposing they did," he said. The thought was a beautiful dream. They can't, of course, and never will. All this, of course, applies only in the Desert.

Sappers lay mines and work compressors to make vehicle and gun pits. The number of compressors and mines which are available is limited, so they get time off to eat and sleep; otherwise they would not. The desert has set new standards of mine figures and anyone who thinks of mines in units of less than 100,000 is probably unable to ride a bicycle. A defended area depends on mines for its safety, and signal cable for its efficiency. If soldiers are ever denied a full and continuous supply of those two simple war stores, then some man in the Empire supply organisation will have blood on his hands, and may that fact be known.

Signals lay cable, but only those that deal with cable. The wireless-operators live a harried life. In the intervals between operations they have to observe wireless silence, so get little training. During operations they have to be perfect, more than perfect, at wireless operation. They have to work over distances which may well be double those for which their sets were designed. They have many more sets on one net than the book foretells. Fourteen on one net is handled successfully by the veterans in the forward area. There is no longer any "Hullo, Hullo, Hullo—BOLO, speaking, BOLO, speaking—I have a message for for you" and so on, with everything said twice.

It is: "BOLO, speaking, can hear noise of tank movement one mile west of Kinibish; over."

"Hullo, BOLO, say again word after 'west of'; over."
"BOLO, speaking, K - I - N - I - B - I - S - H; over."
"Hullo, BOLO, OK; off."

Bolo may have been wrong not to have said "Kinibish" twice. but he took the chance of the operator knowing the place. It is assumed that all sets are well enough adjusted to allow speech to be heard without repetition, and usually rightly so.

Let us end with those who come first —the Air Force; the whole unity of Imperial Squadrons that work in the Western Desert. Co-operation between the Army and the Air Force is close-knit now and almost beyond criticism. We will take Tac R first: As a rule two Tac R sorties go up each "Sitnor" day. A sortie used to consist of one Tac R Hurricane which flies straight ahead, followed by a fighter Hurricane escort which weaved hither and thither in his rear. Neither has an enviable job, for the Tac R plane looks only at the ground, so risks both A.A. fire and unexpected attack from the air. The escort has to engage any attacking fighters, whatever the odds, in order to give the Tac R machine a chance of getting out and home with his news. The news is not wirelessed home, for a Tac R pilot has plenty to do in the air without also sending messages; also his set will not cover the vast distances involved. He is usually more than thirty miles from the nearest ground set. Latterly, Tac R sorties have had increased escorts, perhaps six fighters for one Tac R pilot. The Tac R pilot is valuable, and his value increases every day that he spends over the enemy forward troops. A new Tac R pilot will often cause a mild flutter by reporting every derelict vehicle in the area as a "met." The derelicts total about 150, so the enemy strength shows a startling increase. A new pilot, a new A.I.L.O., and a new G. Staff might almost lead to a new military occasion." During active operations the Tac R squadrons will put, say, two Tac R sorties on to the Advanced Landing Ground at first light. According to the nights news the A.I.L.O. is briefed by the G. Staff and he in turn briefs the pilot of the first sortie. The sortie takes off and is replaced from the rear by another. When the first sortie returns his report is collected by the A.I.L.O. and telephoned to the G. Staff. From this report and developments on the ground the next sortie is briefed, and so on throughout the day. It is not fair to ask Tac R pilots to fly again and again over the same area for very soon enemy fighters will be in that area, and the Tac R pilot will be lost. If either side has two Tac R sorties over the actual battle area in the

course of a day it would be about normal. Each will stay over for a few minutes only. Thus an enemy Tac R machine over our own troops is sufficient of an event for all to note, and those that are unduly congested do more than note it. They disperse. The remaining sorties throughout the day are sent over the enemy rear areas to locate his reserves. The area will be very wide, so great economy of sorties is necessary.

Tac R pilots become known by name to the army through the A.I.L.O. after quite short periods; and there is probably many a modest pilot to day who would be startled to hear that he is known to some 5,000 soldiers as Bill So and So, the Australian expert on the Capuzzo area." The most famous was Andy Mc." Whenever the Germans seemed to be up to something and no news was available, Andy Mc's turn for Tac R was eagerly awaited, and he always solved the problem. He it was who flew at 50 feet along a newly made tank obstacle between Capuzzo and Halfaya and brought back full details of its nature. He was followed home by a German fighter in the middle of June and shot up as he landed. He gave in his Tac R report, and then died, having never left a job for the army uncompleted. The army mourned his loss widely and deeply, yet it is unlikely that Andy Mc ever knew that a single soldier knew his name. Perhaps one day the Tac R aces will have a fan mail. They deserve it.

Fighter pilots become known to the army in a different way. There are periodic fighter sweeps and specific sweeps to cover definite operations by patrols. The latter are asked for by the Army, and are very seldom refused, the former are arranged entirely by the Air Force, and frequently cover Photo R sorties. In these sweeps casualties inevitably occur, and a certain number of our fighter pilots land in the forward area either in their machine or by parachute. One or two of these fighter pilots have already been greeted on landing with the words "Hullo, you again!"

Bombers are more detached. They live a long way away, and normally work a long way the other way. However, they too have taken part recently in an occasion which may have a future. It was decided to carry out a harassing shoot at night on one of the enemy's defended localities. The Air Force were asked whether they would like to join in and they agreed with enthusiasm. The bomber pilots came forward and a plan was made. Artillery would shoot for 15 minutes, whilst the bombers would pick up the area in which the shells were falling. The gunners asked very searching questions of the pilots to ensure that they knew the

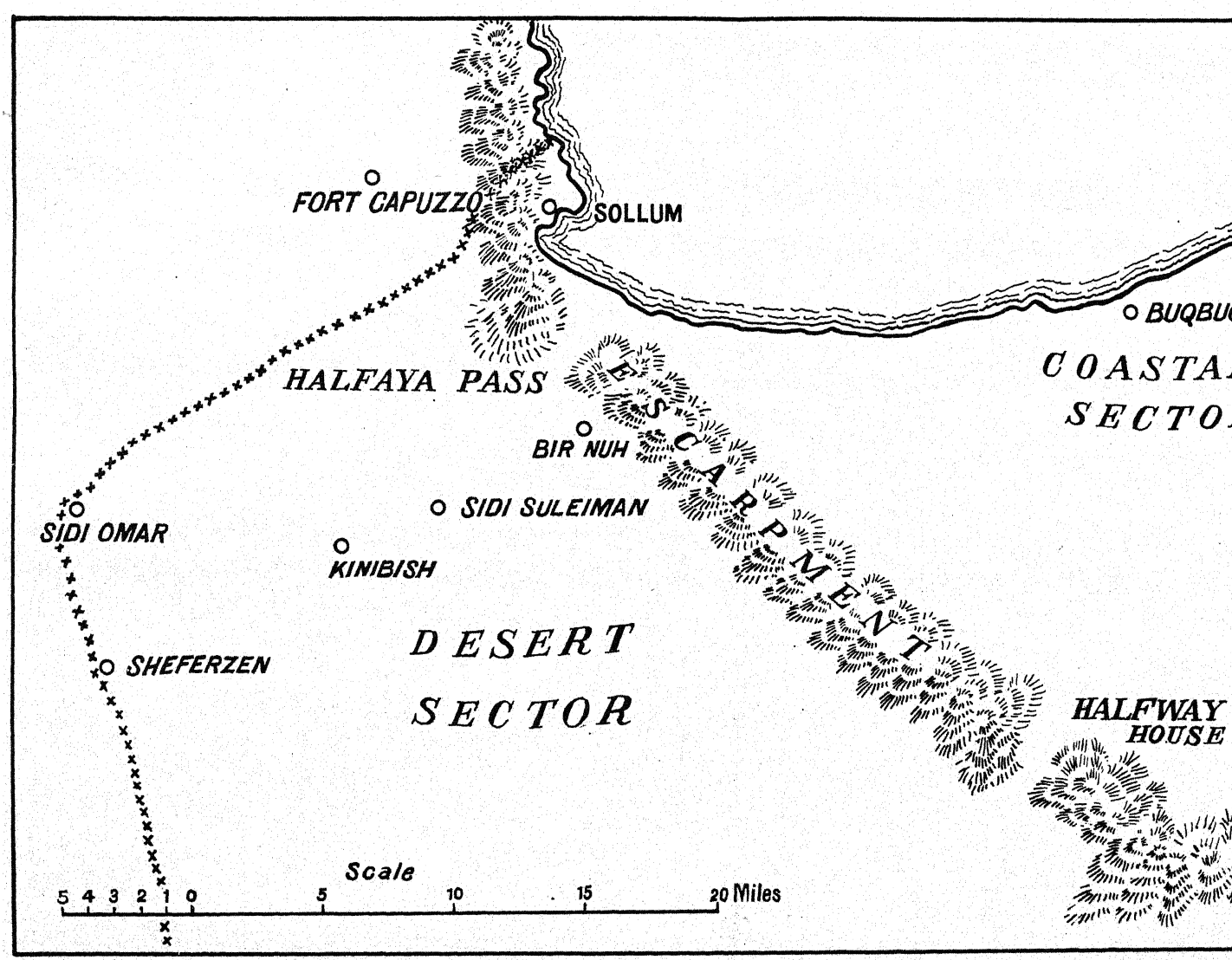
difference between a gun-flash and a shell-burst. It seemed to be important to them. The bombers were to drop flares whilst the guns were still firing and then take up the tale with bombs. Finally, the guns would give a parting period of rapid fire and the incident would close. On the chosen night all went to plan, and even better, for the bombers found that with their flares they could see without difficulty both the shell-bursts and the details of the target. Had the guns been missing the target, which they were not, the bombers could have put them right. It was a re-birth to Arty R that has been quickly exploited.

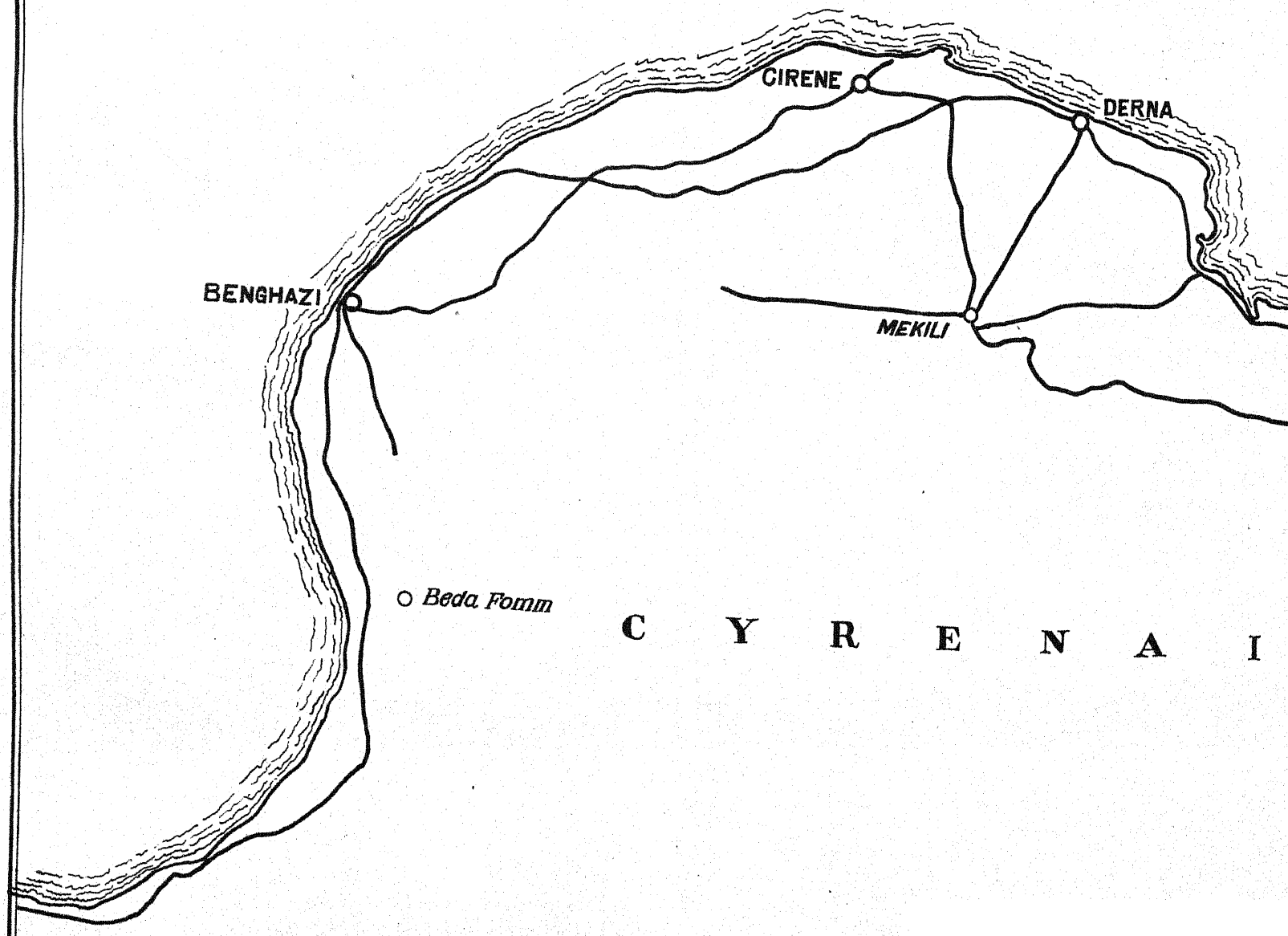
The Germans now have many an unhappy night lying in the light of a parachute flare waiting whilst the gunfire is brought their way.

* * *

In leaving the desert men will have varied anticipations. The first bath for three months, the sight of something really green, the sight of a house, or a tree or a woman or a cold whisky and real soda. But there will be many who come back just listening for some peaceful sound. In the desert there are no voices except those of soldiers, no patter of childish feet, no dogs to bark, cocks to crow, or birds to sing. Leave comes after three months, and after that time a Bedouin woman screeching at her young can be music in one's ears.

THE WESTERN DESER




CIRENE
DERNA
BENGHAZI
MEKILI
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C Y R E N A I

POLITICS AND PUBLICITY IN GREECE

By G. Mackworth Young,

Director of the British School of Archæology in Athens.

The following impressions of Greece as it was just before and during the war may interest readers of the Journal, particularly those who are unacquainted with the country, and to whom the magnificent resistance of its people may have come as a surprise. The writer lived in Greece continuously, except for short vacation, from the autumn of 1932 until the German invasion in April, 1941. During the war, he was employed by the Ministry of Information as Director of Publicity under the British Minister in Athens.

The psychology of the modern Greek shows many points of resemblance with that of his great ancestors. Foremost among these is his passion for independence. Independence of the country, of the individual, of the intellect—these are not merely worshipped as ideals, but are assumed as the normal and necessary conditions of existence. "You have shown the world," said Metaxas in his message to the citizens of Salonica after the first murderous air bombardment of the city, "that life has no interest for you unless you can live it as free men." It may seem strange that a people imbued with such sentiments should at that moment have been governed by a dictatorate on the Fascist model; and stranger still that the words just quoted should have been uttered by the dictator himself. But the paradox, as we shall see, was more apparent than real.

Another characteristic which the modern Greek has inherited from ancient times is his absorption in politics. Politics are the atmosphere that he breathes, and political discussion his favourite pastime. Though generally a devoted and self-proclaimed adherent of one cause, he is fully prepared to argue at a moment's notice in favour of any other, and will repeat with satisfaction a saying, said to have originated in Italy, that wherever there are two Greeks, there are five political parties. During the war, it was as well to keep this latter propensity in mind whenever individual Greeks were reported to hold pro-German views. Politics pervade every walk of life, dividing communities and even families into hostile camps. The inherent good nature and commonsense of the Greeks normally keep the factious spirit within bounds, and their quick sense of humour enables them to

enjoy the Gilbertian situations that often occur. But there are times when the current of partisanship sweeps them off their feet. It is then that acts of tyranny are committed which perpetuate feuds and encourage the vicious circle of grievances and reprisals. A revolution, whether successful or suppressed, involves not only the imprisonment or exile, or even the execution, of leaders, but usually also the dismissal of public servants suspected of sympathizing with the defeated party, and their replacement by relatives or adherents of those in power. It is not difficult to imagine the state of insecurity and bitterness thus created. Greece is a poor country. Her plutocracy, with few exceptions, accumulate their wealth in foreign countries, and hold it in foreign currencies. The remainder have a hard struggle for existence and the competition for posts in the public services is therefore at the best of times acute.

These evils which, one must remember, were equally characteristic of the ancient Greek states in the height of their vigour, are humorously admitted by the Greeks of to-day. Some years ago the writer, on accepting an invitation to join the Athens Choir, received a complimentary letter announcing his election, and expressing the hope that he would long continue to take part in the activities of "this cultural and non-political organization." It was indeed a growing weariness of party strife that led to the establishment of the dictatorate in 1936, though it did not put an end, unfortunately, to party jealousies and suspicions.

Cradled as the Greeks are in politics at home, they possess an unusual capacity for understanding the international situation and the politics of other countries. This facility is by no means confined to the townspeople. In the years before the war, Englishmen taking part in discussions in village cafés, might hear a very clear appreciation of the aims of Germany and Italy, together with some biting comments on the policy of appeasement, and on individual statesmen associated with it. During the war, friendly critics of our broadcasts in Greek (these included a former Prime Minister) would often beg us to remind the B.B.C. that the standard of political intelligence among artisans and agricultural labourers in Greece was the highest in Europe and that it was useless to "talk down" to them, or to teach them where their own interests lay.

The political sagacity of the Greeks had consequences of the utmost value and importance. In the first place, it overcame internal differences and the unpopularity of the government, and enabled Greece to enter the war with a

solidarity that any nation might have envied. In his tactful but firm dealings with Germany, his contemptuous defiance of Italy, and his noble efforts for Britain, Metaxas counted, and counted rightly, as much on the intelligence of his countrymen as on their other virtues. The only point of difference among Greeks, after the war with Italy had begun, was whether Metaxas was leading the people, as his supporters claimed, or whether, as the Venizelists maintained, the people were leading him. Secondly, it was political intelligence, combined with their love for England, that rendered the Greeks impervious to German propaganda. They had already gathered all that they needed to know of the Nazi character and aims, and had formed their own conclusions, before the war began. They enjoyed moreover a flair for propaganda which would have detected methods far less obvious than those of the Germans. German propaganda in Greece was formidable in its bulk and persistence, but not for its content. It made work for the government, but never affected the public.

To these two outstanding features of the Greek character, their passion for independence and their political sense, we must add a third, which has just been mentioned, their love of England and the English. "Friendship" is too colourless a term for this feeling, which dominates the foreign outlook of the nation, and abides independently of the vicissitudes of either country. The Venizelists have no monopoly of it, nor is it peculiar to any section of society. It is strongly ingrained in the people as a whole, and even more strikingly apparent among those who cannot speak English than among those who can. "We are fond of the English," the villagers say, and give no further explanation. Any Greek will admit that the proportion of Anglophiles in the country stands at not less than 90 per cent. Some place it higher. It seems strange that a bond so close should exist between peoples differing so widely from each other in race, language, religion and temperament. Much is attributable, no doubt, to history, to the lives of the great British Philhellenes and to acts of friendship such as the cession of the Ionian Islands and the liberation of Crete. Byron, Canning and Gladstone have prominent statues in the capital, and there are many streets named after British worthies. Yet other nations can, and do, boast their Philhellenes. More is due to the long-sighted political intelligence of Greeks, who see in the survival of British power the best prospects for their own destiny. But neither historical associations nor self-interest, nor both together, offer a complete explanation. We must seek it rather in an underlying similarity

of character, transcending the obvious and superficial differences. The sentiment is easier to illustrate than to describe. It finds unconscious expression in the first person plural. "Our mistake," observed a mason at work on the British School early in 1939, "was not exterminating the Germans after the last war." "Shall we eat (i.e., defeat) them (the Germans)?" asked a brilliant young musician in October 1939. "What I say to my chaps is 'This is a big war: we must expect some hard knocks'"—this from a leading member of the staff of a great Athens daily after the sinking of the Royal Oak. A taxi-driver depositing the writer at his house one night in July, 1940, clutched his arm and said anxiously, "Tell me, are we going to win?" One had only to read the jubilation in the faces and demeanour of the ordinary crowds in the streets after, for instance, the sinking of the *Graf Spee,* and their dejection after a German success, to realise the unity of their feelings with ours. Our troops, during the withdrawal, saw this love of Britain translated into action, and many of them owe their lives to it.

We may now briefly survey the state of affairs in Greece before the outbreak of war. The internal situation which had fluctuated for many years, became, after the failure of the Venizelist rising in March 1935, utterly chaotic. The Royalist party, seeing their opportunity, organized the restoration of the monarchy and the return of the exiled King in October of that year. It was a wise move and one which the great majority of the nation welcomed at heart, though it was achieved with the help of a faked election in which the number of recorded votes for the King's return was said to have outnumbered the total electorate by several thousands. Unfortunately, the Royalists who had engineered the *coup d'etat* lacked the vision and statesmanship to use it for the advantage of their country. Their sole object was to concentrate power in their own hands. In the absence of any attempt to sink differences, the chaos continued. Eventually, after an indecisive general election in the summer of 1936, the King appointed General Metaxas President of the Council of Ministers with dictatorial powers, and the parliamentary system, which had long ceased to function, came officially to an end.

The government of Metaxas had thus been in power for three years at the outbreak of the war in September 1939. It continued until the end of January 1941, when Metaxas died three months after Greece entered the war against Italy. This

is not the place in which to attempt a detailed criticism of its acts and policies; but some description of it is necessary in order to understand the situation in Greece at the outbreak of the war and during its earlier phases. On the material side, the dictatorate undoubtedly pulled the country together, although some Venizelists would strenuously deny this. There were, inevitably, elements of absolutism, coercion and repression in its methods. The Press was virtually muzzled and remained so during the first year of the war. All editorial comment was absolutely forbidden. This measure, which was introduced originally in order to stifle criticism of the government, was later extended, to cover all aspects of foreign affairs and the progress of the war itself. Journalists and politicians who incurred the displeasure of the authorities were liable to be imprisoned or banished to an island. The secret police was organized on lines somewhat resembling the German and Fascist models. Its activities, although mild in comparison with its prototypes, were strongly resented. The same dislike extended to the *Neolaia*, a youth organization of the Fascist type, in which the Premier himself took the greatest pride and interest. Though much abused and derided, the *Neolaia* had its good points. But its main features, especially its compulsory character, were objectionable to the majority of Greeks, who saw in it at the best a waste of money and at the worst an organized attempt to influence their children. The administration could, however, point to considerable achievements, including a big programme of social legislation and a notable advance in public works and amenities. A measure of stability was restored to the currency. The Army was re-equipped. The behaviour of the police as a whole showed a marked improvement on the immediately preceding years. As conditions became more settled, complaints became rarer. Stories of the ill-treatment of political prisoners—never very well authenticated—were heard no longer. It was even suggested that certain statesmen who had escaped internment were chafing at the implied affront to their political consequence.

Although one might still suppose from conversation in some Venizelists salons that the country was groaning under a tyranny comparable to that of the Nazis, the average citizen, even if a Venizelist, would often admit that there were advantages in stable government, and that the suspension of party warfare was on the whole a blessing.

The government, however, could never be popular. Not only was the system directly at variance with Greek ideas of

liberty, but the Venizelists, who formed the bulk of the Opposition, found their leaders debarred from public office as well as from expressing their opinions openly. Several of these were imprisoned or interned, and there was the standing grievance of the Venizelist officers, numbering over a thousand, who had been removed in consequence of the revolt of 1935 and remained unemployed and in disgrace. These included the flower of the Army.

General Metaxas, great man though he was, did not attempt to solve these problems. His omission, if deliberate, can easily be understood. Party feeling at the time of his accession ran extraordinarily high. The rank and file of his administration, many of whom owed their positions to the elimination of political opponents, were unlikely to favour measures of conciliation or reinstatement. The Venizelists, as far as is known, made no overtures to the government and appeared, not without reason, to be implacable. Metaxas himself seems to have regarded his functions as those of a dictator in the original sense of that much deteriorated word. His first task, as he saw it, was to restore order and stability in the political and economic life of his countrymen. When war came, he rightly regarded himself as their only possible leader. It is doubtful whether he looked further ahead. His enemies accused him of purely personal ambitions. His friends declared that he would retire joyfully to his native island of Cephallonia as soon as his work was done. The latter picture was probably nearer the truth: but, whatever his intentions may have been, the facts are that he was an old man approaching 70 when he took office, and that his health was uncertain. He died without having laid plans either for a return to parliamentary government or for ensuring the continuance of his own regime.

The internal political situation had no practical effect upon Greek feeling towards Britain; but it did lead to some confusion and occasionally to unfounded suspicions. Those Venizelists whose main objective was a change of Government at first endeavoured to persuade their English friends that the existing administration was not only illiberal, which was to some extent true, but also anti-British, which was very far from the truth. The leopard, they said, could not change his spots: the Metaxas of 1939 was still the Metaxas of 1916. This, if correct, as it probably was, merely proved what many have asserted, that the Metaxas of 1916 was not anti-British. When it became clear to all that Metaxas

himself both desired and counted on the ultimate victory of the Allies, stress was laid rather upon suspected pro-German elements in the subordinate ranks of his administration and upon the alleged progress of German bribery and Fifth Column activities. The volume and persistence of German pamphlet propaganda was attributed to the connivance of the police, who were, in point of fact, doing their best to check it. Individual officials were reported to be in German pay. This may have been true in a few instances, but the allegation arose more often out of party or personal rivalries. Some high provincial officials, particularly in certain islands, deliberately adopted an anti-British pose, presumably in order to harass their political opponents. There seems no other explanation of their conduct, for popular sentiment was too overwhelmingly pro-British to be affected by it. Internal political differences were similarly responsible for most of the friction between officials of the Ministries of Press and Internal Security on the one side, and individual journalists on the other. Since the latter were invariably Anglophile, the real issue was sometimes confused. In the case of both Ministries there seemed ground occasionally for supposing that the authorities were not altogether friendly towards us. But, as events proved, this inference was very wide of the mark.

Of popular sympathy with the Germans, there was none. Among the classes in which, if anywhere, one might expect to find it, the tobacco growers and merchants of Macedonia, the learned classes, the archæologists, theologians, doctors and lawyers, who had been educated at German Universities, the musicians whose connections were largely German—the general attitude was precisely the same as elsewhere. A few Greeks who had married in Germany enjoyed unenviable repute as pro-Germans, but had no other importance.

Among such was Professor Logothetopoulos, an obstetrician, whom the Germans have since appointed Minister of Education. After the French collapse, a society of "Friends of Hitler" was conceived by Logothetopoulos and a few others, no doubt at the instigation of the Germans. But it died in the womb as soon as British prospects improved. Many Greek men of letters who have been educated in Germany dislike the Germans intensely. Even old-fashioned Royalists, who had some admiration for Imperial Germany, retained no such feeling towards Germans of the Third Reich. Out of thirteen morning and evening papers in Athens, one only could be called pro-German. It had next to

no circulation, and was believed to subsist on German pay. Anti-German incidents were frequent after the Anschluss. Englishmen, mistaken for Germans, were liable to be insulted and even hustled, until they declared their nationality, when genial apologies were always forthcoming. A German lady who had lived for 15 years in Greece complained that, whereas she had always been treated with courtesy in the past, she was now-a-days greeted with cries of "German scoundrel" by children in the streets. A Greek who was sending a parcel to Vienna asked the post office clerk how it should be addressed. A German standing by at once made a scene, shouting, in provocative tones, "Put Germany: there is no Austria now." A free fight ensued, in which the culprit and other Germans who came to the rescue were severely mauled. The police arrested a number of persons on either side, but soon released them and took no further action. The correctness of the story cannot be vouched for, but this version was all over Athens within two days of the occurrence. A German lady went into a provision store and gave her order while the shopman was serving someone else. He asked her to wait. Soon after, she repeated her order, insisting that she was a German, and must therefore be attended to at once. "But that is just why I told you to wait," replied the shopman adroitly, "the lady I am serving is French." In 1938, the Frankfort Opera came to Athens on a propaganda tour. Outwardly the visit went off well, though the performances were not remarkable. But when a second visit was proposed for the next year, the Greek authorities declined on the ground that they could not undertake to prevent hostile demonstrations. A multitude of other examples could be quoted, were it not undesirable to publish particulars at the present time.

Anti-German feeling was so strong that the word Germanophile became virtually a term of abuse. Alternatively, Greeks would say that there were no Germanophiles in Greece, but only "Germanoplektoi," persons obsessed by fear of Germany. This was more or less true.

The Germans openly acknowledged the Greeks' love of Britain, and tacitly accepted their contempt for Italy and their dislike (to put it no higher than that) of Germany itself. German propaganda made no effort to counter these sentiments, recognizing that the attempt would be futile. Greek independence of character and Greek political ideals made it equally useless to endeavour to convert the Greeks to Nazi doctrines, while their subtlety and political acumen rendered them a very unpromising subject for cloaked propaganda or Fifth Column activities. The

Germans therefore resorted exclusively to the war of nerves. They sought to unsettle the public mind by the efficiency and volume of their output of printed matter, and gradually to induce a mood of panic and despair by the sheer brutality of its contents. There was no appeal to reason and virtually no concealment of malign intentions. Even before the war, from 1938 onwards, tourists on *"Kraft durch Freude"* cruises had spoken openly of the occupation of Salonica: and there was a sensational incident in the autumn of that year, when a member of the German Archaeological Institute, losing his temper during a quarrel with a Greek, publicly threatened his opponent and the bystanders with reprisals by the Gestapo. As soon as the war began, the country was flooded with books and pamphlets, mostly dealing with atrocities alleged to have been perpetrated, no matter when, by Britain or her Allies. The Boer War, the Denshawei incident of 1907 and even the Indian Mutiny were drawn upon, grotesquely distorted and garnished with the crudest of faked photographs. Thousands of copies of the infamous book of alleged Polish atrocities, with ghastly pictures of mutilated corpses, were dumped upon the bookstalls or left in private houses, together with masses of other material of the same kind, German "White Books," translations of Hitler's speeches, magazines and drawings occasionally humorous, but more often deliberately repulsive. The Greek Government at first exempted the official publications of foreign governments from the general prohibition on propaganda, but when it became evident that nothing was too scurrilous for the imprimatur of the Nazi government, this privilege was withdrawn as far as Germany was concerned. In spite of the delicacy of the situation, for at that time Greece neither was nor wished to be involved in war with Germany, the police were authorized to confiscate German pamphlets and books wholesale and to arrest persons who were found distributing them. As many as twenty-two thousand copies of one publication are known to have been seized, and nine thousand of another.

German war films exhibited the same terrorist features. They had to be shown privately at the German Legation or on premises owned by it, since the Government prohibited the exhibition of any war items in public cinemas, so long as Greece was not herself at war. A number of Greek officers went to see *Feuertaube,* the film of the Polish campaign, as a matter of professional interest. *Sieg im Westen,* the film of the campaign in France, was also on view at the German Legation shortly before Germany declared war on Greece. But this time no Greeks attended.

A more respectable form of German propaganda was the mailing of two thousand copies of the daily *Frankfurter Zeitung*, and the weekly *Hamburger Nachrichten* indiscriminately to individuals. The distribution of these respectable journals was something of a parergon, as few of the addressees could read German. Quite a number of them were dead. The writer saw a large pile of copies of the *Frankfurter Zeitung* with their wrappers still uncut in the corner of a shop. "I don't know why they bother to send these things," said the proprietor, "nobody looks at them."

German illustrated periodicals were more dangerous, mainly as a result of the greater difficulty of obtaining papers from England. In particular, a war-time illustrated called *Signal*, produced in German, French and English, with occasional columns in Greek and other languages, seemed at one time likely to make headway. It was a handsome publication, supplied gratis, half the sale-price of 10 drachmas (4½d.), going to the news agent, and half to the vendor. Its very cheapness, however, stamped it as propaganda, and militated against its success. Later on, the authorities decided to treat all printed matter published by a belligerent power in any language but its own as illicit. This was a welcome decision, as many more Greeks can read French or English than German. *Signal* in German was harmless. After the French armistice, however, it was allowed for a time in French also.

No system of propaganda is deemed worthy of the name unless it includes a whispering campaign. That of the Germans was conducted principally by well-paid agents who uttered items of news or comments favourable to the Axis, in tones which were anything but whispers, in cafés, restaurants, and other public places and vehicles. These gentlemen did not lightly earn their pay. Besides being closely watched by the police, they incurred some bodily risk from the hands of the public. One of them, who expressed satisfaction in a tram at the torpedoing of an Allied grain ship, was severely beaten by his fellow passengers during the journey, and again, somewhat less severely, by the police on arrival. Some 'whispering' also was done by members of the German Legation and consulates: but this form of propaganda loses most of its venom when the source is known.

German broadcasts in Greek were on a lavish scale, amounting to four transmissions daily. Containing as they did little news and much propaganda, they could be, and were, more specially directed to Greek listeners than the Greek news bulletins

of the B.B.C., but, like the rest of German propaganda, they consisted mainly of menaces and abuse. The Berlin announcer, Kyriakis, a Cretan, was held in general detestation as a renegade and traitor, not only in his own island, but throughout Greece. The broadcasts were ineffective because they contained nothing to which Greeks wanted to listen. German pamphlets, it is true, similarly contained nothing which the Greeks wanted to read. But whereas a pamphlet sent through the post or pushed under a door has at least a nuisance value, no one can be compelled to tune-in a broadcast from a foreign country, if he does not wish to hear it. The Germans did what they could to force their broadcasts on the public by bribing or cajoling café proprietors into turning them on. In Crete, this action led to the destruction of the radio sets in at least two cafés by the enraged customers. The object of the Germans was not to secure a hearing for their own broadcasts but to obstruct ours. In this they partially suceeded. The authorities, to avoid further trouble, forbade the reproduction of any foreign broadcast in Greek in cafés and other public resorts. The ban came into force in the summer of 1940; but was relaxed, in favour of British broadcasts only, soon after the entry of Greece into the war. While it was operative, it did little, if any, harm. In Athens it was neutralized by the large number of private sets, and the fact that the latest British news was always available in the morning and evening papers. In the provinces, it seems to have been a dead letter. British broadcasts were at any rate turned on whenever Englishmen were present.

The Germans also scored an illusive victory over the British Legation news bulletin. This was a daily summary of the British wireless news, with an occasional commentary, produced originally in English only, for the benefit of the Legation and the British community. A widespread demand for it among Greeks, however, necessitated a Greek version, which soon reached an issue of several thousands, increasing at the rate of a thousand, every week. After a time the Germans produced a very objectionable imitation which so embarrassed the Government that they eventually stopped both bulletins. The British Bulletin was then reaching the climax of its popularity, and had already begun to exceed the means of duplication and distribution at our disposal. Psychologically, the decision, which was taken by Metxas himself, came at the right moment for us.

The Germans adopted the same bullying tactics in their dealings with the daily Press, with singular ill-success. Nowhere is Greece's spirit of independence more conspicuous than among her

extremely able journalists. It was useless to bribe or threaten any newspaper of standing, partly for this reason, and partly because even the suspicion of Axis bias in a paper led to a drop in its circulation. Accordingly, the German Legation tried to coerce the Press through the Ministry of Press and the Censorship. Editors were perpetually being called to order for exceeding their ration of British news and giving insufficient prominence to Axis messages. Public opinion would not be denied however, and the Ministry's half-hearted remonstrances were never sustained for long. Meanwhile, it was interesting to note how much extra matter of a distinctly British complexion, often curiously reminiscent of British broadcasts, continued to find its way into the papers under neutral date-lines, or headed "Our special service."

The British position in Greece, contrasting as it did with that of the Germans at almost every point, called for a different publicity technique. The Government and the people were our staunch friends. They were also as good judges as ourselves, if not better, of the European situation: they were certainly better judges of their own. What the public and the Press most wanted from us was, firstly, reliable news, and secondly, evidence of British strength, resources and determination. In propaganda, we had the great advantage over the Germans that our material was in strong demand, while theirs was unwelcome. In counter-propaganda, it was better on the whole to appear to be doing too little than too much. The former might suggest to nervous persons that we were not alive to German activities, but the latter would have given ground for supposing that we ourselves feared the German propaganda, and distrusted our friends. German propaganda could best be left to defeat itself.

In personal contacts, the advantage rested entirely with us. The maintenance of Anglo-Greek cordiality owes not a little to members of the British community in Greece, merchants, bankers, shipping and insurance agents, engineers, officials of public utility corporations and the like. Such men are truly representative of their country, and a permanent medium of propaganda in the best sense of the word. The Germans were less fortunate. The older members of their community were out of sympathy with the Nazis, and consequently, the objective rather than the channel of German propaganda. Other German residents, nurses, mechanics, business agents, doctors, artists and archaeologists were suspected by the Greeks, with good reason, of playing a treacherous role; while the swarms of tourists, artists and commercial travellers who

infested the country before and during the war with their sub-human features, ready-made civilian clothes, and super-efficient cameras, aroused nothing but uneasiness and disgust.

The Anglo-Hellenic League, which had a membership of over three thousand in Athens and important branches in the provinces was a most valuable factor in social and cultural relations. No such emblem of spontaneous fellowship existed or could exist between Germans and Greeks. The recently founded British Council organization, consisting of institutes of English studies in Athens and Salonica and a number of branch schools, possessed immense potentialities for cultural influence. Although it started, as one Greek friend charitably observed, on the wrong foot, it was doing good work under a new head and with re-organized staffs by the autumn of 1940, when war necessitated the closure of all educational institutions.

The test came, in Greece as elsewhere, in the summer of 1940. The first news of the Norwegian campaign had filled the Greeks with enthusiasm. This was followed by deep disappointment when the truth became known. The publicity handling of the campaign from London was bitterly criticised and the reputation of British news messages and broadcasts suffered a severe blow. The failure in Norway was, however, soon dwarfed by the catastrophies which followed. The Greeks, shrewd observers though they were, seemed no more prepared than anyone else for the French collapse. It was in these dark days that the courage and nobility of the people shone out. Now, if ever, was the moment for a Fifth Column to make its appearance; but there was no sign of one. German propaganda had achieved less than nothing. Desperate as the future seemed, and genuinely alarmed as the Greeks were, they never turned colour. The Press Counsellor of the German Legation at an unofficial gathering of the Foreign Press Association in July declared that Britain would succumb within 10 days. His listeners politely begged leave to differ. "Oh, do smash those brutes!" an old lady called across the street in broad daylight to the writer at about the same time. When an Italian spokesman was quoted on the Greek wireless to the effect that it was now the task of the Italian Navy to seek out the British Mediterranean Fleet in its harbours and destroy it, the audience in a theatre where the news was being relayed burst into hearty laughter, in spite of their anxieties. The outstanding popular reaction to the events of the early summer was an intense revulsion of feeling against the French for having failed us. The news of Oran was received with the utmost satisfaction.

Meanwhile, the Greeks were enduring with exemplary forbearance an ever-increasing pressure of threats and provocation on the part of Italy. The forbearance was dictated wholly by expediency and not at all by fear. The public were well aware that large numbers of Greek troops had been assembled on the Albanian frontier, and though they did not want war with Italy, the possibility of it did not scare them. In spite of the growing evidence of Italy's malevolent intentions, the torpedoing of the Greek cruiser *Helle*, as she lay beflagged at Tenos on the Feast of Assumption, came as an incredible outrage. On this occasion, the authorities waived restrictions on editorial comment, insisting only on the fiction that the submarine was of unknown nationality. This qualification enabled the Press to give a fuller vent to their feelings than would have been possible had Italy been named.

The sinking of the *Helle* had one very significant result. It obliterated whatever vestige remained of pro-German feeling in Greece. "I'm through with the Germans after that," was the immediate reaction of the few individuals who had previously seemed to be influenced by the German victories. After the entry of Italy into the war (an event in itself very damaging to Greco-German relations), the Germans had given carefully veiled assurances from time to time, in their broadcasts and in conversation, that they would prevent Italy from harming Greece. The *Helle* incident showed what these assurances were worth.

With the outbreak of war between Greece and Italy, all German publicity in Greece was comprehensively suppressed. From thenceforward, no messages or photographs of German origin were reproduced in the Press and no German newspapers or periodicals were allowed on sale. The "whisperers" went out of action and were not heard again. All German printed and typed propaganda similarly disappeared for good. The *Neue Athener Zeitung*, the twice-weekly local organ of the German community was given a hint, which it took, to cease publication. These measures were put through without fuss and almost as a matter of course, although Greece was not at war with Germany.

The German broadcasts in Greek thus became the only available source of German news and propaganda in Greece, and for this reason attracted more attention than hitherto. All "whispers" of enemy origin could be traced to them. Much of their material was obviously supplied from the German Legation in Athens. They were monitored in detail by the Greek Government, and countered promptly and effectively in the Greek Radio and Press.

From now onwards we worked in collaboration with the Government. Every facility was extended to us. The newspapers had unrestricted use of British material, and added to it much of their own which made better propaganda than anything that we could supply. British newsreels and war films from the Middle East drew enthusiastic crowds to the picture houses. Our photographs and posters were to be seen every where. The Government, with our assistance, organized a series of news and propaganda broadcasts in foreign languages, including English, French, German, Turkish, Bulgarian and Serbian. We took an active part in most of these, and were invited to contribute to all. During the summer of 1940, the Government had suspended all newspapers in foreign languages, including even the semi-official *Messager d'Athènes,* the oldest paper in Athens. This ban was removed in September. The moment seemed ripe for the publication of an English paper. A weekly paper *News of the Week* was accordingly produced, its first number coinciding unexpectedly with Italy's declaration of war on Greece. The paper was cordially welcomed. It proved a notable success, and its issues had risen above 12,000 copies weekly—a high figure for Greece—when the end came.

TROUT FISHING NOTES FOR BEGINNERS

By Lieut.-Colonel R. B. Phayre, m.c.

Owing to the curtailment of furlough to the United Kingdom there has been an abnormal run on the various trout waters in India which have been filled to capacity. After heavy spells of office work, there is perhaps no greater relaxation than a pleasant camp in a secluded valley amid beautiful surroundings with a chance of casting a fly on a well-stocked stream.

Many of these anglers have not indulged in fly-fishing since the days of their youth. Some have never even attempted it, neither have their ladies who usually insist on taking out an additional licence. It is for such as these that the following elementary notes have been compiled. As the initial outfit is of considerable importance it must be discussed in detail.

1. *RODS AND TACKLE.*

Owing to war conditions the supply from the United Kingdom has been greatly reduced. Prices at home have risen considerably, in addition to that, the heavy customs' duty has about doubled the pre-war prices. In spite of these difficulties there is still a reasonable stock available at the various tackle shops.

(a) *Rods.*—For wet fly-fishing a split cane rod of from 9 to 10′, preferably a two-piece, should be selected. It should be of fairly stiff action and weigh from about 5 to 7 ounces. If too heavy it is unduly fatiguing. Examine it to see that it is straight; bend it to see that the curve is an even one; waggle it downwards to test that it comes to rest quickly. Then fit on a reel to test for balance; normally the point of balance should be about 4″ above the top of the hand as it grips the cork handle. The banks of many of our Indian streams are covered with trees which often limit the manipulation of a 10′ rod, for such occasions. It often pays to have a light 7′ rod in addition, but this is not an absolute necessity. It is harder to cast a long line with a short rod.

(*b*) *Reels.*—It is most important that a type of reel advised by the makers to suit the rod should be part of the equipment Line capacity and weight are the primary considerations. In India large trout may

be encountered so it is undesirable to have *less* than 100 yards of line, some anglers insist on having 150 yards. This need not consist entirely of dressed line and the rest can be backing.

A reel should be easily taken down for cleaning and oiling and needs constant attention. The check should be just sufficient to prevent over-running.

(*c*) *Lines.*—As already stated some 40 yards of dressed line will usually be found sufficient to attach to the backing. Tapered line, which is essential for dry fly-fishing, is not so important in wet fly; although it is easier to cast, it is more expensive, consequently a straight line of the 'Kingfisher' type is recommended, in cases where expense is a consideration.

Just as the reel should match the rod, similar matching is required for the correct weight of line. If the line is too heavy or too light casting will be seriously impaired; any competent dealer should be in a position to advise on this point. As regards breaking strains, the weakest link should be at the bait and the strongest at the backing, if this principle is not observed a great deal of unnecessary tackle may be lost when the angler has been caught up on a snag.

Lines in the East deteriorate so quickly that they need constant care and attention. It is essential to dry them after use. When a line is in condition, on unwinding the reel, it should hang down straight with the curve.

(*d*) *Landing Nets.*—A stout staff of about 4′ to 5′ is desirable (preferably of ash). It should have brass caps top and bottom, both recessed for a universal screw.

The top end should take:—

(*i*) folding landing net, or

(*ii*) gaff,

the bottom end:

(*iii*) a combined spike and hook (for releasing tackle), or

(*iv*) a combined spike and cutter.

The landing net frame should be of jointed metal with a diameter of not less than 18 inches. The net should be rather square and not pointed at the apex.

(*e*) *Casts.*—The best casts of all are gut casts but their supply has been seriously curtailed owing to war conditions. They are expensive and deteriorate very quickly, in the East especially, after being soaked and then exposed to the sun. The cost has risen to between Rs. 2/- to Rs. 3/- each.

Gut substitute '(there are many makes on the market) is usually sold in lengths of 5 yards, but it is more economical to buy in reels of 100 yards. It is stronger than natural gut but must be discarded as soon as it frays. The cost works out at about -/1/- a yard. It is sold in sizes (size O being the finest); size 3 is a useful strength for normal wet fly fishing. It has a disadvantage of slipping at the knots consequently these must be very carefully tied; a figure-of-eight knot is recommended. Avoid cutting off the ends too close to the knots. Six feet of cast will usually be sufficient with one dropper tied 2/3rds of the length of the cast above the tail fly. Always soak your casts before use or before tying any knots.

(*f*) *Hooks.*—The best hooks for wet fly are those with down-turned eye and deep rounded bend. The points must be kept very sharp. Test on the thumb nail; the point should catch on the nail; if it does not, sharpen with a file, or on a carborundum stone. For those who tie their own flies Allcocks 'Model Perfect' hooks give very good results.

(*g*) *Gut Mounts.*—As gut deteriorates so quickly in this country wire mounts are preferable to gut, both for lures and minnows. It should be remembered that whilst iron rusts gut will perish. It is no difficult matter to substitute wire for gut and this should be done whenever possible.

(*h*) *Spinners.*—On many waters spinning is permissible. The most acceptable form of minnow is the Devon and reflex Devon of about $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches in length. Plugs, both jointed and unjointed are also good killers.

Too many flights of hooks should be avoided as they usually catch up One single treble is quite sufficient. The distance from the end of the bead to the extremity of the triangle should be about

½″ in the case of a 1″ minnow and 1″ for a 2″ minnow.

(*i*) *Wire traces.*—The secret of success is to fish as fine as you dare. A 5 lb. breaking strain should be quite sufficient. Many good fish are lost owing to failure to examine traces; if wire kinks at all, discard it. Bought traces are expensive; it is simplest to make up your own at a fraction of the cost; all that is required are small link swivels and box swivels—the fewer the better. To attach wire to swivels insert a pin between the ring of the swivel and the crossed wire, twist the ends of the wire round themselves for about 5 turns, finishing up with a few round turns of the short end. When using weights, the weight should be attached above the main (usually the top) swivel.

(*j*) *Flies.*—Every angler has his own particular fancies. The answer to the problem is to learn to tie your own flies. It is quite a simple matter and adds 50 per cent. to the enjoyment of catching your trout, and in addition it cuts down the cost of these luxuries for they can be dressed at one twentieth of the cost of purchased ones. If you must buy flies, avoid the heavy over-dressed type the feathers of which protrude beyond the bend of the hook. As a general principle the tail fly should sink below the surface and the dropper (with its 3″ of gut) be on, or just below, the surface. In clear and low water, the flies should be dark and small; in heavy water, larger and more coloured, often with tinsel bodies.

It is unnecessary to lay in an enormous stock of flies.

The following are renowned killers in India.

Flies.—Silver Doctor, Coachman, Teal and Green, Alexandra, Golden Lion Invicta, Butcher.

Flies and Lures.—Jock Scott, Peacock, Watsons' Fancy, Green Highlander, March Brown and Jungle Cock.

For both flies and lures one inch is usually a sufficient length for the tail fly and about half that size for the dropper.

In the case of lures the barb and point of the rear hook should be upwards *i.e.* barb amongst the feathers, the front hook should be below the body, facing downwards.

(*k*) *Care of Rods and tackle.*—It so frequently occurs that the heaviest fish are lost. If a post-mortem is held on the incident it will often transpire that it is really the fault of the angler—weak gut a perished line, a carelessly tied knot or a kinked trace. All tackle should be carefully dried after use and also inspected both before and *during* fishing to ensure that it is sound. If this were always done methodically, there would be far fewer complaints about losing good fish.

2. *CASTING*

At home it is comparatively simple to obtain lessons in casting from a qualified professional. In India the situation is quite different, for, unless the beginner can enlist the help of a friend, he is left to the tender mercies of shikaris who are usually worse than useless. As it is an easy matter to practise casting on any stretch of lawn, a few elementary methods are outlined.

Imagine you have a lump of mud on a stick which you want to flick off as far as possible. You will, probably, raise the stick behind your head and bring it through an angle of 45 degrees, checking it sharply so that the lump will fly forward. This example conveys the rough idea of casting.

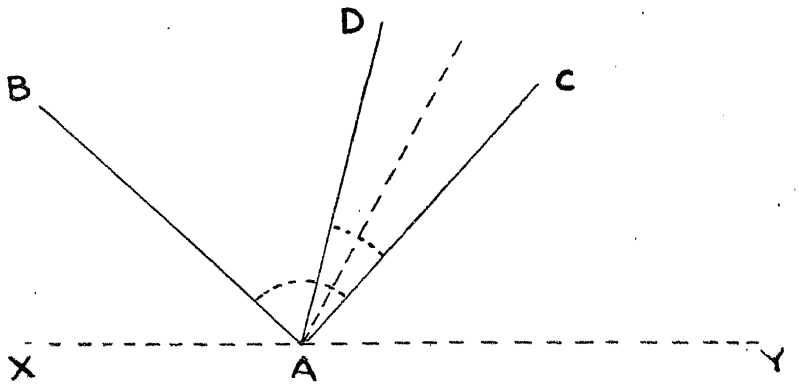
With a rod and line you have the action of the top joint to help you.

(*a*) Backward motion; to lift the line off the water so that it travels back to its fullest extent.

(*b*) Forward motion; to use the action of the rod to flick the line forward in the required direction. Just as in the swing of a club in golf, it is all a question of timing, and this timing can only be attained by practice. No force is required, the only snag is to avoid the whip-like crack which will probably snap off the fly.

Hold the rod by the cork grip with the thumb pointing up the rod. Look behind you to see that there are no obstructions. Start your practice with a *short* line gradually letting out more line as you attain proficiency. Your object is to drop your fly on a selected target on the water, consequently you have to get out enough line to reach this spot. Drawing off line from the

reel with the left hand make false casts until there is sufficient line to reach the target. If the bait falls with a splash on the water it will probably put the fish down, consequently the object is to straighten out the line about 2 feet *above* the target, lowering the rod to let it drop *lightly* on the water. For beginners this can best be learnt by a count of four and can be most clearly explained by diagram.



Supposing XY to be the water line, the horizontal position of the rod will be about AB. When casting it is a mistake to take the line too far back—a very common fault—90 degrees from AB to AC is quite sufficient.

Count one.—For slow recovery from the water—then a flick to AC to throw the line back.

Count two.—Pause until the line has *almost* reached the extreme length of its backward passage.

Count three.—Forward cast with a flick of the rod at the commencement *i.e.* from AC to AD.

Count four.—Allow line to straighten 2 foot above the target then lower to AB.

Short line, short count; long line, long count. As soon as proficiency is attained counting is no longer necessary.

Side casting is equally effective and follows the same principles. There are, of course, a number of surer methods which can be studied later. For inaccessible places where back casting is impossible, a fish can sometimes be covered by 'catapulting.' Bend the rod like a bow by holding the fly on minnow with the left hand, then releasing it. Extra distance can sometimes be obtained (especially with a minnow) by first drawing off some line, allowing it to fall on the ground or by holding in the hand and then 'shooting' through the rings of the rod as the bait flies forward.

BAIT CASTING

Here again there is a knack in casting which can only be acquired by practice. Proficiency can be attained on any flat bit of ground before trying out the actual baits on the water. It is as well to start with a fairly heavy bait (say 2 ounces), working down later to the lighter ones. The larger the fish, the greater is it's cannibalistic tendency, consequently the chances of catching a heavy fish are greater with a minnow than with a fly, but it should be remembered that all waters are not open to minnow, so the fishing rules must be carefully studied.

Most reels have a stud or catch which allows them to 'free wheel.' In the more expensive types, it is often possible to adjust the tension to the weight of baits used. This is a great advantage as it prevents the curse of over-running. Modern ideas have centred in 'multiple' reels which wind in the line at a quadruple ratio—quick recovery of line is obviously a great advantage and enables the angler to cast *upstream*. A trout which may obstinately refuse a minnow fished downstream will sometimes attack the minnow when coming down fast with the current. Multiple reels are frequently used with a 5 foot steel rod; (they are obtainable in India from Messrs. A. E. Verona, 153 Dhurrumtollah Street, Calcutta, also from Manton & Co.).

Threadline fishing is fascinating, for a heavy fish can be beaten by a minute silk line of 6 lbs. breaking strain. The gear required is a 7 foot split cane rod and a thread-line reel of which there are many makes, The 'Helical' has proved to be one of the most reliable. These fixed spool reels are expensive for they have a watch-like mechanism with a slipping clutch and an adjustable tension. It always exerts the same pressure on a fish. Casting is effortless and a light bait can be cast an incredibly long distance. If expense is not of great consideration, a threadline outfit is strongly recommended.

For normal casting, assuming your target is at 12 o'clock on an imaginary clockface, point the left shoulder at the target with your rod pointing to 3 o'clock at an angle of about 45 degrees above the horizontal. Swing back the bait to 6 o'clock, then swing, forwards and upwards, evenly and without jerking and without any excessive effort, the 'action' of the upper portion of the rod will do the work. With lighter baits you may have to swing back to 9 o'clock.

When casting with threadline the projecting should be almost flat; if force is used, it diminishes the power.

WHERE TO FISH

"Time spent in reconnaissance is seldom wasted." Your object is to find out where the fish are lying and for this it is necessary to know a little about the habits of the trout. They usually have their own 'lies' and wait expectantly for any food that may be coming down, consequently any junctions of streams or tributaries are always favourable places. A few good fish will usually be found in the rough water of dams, they will also be found lying in the deep hollows below banks and in holes formed by eddies. They like shelter from a hot sun and protection from the force of a strong current, so they may be sought in shady spots, in the scourings behind rocks and also in the deep water at the tail of a pool.

They are sensitive to shadow cast by the angler or his rod and vibration of the ground. Consequently it is desirable to keep out of sight as much as possible using what cover is available. Avoid getting the sun directly behind you. Approach with as soft a tread as possible, keeping your shikari well out of sight. If these simple, common-sense methods are not observed, the angler does not give himself a chance.

Shikaris have little imagination and are terribly conservative. As a rule they will only take the newcomer to places where fish have been caught before, and this probably well-flogged water where the trout are shy. The fly should be presented as naturally as possible; a good fish may often attack only once, so particular care must be taken that the first cast is a good one. If fish refuse to take, don't continue to flog the same water, but go elsewhere, returning to the original spot after an interval of time, with perhaps a change of fly.

In a swift current the fly may not sink much below the surface whereas the fish may be lying deep; it often pays to cast *upstream* above a rock, allowing the current to suck in your fly past the sides of the rock. Draw in any surplus line with the left hand otherwise it will be impossible to tighten on the fish when it takes.

You should plan to cover the whole water. In wet fly fishing this usually means casting across and slightly downstream allowing your flies to sweep down until the line straightens, then either reel (or handline) in. A fish may be following and this is the time he usually takes. Pause for a few seconds and perhaps let *out* a little line before you commence to reel in. For the original cast you should attempt to drop your fly under the far

bank and this may mean letting out a good deal of line. Remember that several good fish may be lying under your own bank; if you approach the edge too closely you may disturb them before you start operations, so it often pays to cast down under your own bank first; in doing so it is necessary to keep back as far as possible, otherwise the least movement may give you away.

STRIKING

This is an important branch of the anglers' art and can only be learnt by experience. It does not mean a wild jab at the fish which may merely pull the fly out of its mouth. Tightening is a better definition; all that is required is to drive the barb home —the larger the fish the greater is the firmness required. If you can see the fish and it turns, tighten at once.

As a brief guide:

(*a*) Strike quick for: Upstream, small fish, fish attacking a dropper, rapid and shallow water.

(*b*) Strike slow for: big fish, slow water, surface rises and dapping.

More fish are lost through quick striking than by slow tightening.

PLAYING A FISH

Fight your trout and do not let him fight you; the longer he is in the water, the better are his chances of escape.

Always get below a fish if you can for he will then have to fight against the rod strain *and* the current which may drown him if it forces him to open his gills. The normal time taken in playing a fish is about one minute for each pound of its weight. Keep your line taut; if the fish wants to run, let him run, reeling in when the rush is over. Additional braking can be effected by fingertip control on the spool of the reel. Should he move upstream, follow him, reeling in as you go; excessive line on the water may result in a 'drowned line' and consequent loss of the fish.

POSITION OF THE ROD

The correct angle of the rod above the horizontal is from 60 degrees to 70 degrees. This is not a mere personal opinion but one confirmed by the experts. Many experiments were carried out and the results were published in the angling press some time ago. If the rod is held at 90 degrees there is a tendency either to pull the fish to the surface, or to make him bore standing with his head on the bottom in his endeavour to release the hook.

If a 10 foot trout rod is held at 30 degrees the pull is twice that exerted by the rod when held at 90 degrees. With a heavy salmon rod this ratio increases three or four times.

'Giving the butt' means lowering the rod to about 30 degrees with the rubber button in the vicinity of the stomach the strain thus falling on the lower, *i.e.* thickest, portion of the rod. It is often misinterpreted to imply *advancing* the butt, in which case the strain imposed is actually less.

For a jumping trout, lower the rod to the right or left, NOT to the front.

LANDING A FISH

The general rule at home is to use a net for a fish up to 5 lbs. and a gaff when over that weight. Never attempt to net a fish over 10 lbs.

At home the average angler nets or gaffs the fish himself. In India shikaris are notoriously bad at landing fish and, consequently, many are lost when actually brought to the net. Whilst playing the fish, the most suitable landing place should be settled. Play the fish out before attempting to land a large fellow; when he turns on his side for the third time, he is generally ready for the net, but keep a little loose line handy in case he makes a final rush.

The net should be wet; put a small stone in it to make it sink easily. Keep your net handy but concealed until the last minute. Your shikari should be out of sight also and not doing his war-dance on the bank. Slip the net into the water, downstream, below the fish and draw him over it, then raise the net drawing it slowly towards you—should you fail, lead your fish to another spot and try again.

Should the fish appear too large for the net to take him sideways, try to net him tail first rather than head first. A little loose line is still useful as you may strain, or even break, a rod tip when bringing him up the bank.

When using the gaff don't snatch. Put the gaff over the fish, between the head and dorsal fin, then draw with a firm stroke towards you and down on the back. Never attempt to gaff a struggling fish or one that is more than a foot below the surface. Put the gaff *behind* your line—not *over* it.

I have described these methods in greater detail in my book "Hints of Flying-fishing and Fly-tying" which is shortly to be published by Messrs. Thacker & Co., Bombay. I have also added chapters on elementary fly-tying and on what feathers should be selected for flying dressing.

HUNTING AND TRAINING FOR WAR

By Major-General A. V. T. Wakely, D.S.O., M.C.

In *The Onlooker* of October 1941 an article was published on Hunting and Training for War. The chief points made in that article were, first, that training of very great value to a soldier can be obtained while hunting, and that the mechanisation of the Army has increased the value of hunting as training for officers. Secondly, it was suggested that each day's hunting could and should be used to give officers a type of training that is not easy to obtain in the ordinary way.

The object of the present article is to describe the type of exercises that have been set this season to officers hunting with a pack of foxhounds in Northern India, and to give anyone who wishes to do this training some idea of the sort of exercises which can be usefully set.

When these exercises were started this season, some doubts and criticisms were expressed about them. These crystallised in two directions:

(*i*) Hunting is a recreation, and should be treated as such. Therefore officers engaged in recreation in their spare time should not be asked to do work!

(*ii*) In any case, most people would be so busy riding their horses that they couldn't possibly do any work without falling out of the hunt for that purpose. In fact, the exercises would ruin the sport.

As regards the first argument, it should be remembered that there is now no such thing as spare time. We are engaged in a war against efficient and ruthless enemies, who have been preparing themselves for it for many years. We are far behind them in our preparations, and we have many junior officers whose training has so far necessarily been of the most elementary kind. We have no time to lose and we must make ourselves fitter and more efficient than our enemies. Nearly a year ago, our late Commander-in-Chief in India said, "Nothing else matters now, except that you should get yourselves ready for war in the shortest possible space of time. Your leisure and comfort or leave do not count. Of course you must have time off, in order to avoid getting stale, but there can be but one object for every one of us and that is to make

and keep ourselves mentally and physically fit to beat the Germans." Incidentally, he is now demonstrating in no uncertain fashion how well he has carried this out himself.

The prime necessity for making ourselves fit for war should now never be absent from our thoughts for a single moment, and we cannot afford to miss a single opportunity for training. Any form of recreation which involves an expedition into the country is an opportunity for training. Hunting, shooting, golf, and an afternoon's walk are instances of such opportunities. At the present stage of the war, when time presses, all these chances of doing some small exercise should be seized.

There is an old English saying that "Battles are won on the playing fields of Eton." This is all right for a gentlemanly war, but something more has to be done about it in *total* war. To win a *total* war we must have *total* training.

The second criticism about the hunting exercises has more in it. Most of the exercises required accurate map reading and it is certainly difficult, if not impossible, to do that on a restive horse at a tearing gallop. This is exactly where the value of these exercises comes in. When moving at speed across country, a rider is forced to rely on his memory and observation to keep track of where he is going. In war in a cross-country vehicle the same situation will arise. It will be very difficult to read a map accurately without stopping to do so, and it may be most inadvisable to stop!

In an Eastern theatre of war when dealing with mechanised forces, or partly mechanised units, every officer should be a good cross-country leader. If he is not actually driving the vehicle himself he will in all probability be responsible for two things. picking the way and finding the way. Riding across country gives good practice in picking the way. Finding the way may be more difficult. In the desert with an armoured formation the navigator does it, but the trucks of an Infantry Unit, supply vehicles and many others will have to find their way on their own, and possibly singly, across country, sometimes in close proximity to the enemy. The man in charge of these vehicles must be able to know exactly where he is on the map at any moment and he must know where he is going. Otherwise he may drive straight into the enemy. In Eastern countries roads are not numerous and most of the driving is cross-country. Good training for this type of driving can be obtained while hunting. When the map cannot be used, the ground must be memorised, direction and

location should never be lost and the map position should be regained at the first opportunity.

These exercises with hounds can be conveniently done in three stages:

(*a*) Officers bring their maps with them, the exercise being given to them the day before hunting.

(*b*) The exercise is given the day before hunting, but officers do not carry their maps with them.

(*c*) The exercise is set *after* hunting. Maps may be carried out hunting.

Almost any kind of exercise can be set, but at first it is better to make them very simple. With the first two stages it is impossible to say how a problem set will turn out. There is no previous Directing Staff solution. There is a D.S. solution afterwards, but it may be liable to severe criticism, since the D.S., who may be the Master or the C.O. of the unit, can quite easily make mistakes the same as anyone else. These exercises give great opportunities for catching the D.S. out in an error and he will be caught out unless he keeps his eyes very much wide open, has a good memory for country and, above all, a good "bump of locality" and an "eye for country." The exercises develop all these things and are therefore excellent training.

The exercise set after hunting is much more difficult, both to set and to do, but there is a much wider scope.

To get a fair picture of the exercises set this season a brief description of the country hunted by these hounds is necessary. It is generally undulating. There are good landmarks at a great distance, but practically none in the actual country run over by hounds. It is, therefore, easy to tell whether you are going North, South, East or West; but extremely difficult to locate exactly where you are. This difficulty is accentuated by the map makers. There are hundreds of nullahs in the area, some are very wide sandy nullahs, others not so wide; some are narrow, while others, shown on the map, cannot be distinguished on the ground at all. Except for the wide sandy nullahs the map makers show no difference in all these, marking them all with a thin black line; so it is very easy to get mixed up in them. They offer no obstacle to horses, except in a few places. The country also has many very small hillocks, all of which look exactly the same. The going is light sandy plough, perfect for galloping on and there are few fences. Therefore when hounds run, there is nothing to stop them, and when there is a good scent they go at a terrific pace.

Horses have to gallop all out for considerable distances to keep near them. On a good day the average pace is 3 to 4 minutes to the mile. In such circumstances map reading is at a complete discount, and the rider has to trust to his memory and powers of observation. These conditions, however, approximate closely to those experienced by the driver of a cross-country vehicle and that is why exercises with these hounds are such good training.

A brief description will now be given of some of the exercises done this season. When considering the results obtained the conditions described above must be remembered, because the map reading is really difficult, and unless one knows the country pretty well it is very easy to get lost.

The first exercise set was intended to be very easy. Owing to unexpected action by the hounds (a fast hunt straight away.) It turned out to be very difficult, but many lessons came out. It was:

1. *Mark on the 1-inch map the route taken by hounds during the morning.*
2. *The Master did not take the direct route from the meet to the first covert. Why did he do this?*
3. *If an enemy M.G. post were located in the first covert, by what route would you lead a platoon from the meet to attack it?*

The first thing that happened was that officers brought out only the map on which the meet was shown. Hounds soon ran off that map. The first lesson was, therefore, always bring out sufficient maps for the job in hand.

The second question was intended to produce the answer that a circuitous route was taken, first, because the direct route lay through very thick country in which the hounds would necessarily have to be kept packed up. Secondly, it crossed two tank obstacles which, if full of water, would be difficult to cross and there were bridges on the circuitous route, and thirdly the longer route lay through open country where the hounds could move, spread out and had a good chance of finding the line of a travelling jack. This is what actually happened and hounds went off at a very fast pace. It was quite difficult to follow where they went. Thus, many officers got their route as much as 2 miles wrong and never located the first covert, which was drawn after the first hunt and was approached from an entirely different direction from that first intended. This produced the answer to question 2 that the Master had taken a circuitous route because he had

found a jack, and it spoiled the third question, which would have been a very interesting one.

The result of the exercise was to show that several officers were not sufficiently good at map reading to lead troops in war, except for a limited distance and at a walking pace. This war is being waged at a greater pace than that, and it is essential that officers should take a much wider view of the country they may be called upon to traverse and be able to find their way both with and without a map across country over very much larger areas than we have been accustomed to in the past.

Subsequent exercises confined to marking the route on the 1-inch map showed a great improvement in the solutions. It was quite clear that those who did the exercises were in fact getting valuable practice in map reading and that it was producing good results.

A senior officer reported that the practice had greatly improved his map reading. He developed a sort of instinctive triangulation for checking up his initial estimate of his position by memorising what he could see at checks and at places where hounds changed direction. This will not pin-point the position, but it will indicate at once whether the first estimate is badly out.

Another exercise set was as under:

You are commanding a Coy. of Inf. (Higher Scale Mech.) engaged in pursuing and trying to round up a large number of Germans who have escaped from the main battle. For various reasons the Germans are likely to take an unpredictable route (that taken by hounds).

Your men are lightly equipped and it is essential that the trucks should keep near them. Your Coy. is advancing on the route taken by hounds and is moving two up, covering a wide front.

1. *Mark on map the route taken by your Coy.*
2. *Mark any deviation from that route which you would order your trucks to take.*
3. *How would you send your orders to the trucks?*

Problems 2 and 3 proved to be beyond the powers of a number of officers, whose only solution was to move the trucks "by bounds."

If, as in this case, the direction taken by the enemy is unknown, previous orders to move to certain bounds will not work, and did not work in this case. Incidentally, the "enemy" (the

hounds) went much faster than real Germans could go (those now in Cyrenaica excepted).

The D.S. solution was to divide the five trucks into two groups and move these on two tracks about 1½ miles apart, keeping in touch with them by signallers on chosen hillocks, which abounded in the area.

This solution was not ideal, and it was subjected to much criticism, the chief one being that the truck is a platoon vehicle and should go with the platoon. In this case, however, it couldn't accompany the men. Anyhow, no one could produce a better solution, but the country was very difficult.

The exercise showed that sufficient atention had not been given to the problem of moving these trucks across country, and most officers had very vague ideas about how to get orders to the trucks.

Another exercise was:

You belong to a force advancing towards the East.

At 0730 hours (time of the meet), you started on a reconnaissance in a light tank (along route taken by hounds).

At 0800 hours precisely you were fired on by an isolated hostile M.G. from a point 500 yards from where you are (the place where hounds are at that hour).

The true bearing from you to the enemy M.G. is 100°.

You decide to send an Inf. fighting patrol to clear up the enemy M.G. You arrange this on return to your own lines near the camp, but, owing to the conference on your reconnaissance, you can't lead the patrol yourself. You, therefore, have to explain to the patrol commander where to go and what to do.

1. *Give the map reference of the enemy M.G.*
2. *What advice would you give the Patrol Commander?*

This exercise entailed synchronising watches and memorising exactly where hounds went during the half hour between 0730 and 0800 hours. Everyone got the position of the enemy M.G. accurately. As luck would have it the exact point happened to be marked by a prominent lone tree. But where many officers failed was in giving advice to the Patrol Commander. This required a wide consideration of the ground and a knowledge of its tactical significance.

There is no doubt that we do need more training in the appreciation of the value of ground and in memorising the main tactical features of country as we pass through it.

An exercise which gave rise to much argument was the following:

Make a mechanised movement map of the area covered by the hounds during the morning.

(See *Army in India Training Memorandum No. 2 para 13*).

The area covered by the hounds may be taken to be a strip one mile wide (½ mile on each of the route taken by hounds). No one need leave hounds to reconnoitre the area and no area outside the above need be considered.

In order not to spoil maps the 1-inch map should be shaded in lead pencil, which can afterwards be rubbed out. The term "cross-country movement" will refer to 15 cwt. trucks.

The following shading will be used:

(a) Areas suitable to cross-country movement—horizontal shading.

(b) Areas impassable to mechanised movement— vertical shading.

(c) Areas difficult but traversable—diagonal shading.

(d) Obstacles to mechanised movement—ringed in pencil.

At first sight this was very well done, but when we came to move trucks across some of the horizontally-shaded country, they all got stuck in the sand.

This showed that the making of a mechanised movement map cannot be lightly undertaken, and, if this map is to be of practical use it must be done by people who have considerable experience of cross-country driving and who know the capabilities of the various vehicles.

It will be seen from the above examples that the exercises set included map reading and simple tactical problems suitable for platoon commanders. They are good examples of the sort of exercise that can be set during any expedition into the country. It has been proved this season that they do provide good training of a type that is not easy to obtain in the ordinary way, because to do them, much time during working hours would be taken up

in getting out into the country. When they are combined with hunting that time is not normal working hours, *e.g.*, before dawn on Sundays. It is true that the number of officers doing them is limited to those who hunt, but it is better that these should have training which can be done without any extra expenditure of time and petrol rather than that they should lose an opportunity for doing something useful. Furthermore, those officers who do the exercises can devise similar ones for their companies and platoons on route marches and on other occasions when the men move out into the country. This is good training for the men. It keeps them on their toes, and relieves the monotony of route marches and long treks to manœuvre areas and training camps.

A GLIMPSE OF SHANGHAI

By Officer Cadet D. K. Hislop.

Shanghai conjures up in the minds of most a picture of bright lights, lonely ladies and the attendant gay life. The picture is a very true one and life there is a pleasant one. But Shanghai was not always such an enviable spot and behind its present eminence lies a story of toil and pioneering comparable with any in the world.

The growth of this great city is a long and interesting story —a story of a handful of Britishers, who living in little more than shacks scarcely a century ago, by their courage and their hard-headed business acumen, changed a flat muddy swamp in China into one of the world's greatest cities, a city where to-day a sky-scraper of twenty storeys is no uncommon sight, where the brightness of its Nanking Road is comparable with Broadway and whose markets are of world wide importance.

Shanghai grew and prospered on the Yangse. The Yangse-Kiang, China's longest and most important river, is born in the Tibetan Plateau and for 3,500 miles makes its way eastward through China, draining and irrigating a great part of that country until it flows into the Yellow Sea.

This grand river is the lifeblood of Cathay and on its waters the many and varied exports of the country find their way to the coast. Ships of every conceivable shape and size, of every nationality, are found ploughing their ways up and down, from the lordly 10,000-ton freighter to the lowly sampan.

Shanghai, situated fourteen miles up the Whangpoo river which meets the Yangse at its mouth, became the centre and distributing point for China's exports. It grew as the demand for China's tea, cotton, oil and other exports grew, but its growth was due mainly to foreign—chiefly British—initial energy and enterprise and to the belief of those pioneers of nearly a century ago in the future of their city.

In 1843, Shanghai was opened by the Chinese to foreign trade and a strip of land outside the city and on the banks of the Whangpoo river was marked out, in which foreigners might buy plots from the native owners for trade and residential purposes and over which they might have municipal control. The French secured the inner section, making it the French Concession over which they exercised complete control in every respect.

The British obtained the outer section, and it was intended that this should become the British Concession over which Sovereign rights would be exercised. The American authorities, however, hoisted their flag there. What it was like in those days it would be hard to say, and despite protests by both British and Chinese authorities the Settlement became international and has been so since 1863.

Shanghai, therefore, is divided into two parts: the International Settlement and the French Concession, occupied and governed by foreigners. Here the term 'foreigner' may be explained. It is a term first used by the Chinese of Europeans, including Americans, and now the common one used by Chinese and Europeans alike for non-Chinese.

The French Concession, the area of which covers about 25 square miles, is governed in exactly the same way as any French Colony or Protectorate, with its own French Municipal Council. An efficient military force is maintained there and its police force is composed of French officers and N.C.O.s with Chinese and White Russian constables enrolled locally and Annamite constables from Indo-China.

Except for general co-operation with the Settlement Authorities, principally in times of war, there is no association between the two Councils. It must be remembered that no physical boundary separates these two administrations and in many cases one side of a road may be French and the other International. Reciprocation takes place between them in the way of licences for vehicles and in a few other minor ways, but that is all.

Up to a few years ago, French Town, as it is known, was considered the finest residential part of Shanghai for foreigners, and long straight avenues on a typical French fashion were built and, as time went on, lined with stately homes worthy of any place in the world. Times change, and with the growth of the Settlement and extension of the roads there a slow move of the residents took place, and many of French Town's bigger homes were vacated and taken over by speculators for night clubs and for other similar purposes.

Owing to the comparative laxity of certain restrictions, as might be expected and as is the case, in any spot under French control, the concession was a popular centre for these night clubs and the more famous cabarets. Night life there resembles closely that of Paris, except, perhaps, that the high Parisian moral standards are not always maintained and one will hear Russian spoken

more frequently than French. Another very important point is that chits may be signed for drinks and dances and other pleasures where for some reason cash may not be available. These chits find their way with depressing regularity from French Town to one's office in the Settlement at the end of each month. If one is not *persona grata* in a particular haunt of vice where one's signature has been cheerfully accepted in place of ready cash, the chits then appear on one's office doorstep very early the next day. Economic experts and the older residents of Shanghai declare that at least ten years' study of the subject is necessary before a story sufficiently convincing can be concocted on the spur of the moment to persuade the beady-eyed old so-and-so, who comes to collect, to give a further month's grace wherein to save sufficient to pay for your fun of the previous evening.

French Town supplies sport in plenty. Among other amusements is Hai Alai, the Basque game of pelota, and a vast amount of money changes hands every night at Hai Alai. The Chinese are great gamblers and lovers of the game. The standard is very high and only professional players, imported from Spain and Cuba and other places where it is a national game. take part.

Grey hound racing, shooting ranges and really every kind of game, professional or otherwise has been or is played in French Town. Needless to say the 'wheel', although officially frowned upon, carries on its good work.

So much for French Town.

The International Settlement is a much more complicated place than French Town. It has an area of about forty square miles with the French Concession on one side, Chinese territory on another and the Whangpoo river on the third. It is said that at least one representative of every nationality in the world will always be found between its boundaries, and there is very little exaggeration in this as the nationality returns show.

The Government of the Settlement is an able body known as the Shanghai Municipal Council, comprised of British, American, Japanese and Chinese, in the ratio of 5:2:2:5. The Chinese representatives are nominees of the Chinese Ratepayers Association and are there for the purpose of protecting their nationals and representing them in disputes which arise from time to time over assessment of property taxes.

The majority of the British representation has been fiercely contested from time to time by non-British nationalities in Shanghai and this has culminated in the very strong and underhand efforts which the Japanese are making at present.

The facts are that we were the founders of the settlement and we built up the present administration, of which America and Japan have taken full advantage. Again our financial interests in Shanghai alone amount to £150,000,000 as compared with Japanese £44,000,000 and American £26,000,000. The British contribution to the Municipal Revenues is at least three times as much as the next highest.

With all this in mind one will perhaps realize the difficult and delicately balanced position in which an international administration with a British majority finds itself, governing impartially and fairly the most cosmopolitan population in the world. One must realize too that while so governing, the interests of their own nationals must be safeguarded at all costs.

This has been carried out in a most able and successful manner for many years, but if our friends from Nippon are allowed to progress much further it will be the end of the "Modern Settlement" as it has been called.

For defence purposes the Settlement is divided into four sectors, allotted to the British, Americans, Italians and Japanese. Since the Chinese uprising in 1927 and the attack on Shanghai we have maintained a garrison there. The Americans have a detachment of marines, the Italians a small force, supplemented usually three months after trouble starts. In the recent trouble in 1937 which continues to-day, although not in Shanghai, the Italian troops which ultimately arrived were their crack Alpine ones and reached Shanghai dressed in military skiing kit, skis, snow goggles and beautiful hats with feather dusters on the side. The Shanghai hills are twenty miles away in Chinese territory, and September in Shanghai is pretty hot, as were our Italians.

The Japanese force is a considerable one and has grown out of all proportion to the others during the last few years.

In addition to these Government troops Shanghai has its own Russian Regiment, of about five hundred, enlisted from White Russians living there, a very able body. There are also the Volunteers, comprising the Shanghai Scottish, 'A' Company Light Horse, and Portuguese and Chinese Companies. The whole of this force is in the charge of a British Commandant. There you have internationalism at its best.

The Russian Regiment and the Volunteers are called out for internal security and have proved their worth many times in the past. At the outbreak of disturbances in 1927, 1932 and 1937, Shanghai depended on them for its safety for the first few days until reinforcements could arrive from Hong Kong and Manila.

The Japanese, as has been their habit in all countries to which they migrate, concentrated in one area of the Settlement known as Hongkew. This has become their 'Little Tokyo' and, in fact, reminds the visitor of Japan rather than of China. Hongkew, naturally, was the sector allotted to the Japanese in the defence of the Settlement. We will return later to 'Little Tokyo.'

The next, or perhaps it should be the first factor in safeguarding Shanghai's safety is the Municipal Police Force. It is one of the finest organizations to be found anywhere in the world. One must realize that these uprisings, or "incidents," or what you will, bring with them a mad hooliganism that cannot exist in a well-policed successful city at peace. With its mixed population, its open arms to all comers—no passports required—Shanghai has collected as good a gang of toughs—Chinese, Japanese, all nationalities as are to be found anywhere. In normal times the Police Force has kept them well in hand, but with the added burdens of a war of no mean dimensions at their front door their peacetime duties must suffer.

The Commissioner of Police is and always has been British (to-day he is an ex-I.P. Officer). His deputy is Japanese, a sop to our Japanese friends, and the remaining officers are comprised of British, Japanese and Russians. Constables are Chinese and Sikhs, with officers of their own nationality. This Police Force has always proved itself loyal to its international character and to the Council which it serves. All except the Japanese.

The policing of the Hongkew district—the Japanese area—was given over very slowly and very reluctantly to the Japanese representation in the Police Force although some stations manned by Japanese officers have steadily been maintained in the district. After the beginning of the '37 trouble the Japs showed themselves in their true colours, closed Hongkew to all but Japanese, and cocked a snook at the Municipal Council and at all it meant. Under the guise of safety precautions no one was allowed over the fifty-yard long bridge into Hongkew without Japanese police or military passes.

Unbelievable indignities were suffered by foreigners wishing to enter Hongkew, and at last Nippon was able to show to the world the contempt in which she held Europeans.

Japan is undoubtedly the biggest menace to the future of Shanghai, and Shanghai just now is going through a very difficult and tricky period. She has been through many such ones before, though perhaps none so serious as to-day. She has weathered

many a storm and come up smiling. Through all her vicissitudes her brightness and cheeriness have never deserted her, and her gay life has continued, even though curfews time and time again have prohibited residents from appearing on the streets between ten at night and five in the morning.

There is what is called a 'Shanghai Mind,' a peculiar thing that exists nowhere else in this world. It is a mind which permits one to enjoy the biggest booms in an open-handed full-of-the-joy-of-living manner. Money is easy to get and goes as easily as it comes; there are no cliques and your neighbour is your friend. So in times of slump. Little money is available, but what is there is given readily to the most deserving cause. It is a mind which believes that Shanghai will always come out top—it allows one to sit in the Shanghai club and watch the Japanese blowing China, and possibly one's own possessions, to pieces with guns not two hundred yards from where one is sitting, with a feeling that it has happened before and it will happen again but Shanghai will weather any storm.

Before concluding this attempt to describe the 'Modern Settlement' I must explain the many references made to White Russians. These people are the remnants of the Revolution of 1917 and their descendants. They fled eastwards through Siberia to Manchuria and a haven was offered to them in the city of Harbin in Manchuria by the Chinese. There they colonized and started life again. Many came as far as Shanghai, a city where no questions were asked. Most were penniless, but those who had money helped their less unfortunate brothers, and they have been a credit to the city which gave them a home.

Their records in the Police, the Chinese maritime customs services, and wherever a chance has been offered them, are records to be proud of. Their lady folk, as one already knows, have helped to make this city one of bright lights and cheerfulness, and have made the name 'Del Monte' one to be conjured with wherever the subject of night clubs and cabarets is raised.

So, these past hundred years have produced in far Cathay—a modern city and a world's foremost port, a city of twenty-storey skyscrapers, a city where Internationalism has been preached and successfully practised, an example in tolerance, high-heartedness and able administration which could be well followed to advantage in many parts of this world. We should be proud of our countrymen who founded this 'Model Settlement.'

JARBOIYAH—1920

SOME RECOLLECTIONS OF AN EARLIER IRAQ REBELLION

By "Jebb"

It was originally intended to devote the whole of this article to a description of the defence and siege of the small post of Jarboiyah during the Arab Rebellion (as it was commonly called) of 1920 in Mesopotamia. But in view of the events which took place in that ancient and turbulent country in April and May 1941, a short account of the earlier insurrection may also not be without interest. And different as the two rebellions were, both in cause and scope, there may, who knows, be lessons to be derived for the future from a comparison of the two.

It will be as well first to refer briefly to events in Mesopotamia which succeeded the signing of the armistice with Turkey in October 1918. From a military point of view the situation was all that could be desired, and British prestige in the country never stood higher. Mosul lay at the mercy of the 1st Corps which, after a rapid advance up the Tigris, had captured at Shergat the Turkish general, Ismail Haqqi, with his force of 11,000 men and 50 guns. The 3rd Corps were on the borders of South Kurdistan; while the 15th Division, operating on the Upper Euphrates, had successfully enveloped the 50th Turkish Division almost entire.

Further west, all had gone even better. In Syria, British, Australian and Indian cavalry, with infantry pressing close behind, had captured the whole of the Turkish army and were riding in triumph through the streets of Aleppo and Damascus. The British Fleet had passed the Dardanelles, and Constantinople had fallen. Bulgaria and Austria had already accepted armistice terms, and Germany was soon to follow.

All this was not lost on the people of Iraq, and they accepted with resignation the occupation by the victors of all the principal towns in Northern Iraq and South Kurdistan. On the Upper Euphrates, Anah and Dair-al-Zaur were also taken under our administration. But when they saw us apparently settling down in their country for keeps, they began to get a bit restive.

The Political officers to whom the administration of the country was entrusted consisted largely of demobilized officers of

very little experience, while the administrative work at headquarters was mainly in the hands of the Indian Civil Service. Stout-hearted and conscientious as many of these officers were, under the leadership of their gallant Chief Commissioner, Sir Arnold Wilson, there can be little doubt that their inexperience, coupled with the highly centralized and perhaps rather unimaginative system of control, was one of the principal causes of the unrest which came to a head in the summer of 1920. To the Arabs, accustomed to the elastic and easily evaded administration of the Turk, the meticulous collection of revenue, the heavy demands for forced labour, and our 'Sandeman' system of dealing through the Shaikhs rather than with individuals, to all of which they were unaccustomed, were distasteful in the extreme.

There were of course other causes. In Syria the Emir Faisal, son of Hussain of the Hedjaz, had been established as practically independent ruler, and many Iraqis dissatisfied with the non-introduction of a similar indigenous government in their own country, had gone to Syria and were now occupying important positions in the army and civil administration. From here, knowing well the state of feeling in Iraq, they began an insidious propaganda designed to secure their country's independence; which propaganda was sedulously fostered amongst the tribes by the 'Ulamas' or Shiah religious leaders of Karbala, Nejaf, and Kadhimain, the three holy places of Iraq. Current talk of the Anglo-Persian agreement, whereby the Iraqis got the idea that Persia would become a British dependency and that the same fate would soon overtake their own country, was also not without its influence.

Another contributary factor was the gradual departure of our troops after the armistice. There is an Arab saying that the brain of the Arab is in his eyes—"seeing is believing," in other words—and not being an over-intelligent individual, he failed to realize that the trains and steamers which took the troops away could equally readily bring them back, and did.

Altogether, what with one thing and another, there were by the end of 1919 all the ingredients of first-class trouble. These ingredients moreover had been given a stir on our part by a gratuitous piece of 'appeasement,' in the failure to re-occupy Dair-al-Zaur when that place was seized by a Sharifian firebrand on the 13th December 1919. This was followed by the evacuation of Albu Kamal.

Henceforth the betting on a rebellion taking place was odds-on; the question was merely—when? But in spite of steady pro-

paganda, underrated and unchecked, the first explosions did not occur until June 1920. There was a preliminary and very unpleasant incident at Tel-Afar, 36 miles West of Mosul, in which not only the Police and Political officers but the entire crew of an armoured car detachment were murdered; but the real beginning of the rebellion may be said to have taken place at Rumaithah on the Middle Euphrates.

Before describing this and subsequent events, we will pause for a moment to examine the military situation from the British side. At the moment of the outbreak there were under the command of Lieut.-General Sir Aylmer Haldane, G.O.C.-in-C., nominally some 60,000 men, consisting of 7,000 British and 53,000 Indian troops. In this total, however, were 3,000 British and 23,000 Indians employed on non-combatant duties such as guarding prisoners of war and refugees. After reductions, therefore, the balance amounted to only 4,000 British and 30,000 Indian troops, consisting of units many of which were under-strength and weak in officers. Roughly speaking, they were disposed as follows: 18th Division, between Mosul and Baghdad, and 17th Division between Baghdad and Basra, plus two extra battalions at Baghdad and three on the L. of C. In addition there were five batteries of armoured cars, distributed in Persia, Mosul, Baghdad, and on the L. of C. Of the two squadrons of the Royal Air Force, three-quarters at least of one squadron was detached to Bushire, Kazvin and Mosul, leaving only four flights at Baghdad. There were no troop-carrying aircraft, nor were any available from India.

With the above forces a country three times the size of England had to be garrisoned and administered. But the study of a map conveys no idea of the time factor involved in moving troops from one part of the country to another, aggravated by indifferent railways, lack of roads, and the heat of a Mesopotamia summer. Actually, by 30th June when the rebellion broke out, only some 500 British and 2,500—3,000 Indian troops were available as a mobile force, of which one battalion only was in a position to reach the Middle Euphrates area within 24 hours. It was, therefore, no easy problem which faced General Haldane, and the proper exercise of those well-worn principles of war, Concentration and Economy of Force, were to give him much anxious thought.

It was at the little town of Rumaithah, standing on both banks of the Hillah branch of the Euphrates, about 28 miles above Samawah, that the insurrection burst into flame. On the 25th June the Assistant Political Officer had been ordered to arrest and

send to Diwaniyah one Sha'alan Abu, a Shaikh of the Bani Hachaim tribe, for non-payment of an agricultural loan. While the party was waiting for the train to Diwaniyah, the retainers of the Shaikh took the law into their own hands, killed the Arab guard and released Sha'alan.

This incident was perhaps the match that set the Middle Euphrates alight, but the country round Rumaithah had been in a highly disturbed state for some days and there were several incidents of railway cutting. At the urgent appeal of the Assistant Political Officer, one-and-a-half companies of the 114th Mahrattas arrived from Diwaniyah and Samawah on the 1st and 2nd July, and during the latter night all civilians were moved into the Political serai on the left bank of the river. On the 3rd a company of the 99th Infantry arrived from Hillah after an adventurous journey, and this brought the total of the garrison to 527, of whom 312 (including four B.O.s) were combatants.

Unfortunately, the force, which now became besieged, had only two days' rations, and the task of providing food for it soon became a cause for anxiety. Raids into the surrounding bazaar brought in food for a few days, but on the 12th supplies were again running short. However, another successful sortie on a large scale, with two platoons of the 114th acting as covering party and the remainder of the garrison armed with bags, tins, and blankets, produced rations for another twelve days, consisting of half a ton of grain besides some sheep and chickens. The covering party also accounted for 20 of the inhabitants without loss to themselves. On the 8th, three boxes of ammunition, asked for by helio through Samawah to Baghdad, were dropped by aircraft. The only box to land in the serai unfortunately also landed on and killed an N.C.O. of the 99th, but the other two boxes were eventually recovered—one from the river and one from among date-palms 100 yards from the serai.

Meanwhile a small relief column, accompanied by a train carrying ammunition, food and water, had reached on the 6th July a point some six miles north of Rumaithah. Next day the insurgents were encountered in very large numbers, and the force after suffering 200 casualties was compelled to withdraw to Imam Hamza, 18 miles north of Rumaithah, where it halted. It was by this time clear that a much larger force would be needed to effect the relief, and the G.O.C.-in-C., not liking the look of things generally, also took the precaution of asking the War Office for reinforcements, which to his disappointment he learnt could not embark before the end of July. He had, therefore, for over a

month in the most critical stage of the rebellion, to do the best he could with what he had got, and the juggling process must have given him nightmares. The immediate situation, let alone any others that might develop, was unpleasant enough. Only by denuding other areas to a dangerously low level could he concentrate a force adequate to the task, and this force he was committing into the blue over ill-guarded communications, and with every prospect of other tribes rising between the force and its base at Baghdad, 150 miles away.

The relief force, consisting this time of six battalions, with one squadron of cavalry, three batteries of artillery, a sapper and miner company and details, were concentrated by the 16th July within 16 miles of Rumaithah; and to cut a long story short, after considerable fighting it entered Rumaithah on the 20th and relieved the garrison. In this operation, in which there were about as many casualties as in the earlier abortive attempt, the 45th Sikhs and the 1/10th Gurkhas particularly distinguished themselves. Indeed, to the author, the Arab Rebellion of 1920 will always be linked in memory with the names of these two units, and of the intrepid commander of the Rumaithah relief column and many other columns, Brigadier-General F. E. Coningham, C.M.G., D.S.O. One of the features of this and other operations that year was taking a railway train with the column. It meant of course tying troops to the railway and so hampering their freedom of manoeuvre, but the great advantage of having the wherewithal to carry plenty of water and ammunition and medical comforts, not to mention a mobile hospital far outweighed any disadvantages.

We must now leave the Rumaithah garrison, the relieving column and its train at Diwaniyah, and turn to events nearer Hillah. What had happened at Rumaithah was happening in rather similar measure at Kufah, 33 miles South of Hillah on the other branch of the Euphrates. This place, which was situated only five miles from Nejaf, hotbed of intrigue, was originally garrisoned by two companies of the 108th Infantry (the author's unit), which garrisoned had been reinforced by another company early in July. By the 20th it too was in a state of siege, and General Haldane's intention was to send a brigade to Kifl—21 miles South of Hillah and terminus of the 2 feet 6 inches railway from that place—and then later with reinforcements from Diwaniyah to set about the relief of Kufah. On the showing of Rumaithah it would be unwise to attempt the relief with less than a brigade-and-a-half.

Unfortunately, the local commander at Hillah, under pressure of the Political Officer, was persuaded to send a small detachment from the small garrison at Hillah in the direction of Kifl. All the usual arguments in such cases were brought to bear. We must show the flag—if we did not, other tribes would rise; and so forth. Here in passing would seem to be one of the outstanding lessons of the campaign—the clash between military and political interests. You constantly had on the one hand the urge of the political to scatter all available forces, often small in number, in order to maintain law and order, on the basis that such action would help to stave off greater trouble; and on the other, the deeply ingrained instinct of the soldier to concentrate his forces and so avoid the danger of being weak everywhere and strong nowhere. At any rate, the result on this occasion was the disaster to what came to be known as the Manchester Column; though it must be said in fairness to the political that though they were responsible for the situation arising, it was the failure in judgment and commonsense on the part of the commander that led to the actual disaster.

Briefly, what happened was that the column moved out on the 23rd July to a point six miles from Hillah, found the water brackish, moved on in the heat of the next morning to a canal ten miles further on, and there encamped. In the evening large numbers of Arabs were reported approaching, but instead of standing his ground—which was not too bad, being protected on three sides by bunds—the commander decided, on the advice of the Political Officer attached to the column, to withdraw in the dark to Hillah. Of course, the situation was one that any Pathan or Arab or savage enemy might dream of, and in spite of great gallantry by the 35th Scinde Horse acting as rearguard and a small party of the Manchesters, of whom Captain Henderson won the posthumous V.C., the Arabs got right in. The transport stampeded and there was deuce and all of a shemozzle. Of the 318 missing from the column on arrival at Hillah, 79 British and 81 Indians became prisoners with the Arabs, and our net loss in killed was thus little short of 200. One 18-pdr. gun of the 39th Battery was also lost, in spite of heroic efforts to save it, and many transport vehicles and animals.

It was altogether an unfortunate affair, occurring at a most inopportune moment. The answer seems to be—

(*a*) If you must show the flag, be certain that you are strong enough to do it.

(*b*) Make sure of your water before you start out into the blue in the desert.

(*c*) Don't always believe the Political Officer but rely on your own military judgment.

(*d*) If you have to withdraw in the face of a savage enemy, try and avoid doing it at night.

* * * *

And that, after a somewhat lengthy preamble, brings us to Jarboiyah. Relief of Kufah was now of course out of the question; the immediate necessity was to get Brigadier-General Coningham's column and train to Hillah, and 14 miles South of Hillah, at Jarboiyah, was a small but vitally important bridge, spanning the Hillah branch of the Euphrates, over which the column and train had to cross. General Leslie, commanding the 17th Division, rightly appreciated that if he didn't do something about it the Arabs certainly would; and so it was that at about 0130 hours on the 26th July the author, who was then Adjutant of the 108th Infantry (henceforth he will refer to himself in the first person) was woken up and told that what remained of the 108th (Headquarters and one rifle company, less details) would proceed in the morning to Jarboiyah and there, like Horatius, hold the bridge.

There were only two British officers with the small detachment—M., who was officiating for the C.O. then on his way back from leave, and myself—and our first job on arrival at Jarboiyah was to decide how the bridge was to be defended. It was an interesting little problem, of the same variety as that which faced the bewildered hero of "The Defence of Duffer's Drift" way back in the South African war. But there were really only two choices open to us: either to defend the original camp and station (see sketch) with a detachment at the bridge; or to let the two former look after themselves and have the post actually at the bridge. We were fortunate in having on the train Major Bradney, C.R.E., 17th Division (later to be Commandant of the Q.V.O. Madras Sappers and Miners), and he came in strongly on the side of the actual bridge site; so bridge site it was. But though obviously the right choice, it wasn't too pleasant a site, being completely overlooked by bunds on either flank and the fort to the west, and with a nasty thick belt of palm trees on the North, across the river. The river here is quite a little chap, being hardly wider than the average Punjab canal, and it was unnecessary to do more than wire the north side of the bridge; though later we were compelled to keep a post there at night. The bridge itself was a simple

affair, with one rather elongated set of wooden piles and one smaller set supporting the girders and rails; there was no roadway, and to get from one side to the other one had to hop across the sleepers.

So far all was peaceful on the Jarboiyah front. Whether the Arabs had been impressed by our sudden arrival, or whether they were waiting until they could attack *en masse,* I don't know; but the respite gained was very useful to us. In the evening, to our surprise, a railway construction train arrived from Diwaniyah, bringing three platoons of the 32nd Sikh Pioneers, with Major P. in command. (He was an M. too, but I call him P. for he was known affectionately as Pop throughout the Corps of Sikh Pioneers.) He being senior to our M., took over the post, and in an incredibly short space of time his Sikhs were out of the train, spaced on to their tasks and started digging, while our men put up the wire. The construction train, meanwhile, having started back for Diwaniyah, found the line cut and turned round and went to Hillah instead. Next morning it returned, bringing a platoon of Sappers and Miners, and what was more important, 15 days' rations for the garrison; but as a set-off to this it removed 100 men of the 108th to act as additional escort on its rail-mending journey to Diwaniyah. These three platoons were not seen again until the end of the siege, and we were left with roughly 300 rifles with nine Lewis guns, and 120 non-combatants. Not too bad.

By 7-30 p.m. on the 27th we were more or less dug and wired in and ready for anything that might transpire. Our particular little balloon went up in rather curious fashion. At that moment, 7-30 p.m., a party of Arabs set fire to a small bridge about 1,000 yards S.E. of the camp, and we decided to let them have a burst of L.G. fire to register our disapproval. This in turn brought a bout of sniping from the bund, and as though at a signal every blessed man in the garrison (we were standing to at the time) let off his musket in reply. Nerves were taut, I suppose; at any rate, it required all the whistle-blowing and shouts and oaths that B.O.s and I.O.s were capable of, to put a stop to it before all our ammunition was expended. But we were undoubtedly besieged from that moment. Next morning found it impossible to send out patrols and piquets in daylight, and any man unduly exposing himself was instantly fired at. One of our first casualties, as bad luck would have it, was Major P. himself, who was hit in the fleshy part of the right thigh while sitting rather too far up the railway embankment, talking to the author. Regrettable as it may seem, we had no doctor not even a sub-Assistant Surgeon: an

omission to which, doubtless, we ought to have drawn attention before leaving Hillah—but, well, we were busy and it is generally up to the staff to think of these little details. They had sent us back our station-master on the construction train (under arrest; he having deserted his post and jumped the train the previous evening, in the evident belief that Hillah was more healthy than Jarboiyah), but he did not quite fill the bill. Our only personnel with any claims to knowledge of medicine were therefore a Sanitary Havildar and a few stretcher-bearers, with some bandages, lint and a bottle of iodine. With these we dressed Major P.'s wound morning and night, and by a miracle it kept clean and he was eventually safely evacuated to Baghdad where he completely recovered; but it was an anxious time for both the patient and us. Casualties were not heavy on either side, in spite of *The Pioneer* of 6th August alleging that as a result of the Arab attack on the night of the 30th/31st (that was wrong too: it was 27th/28th) the ground round the post was "littered with rebels dead." Actually, the attack, if one could call it so, was a very half-hearted affair, and in the morning we saw only one corpse, though doubtless others had been removed during the night.

Our chief excitement in the early stages of the siege was the attempts by the rebels to set fire to our precious bridge with fire boats. The first time, at about 2-30 *ack emma* on the second night, i.e. only a few hours after the abortive attack, rather caught us bending; but we got away with it, because the boat they sent down was no more than a small raft (obviously constructed on the spur of the brain-wave), and though it bumped against the piles and set them alight we were able to put out the flames with our fire buckets. The raft then floated harmlessly on down stream. Such initiative on the part of the Arabs was unexpected, and might have earned a better reward had they remembered the lessons of German gas and British tanks; to wit don't spring your tactical surprise until it can be really effective. Of course, we were ready for them next time, on the following morning and again in the evening; but let me describe the latter occasion from my diary—the only diary I have kept at any length for any period of my service:

> "7-30 p.m. Sun just going down. Another fire boat alarm—this time a big one. I can see it pushed out into the stream and then suddenly burst into flames. This is the third in about 18 hours, curse them! Well, we are ready, provided it isn't so big that it sticks under the girders of the bridge; this is the great danger. I make a leap and a jump across the railway embankment into the L.G. post on the left of the bridge and make them turn the gun round so as to fire on the Fort as soon as the polewalas go out.

The latter are ready, close to the L.G. post, and the bucket people behind them in case the bridge catches fire anywhere. I anxiously look out to see where it is coming—between the near piles or the middle ones. This time the brute is coming straight for the centre pile, and the pole-men will have to double out there; no other way of doing it. Things are pretty lively by this time; in fact I seldom remember spending a livelier 10 minutes. The old Arab is firing very heavily on the bridge and vicinity, and the crack-crack of the bullets seems unpleasantly close. The boat is within 50 yards now and it is time the men went out with the poles. I have to shout at the top of my voice at them for at least half a minute and for an awful moment I thought they didn't understand; then they get up and double across and let themselves down on to the middle pile, poles in readiness. What a scene! An artist would revel in it. The light of the setting sun made redder still by the flames from the boat, the flashes from the fort, the clatter of rifle and Lewis gun fire, and this fiendish boat floating slowly towards the bridge! It is almost on to the pile now and the men are pushing it away so that the wood won't catch. A roar of cheering as the third boat also passes harmlessly downstream. The men get up and double back from the central pile. These two men are going to be recommended for bravery.

"We feel fearfully cheered by this little fracas, at least I do, but we don't get off scot free. The havildar in charge of the bucket party, Yasin Khan, has been hit in the stomach, it is feared pretty badly; but on the whole we are remarkably lucky to have got off so lightly."

Quite picturesque. The two pole-bearers (Rajputana Mussulman Lance-Naiks) each got the I.D.S.M., but the havildar died of his wounds, which was not so good.

That finished the efforts of the Budhus to burn our bridge and as they obviously had no stomach for more attacks life settled down to trench warfare routine, sniping and all. It seemed incongruous to us somehow, stuck there in the middle of the desert and in a daily temperature of about 110° maximum, to be stumbling about in trenches and not able to put one's head over the top without getting a bullet fired at it. I forget how many bullet holes we found in our E.P. mess tent (dug down, of course, with Major P. on his stretcher in one corner), but there were quite a lot. Later the Budhus attempted to sap their way forward close to the bridge through the palm trees on the other side of the river, and we had to keep a bombing post there at night. Arabs sapping! A fantastic idea, but true enough.

In addition, we were completely cut off—from Brigade H.Q. in Hillah, from the rest of our battalion in Kufah, from the column at Diwaniyah—and we had no idea for how long. The only way G.H.Q. could get in touch with us was by air. We had noticed chaps flying about and put out our Popham Panel to encourage them, but having been designed primarily for France it was not a very intelligent means of communication. For instance such messages as "We are stopping out for the night," or "Where are the nearest infantry?" didn't seem appropriate. However, we

were at least able to show the pilots by means of signal No. 289 "Inform" that we hoped for a message, and sure enough, on the 31st, an aircraft came over very low and dropped two streamers, both wide, but we were able to recover one without loss of life or limb. This was the message it contained:

> "Please look out for helio from HILLAH and make every endeavour to get communication, keeping your station open as long as light allows.
>
> "2. Expect Genl. Coningham to leave GUCHAN (9 miles S. E. of JBH) for you on 2nd August. Help with your construction train if you can. Will send cavalry to you to-morrow if there is safe camping place for horses. *If so* fire a Very Light when machine flies back over you and itself fires one RED Very Light. Keep good lookout for this, as there are many machines flying about. If no Very Lights fired by you, I will understand cavalry cannot go to you.
>
> "17th Division 0650."

An odd message to send to a small beleagured garrison, we thought. Surely the chaps could see that there was no construction train within miles of us, and that we had put wire and barricades across the rails? As for the heilo suggestion, M., who was our mathematician, worked out that our answering helio would have to be raised 30 feet up, which meant suspending a signaller from our solitary palm tree. He would certainly have been dead as mutton within a minute of getting there, so we didn't awfully like that idea either. Needless to say we fired no Very Light and hoped the cavalry were duly grateful. It was however cheering to hear that General Coningham might arrive on the 2nd; but plans might go awry and we felt we must be prepared for a much longer siege than that. Of rations and ammunition we had sufficient for a month by going carefully, and as mess secretary I amused myself by making out a list of stores for consumption by the four of us. (Did I say that we had a Sapper officer too? His chief claim to fame was the construction of a natty wire rope to fling across the river to catch fire boats; unfortunately, by the time it was in position there were no more fire boats.) This list of stores is recorded in my diary, and I see that while we could open one tin of bully beef every day for a month and one tin of milk every second day, we had to make judicious spacing of such items as tinned soups, fish, vegetables and fruit. I was indulgent in allowing coffee, porridge and bacon to be consumed every day while they lasted, but insisted on the retention of marmalade, jam, biscuits and curry powder. I suppose the idea was that if we were finally reduced to biscuits and bully, the jam and marmalade would improve the taste of the former, and the curry powder the latter.

So life went on. By the 1st August we felt it was time to take the initiative against these Arabs, whose sniping and singing and array of red, green and white flags on the bund were beginning to irritate us. Singing and beating of *dhols* usually reached its crescendo at about 7-30 *pip emma,* so we planned to send out at that hour a small raiding party consisting of two rifle sections of Sikh Pioneers and one bombing section 108th, under a Subadar of the 32nd: the party to creep up to the walls of the fort, hurl their bombs inside at a suitable moment, and then return. It all went off like clockwork and we hadn't a single casualty. The party interrupted the Arabs drinking tea, and from our posts in the trench it was most comforting to hear the crump of bursting bombs, followed by groans and then silence, instead of the usual nightly sing-song. My diary records in conclusion: "With a few more men we might have smote those Philistines hip and thigh to-night, but one never knows and after all it is our job to hold the bridge. These little outings are only to keep up the offensive spirit!"

We were now sending out patrols again, night and morning, up and down the line, who usually reported no enemy in sight but much damage to the track. It was astonishing the way those Arabs could mess the rails about. Every night we would hear banging and hammering and would hopefully let them have a burst or two of L.G. fire, but every morning it was the same: if the rails hadn't been bodily removed they had been bent completely out of shape.

It was early on 2nd August that we first heard sounds of gun fire from the S.E. in the direction of Guchan, and though we had only been six days in a state of siege we felt like the heroes of Mafeking at least. But it is undeniably thrilling in those circumstances to realize that in a day or two one may be able to walk about like free men again. There was also the sound of gun fire from Hillah on that day, indicating a battle in progress there too, which afterwards proved to be the truth. The Arabs had in fact made quite a determined assault on our home town, but like most of their ventures (fortunately for us, as again in 1941) it went off at half-cock.

But to return to Jarboiyah. Three more days were to elapse before we saw the relieving force, and meanwhile it became increasingly difficult to pass the time. Much as I liked my companions, I had one thing against them—none of them played bridge; and I was forced to take to patience. Our library consisted, not, I regret to say, of classics or even of military manuals,

but of three novels of mine and a copy of the "Motor Cycle" belonging to M!

August 4th, 1920, the sixth anniversary of the opening of the first world war, thus found one still at war and still in trenches, though there was a musical comedy atmosphere about this little war which had never existed in France. By this time our patrols were meeting with more opposition, and reported much movement of Arabs in a S.E. direction, doubtless all going to see what fun—or loot—could be got out of harassing General Coningham's column. With the morning of the 5th came the sound of gun fire much closer, and Major P. decided to send out about half the garrison to try and assist the oncoming troops. I found myself with two platoons 108th on the bund S.E. of the camp, and will let my diary describe events later on that morning—

> "1-45 p.m. Things have been moving a bit. About a quarter of an hour ago we heard a perfect fusillade of firing from the river bank, and learn later that it was the 10th Gurkhas effecting a crossing of the river in order to work down the gardens on the other side. Our troops can be seen coming over the bund about 1,000 yards away. We realize that they may take us for some more Arabs trying to oppose their advance, and sure enough in about two minutes we get L.G. and rifle bullets whistling over our heads. Unfortunately, we have no means of showing them as we have no signalling flags or helio with us. It is really rather a comic situation. We fire several bursts of L.G. fire into the blue, and M. puts his helmet on a rifle and waves it frantically in the air! Still the bullets come over . . . Finally, a flag arrives from the 32nd and we signal with it, and Major P. from camp sends a bugler who blows the "Cease fire" and "No parade" at short repeated intervals. We cannot help laughing, especially when we see one of our men wandering slowly down the railway line waving my handkerchief tied on a stick. He is wounded in the arm during the process which is rather hard luck! Anyway, we finally work the oracle and the firing ceases."

Didn't I say there was a musical comedy atmosphere about this war? Half an hour later we had made contact with the 116th Mahrattas, advance guard of General Coningham's column, and the siege of Jarboiyah was over. The first British officer to greet us was H. of the 114th, attached 116th, who had been in the besieged Rumaithah garrison. 'Irish of the Irish, his chief amusement, it transpired, had been to emerge from the fortress at dusk armed with rifle and bayonet and chase Arabs round their houses in search of a duck or hen for the evening dinner.

G.H.Q. would have liked the column back in Hillah on the 6th, but there was a full day's work ahead to get guns and transport over the bridge, which first had to have a roadway laid over it. One began to hear scraps of news and to piece together the adventures of the column since leaving Diwaniyah on the 30th July. Opposition until the final battle near Jarboiyah on the 5th

had not been severe; the delay in arrival had been due to the necessity for bringing the train back to Hillah too, and over a track which for miles was largely non-existent. The Arabs had removed sleepers and rails wholesale, and in spite of what the train was able to carry in the way of construction material, it often became necessary to pull up the rails from behind the train and lay them in front before it could proceed further. And what a train—oh boy! Over three-quarters of a mile long, it consisted of no less than six engines and 251 wagons. In these wagons were all the ammunition and stores that could be saved from Diwaniyah, together with numerous non-combatants which included amongst others 13 Armenian woman teachers who could not be left; while in addition to the train General Coningham had brought safely to Jarboiyah 4,000 troops and 2,000 non-combatants, nearly 400 A.T. carts, over 100 Ford vans, 8 lorries and 22 guns with their limbers and equipment. A notable achievement; but as my diary sadly remarks: "The tragedy is to think of all the stuff that *had* to be left in Diwaniyah for the Arabs. 500 E.P. tents and a huge amount of canteen stores, including 48 cases—of *beer!*"

At one time there was some chat to the effect that the train might be left at Jarboiyah with ourselves to guard it, while the troops marched post-haste for Hillah, a prospect which did not amuse us in the least; but after order and counter-order the 86th Carnatics with two mountain guns were left at Jarboiyah, while we and the train moved off at 3 p.m. on the 7th. But there was still a surprise in store for us from the practical joke department. At 3 p.m. on the 8th, having waited all morning in the heat of the August sun for the line to be repaired, we were told that the train would go on but that General Coningham's brigade would stay behind to build blockhouses, and that we, 108th, would garrison them. But, of course, it *was* only a practical joke. At 11 p.m. all previous orders were cancelled, and 3 p.m. on the 9th, exactly a fortnight from the day we had left Hillah, saw us marching into it again, very hot and dusty and sore about the feet.

So ended the siege of Jarboiyah. Although described as a "small affair" by General Haldane in his book—and doubtless it was, against the background of the rebellion as a whole— we felt we had played a not unworthy part. We had held the bridge; and the subsequent operations would have gone ill without the 6 engines and 251 trucks, which but for us would have remained on the wrong side of the Euphrates for some months. Our total

casualties in the post had been 6 killed and 10 wounded, the latter included Major P.

* * * *

We will now return to the main scene. There was now a large force assembled at Hillah, but before relieving Kufah, which it appeared had ample rations, there were other more important jobs to be done. The railway between Baghdad and Hillah had to be repaired and blockhouses built; the Baghdad defences must be improved and strengthened; and more important still, control had to be secured of the Hindiyah Barrage and the town of Musayib, 8 miles up the river from it. The Barrage, *i.e.* dam, built by the Turks before the great war on the advice of Sir William Willcocks, controls by means of its regulators the amount of water flowing down the Hillah and Hindiyah branches of the Euphrates; and though the local Arabs were unlikely to tinker with the works, since by so doing they might deprive large numbers of their countrymen of water, it was obviously better that we should be in control of the barrage and not they. The occupation of Musayib gave us control not only of the bridge over the Euphrates which carried the Baghdad-Karbala road, but of the canal and regulator which supplied Karbala with water. This town, greatest of the Shiah centres of pilgrimage, with its tomb of Hussain son of 'Ali, had been in no small degree responsible for the insurrection, and the moral effect of seizing the regulator and thereby controlling its water supply was considerable. The blockhousing of the railway, started first, on the Hillah-Baghdad portion, eventually involved the garrisoning of some 300 blockhouses and 25 railway stations, distributed along 250 miles of railway. Meanwhile, Hillah was attacked again on the 21st August, and on the 27th a column reached Jarboiyah—our old friend—and withdrew its garrison which could no longer be spared to hold it. Eheu fugaces!

Thus another month had passed, but the relief of Kufah was to be delayed still further by events north-east of Baghdad, which necessitated transferring most of the available troops to that quarter. These operations followed the usual course and will not be gone into in detail. Their main object was to localize the rebellious areas as much as possible by a display of force, and at the same time to restore railway communication between Baghdad and Quaraitu and its branch line to Kingarban. Not only was there a considerable force in North Persia, whose communications had to be kept open, but some anxiety began to be felt for the large conglomeration of British families then camped at Karind

in Perisa. General Haldane, who had found this awkward baby on his hands (or should one say mother and baby?) on arrival in March, was determined to dispose it of as soon as possible; and this he was able to do as soon as the line had been opened and blockhoused. Fortunately, the Kut/Tigris area, thanks to the work of some excellent political officers and the good sense of the tribes, did not go up with the rest, and General Haldane was thus assured of his communications with Basra, along which fresh reinforcements were now reaching Baghdad weekly. The Upper Euphrates, under a stout-hearted Shaikh, also remained loyal; though lower down the Zoba tribe had risen and murdered at Khan Nuqtah Colonel Leachman, one of the outstanding political officers of his generation.

Thus it was not until the 6th October that a force at last moved out of Hillah to effect the relief of Kufah. This town, to digress for a moment, was founded as far back as 638 A.D., three years after Iraq had fallen to the Muhammedans. Its main interest lies in the fact that 'Ali, nephew of the Prophet Muhammed and originator of the Shiah Sect, was assassinated there in 661 A.D. He was actually buried at Nejaf, five miles to the west, the story being that as he lay dying he instructed those around him that as a Bedouin Arab he desired to be buried in the desert, and that after death his body was to be tied on the back of a camel; the camel would then be allowed to wander and graze at will, and wherever it lay down to rest, there would be the burial place.

By the time the relief force started the Arabs were getting a bit tired of being hounded from pillar to post, and opposition was slight compared to that which the Manchester Column had met in July. Progress though slow was steady, and on the 17th October at 9-30 a.m. Kufah was relieved, the leading infantry to reach the town being appropriately the balance of the 108th. All the troops of the garrison were found to be in good health and spirits, in spite of having to subsist on rice and horse-flesh for the last three weeks. The siege had followed the usual course, the Arabs being enterprising to begin with, with fire, mines and what not; but as soon as they realized that the garrison meant business, their efforts slackened off. What, however, distinguished this siege from the others was that the Arabs were able to use against the garrison the 18-pdr. gun which had come into their possession as a result of the Manchester Column disaster. Though the breech-block had been removed before capture, another had been roughly forged, and on the 17th August the gun opened fire on the gunboat *Firefly*,

which had arrived from the Upper Euphrates in the middle of July to assist the garrison. The first shot caused her to burn fiercely, and she had to be sunk by L.G. fire in case the ammunition exploded. Round One was undoubtedly to the Budhu in the contest Budhu *vs.* Dowling (Dowling being commander of the Kufah garrison). Next day the gun was discovered to be only 250 yards away, so all the L.G.s of the garrison were turned on the spot and the gun was damaged and the crew annihilated. Round Two, Dowling. That night the gun was removed, but turned up again like a bad penny at the end of the month though at a more respectful distance. From here it fired some 90 shells and caused a few casualties, but many were inflicted in return by rifle fire. Round Three was probably a draw. I was able to take a photograph of this gun later and its shield was perforated like the top of a pepper-pot.

On the 18th October Nejaf made submission and next day the 79 British and 81 Indian prisoners taken on the 24th July were handed over. The British prisoners, already almost naked and without boots and socks, had been disgracefully treated on their march to Kufah, but thereafter, thanks to the good offices of a Deputy Assistant Political Officer, cousin of the Aga Khan, had been tolerably well looked after at Nejaf. Incidentally, in spite of having had their topees stolen with the rest of their clothes, except for a pair of shorts, not one of these British soldiers suffered from sunstroke. This would appear to lend proof to the theory that if your feet are bare as well as your head, you act as a conductor and the sun cannot hurt you. But the experiment is perhaps not one to be encouraged.

We have so far had our eyes focussed on the Hillah-Baghdad scene, but all this time stirring events were taking place in the River Area, as it is called, that is roughly all Mesopotamia South of the line Kut/Nasiriyah, and with the reader's indulgence they will be briefly described. The disturbances at Rumaithah at the end of June spread quickly South and displayed themselves mainly round Samawah. At this place were two-and-a-half companies of the 114th Mahrattas, and at Nasiriyah the 2/125th Rifles with a detachment at Ur (Ur of the Chaldees), the railway junction for Nasiriyah and 9 miles from it. These were the only troops between Jarboiyah and Basra.

Samawah being the centre of the trouble, reinforcements were sent in the shape of 100 men of the 2/125th, an armoured train from Basra, and the gunboats—or more correctly, "protected defence vessels"—Greenfly and F. 10 from Nasiriyah. Seventy

five Euphrates Levies were also sent to Khidr, the only station between Samawah and Nasiriyah that lies close to the river and therefore of some importance in that waterless area.

With these reinforcements on the scene all remained quiet for over a month, but then things began to happen. First, the Greenfly, proceeding to Khidr on 10th August, ran aground five miles above that place, and all efforts to refloat her failed. (We were not at that time in control of the Hindiyah Barrage and the water was particularly low.) It then became necessary to evacuate Khidr, which operation was only achieved with great difficulty. The Levies in this action behaved with great coolness; but an accident occurred to the armoured train from Ur which had come up to assist and though the greater part of the garrison got away, 17 men of the 10th Gurkhas in the train were butchered.

Samawah could not now be evacuated as was General Haldane's hope, either by rail or river, and the garrison prepared to stand a siege. The trouble about Samawah was that no less than four different posts had to be defended: the main camp and supply camp, close together; the Barbuti bridge post half a mile west of the main camp, where the railway crosses the Euphrates? and the station, half a mile south of the main camp. On 26th August the Arabs attacked the railway station camp with great vigour, and it was here shortly afterwards that one of the most gallant actions of the whole campaign was fought. The garrison consisted of about 75 men each of the 10th Lancers and 2/125th Rifles, all under command of Captain Russell of the former regiment; and in addition was No. 1 Armoured Train, with its 13-pdr. gun and crew and loopholed trucks manned by the 10th Lancers. The post, badly sited and with an uncertain water supply, very soon became untenable, and it was decided to evacuate the garrison to the main camp. All went well until the armoured train jumped the track about 200 yards from the station. Some of its occupants were able to make a dash to safety, covered by the 114th Mahrattas, but Captain Russel, together with his Medical Officer, Captain Pigeon, deliberately stayed with the sick and wounded, and here after a heroic and bloody fight, during which with a few men they defended one of the loopholed trucks for many hours, they both perished. The Arabs hereabouts, long after the rebellion had ended, still spoke of the bravery of him whom they called "Abu sil Sillah" (Father of the Chains), on account of the steel chains worn on the shoulders of his khaki cavalry jacket. One lesson seems to stand out here; that in unsettled or semi-settled

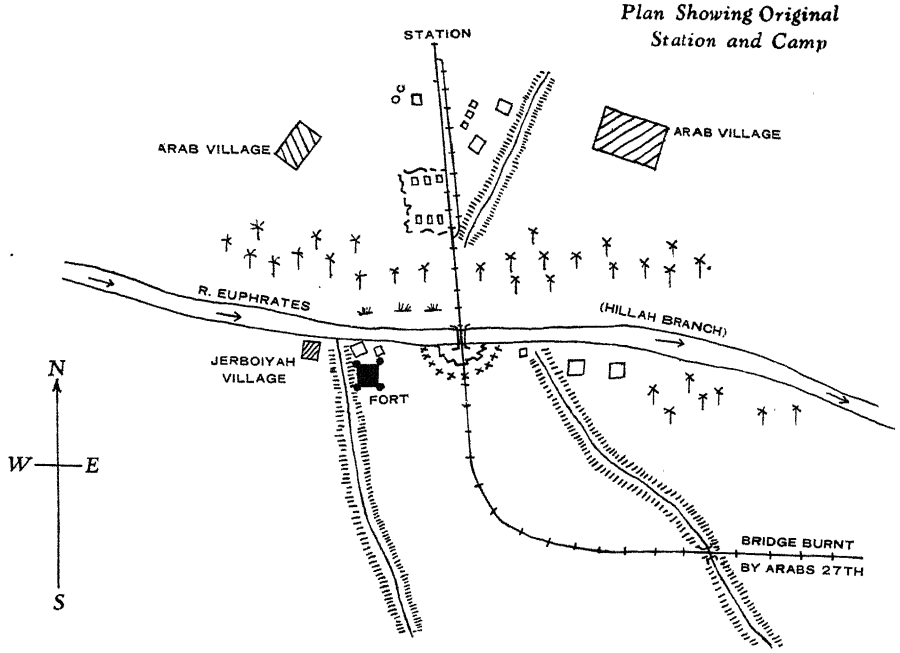
countries railway construction and other work for which protection may be demanded, *e.g.* stations and bridges, should not be undertaken without the advice of the military authorities as to security.

Samawah was finally relieved by the ubiquitous General Coningham on the 14th October, after a siege of about two months; he was just too late to save the crew of the ill-fated Greenfly, who had surrendered on 3rd October owing to lack of food, and were then murdered. "Cooped up in the unbearable heat of summer in what was little more than a tin box, with nothing to drink but the hot muddy water of the river, slowly to starve and not know that every effort was being made to relieve them, such was the fate of those on board." Thus writes General Haldane in his book. It was certainly one of the grimmer episodes of the campaign, and there were not a few.

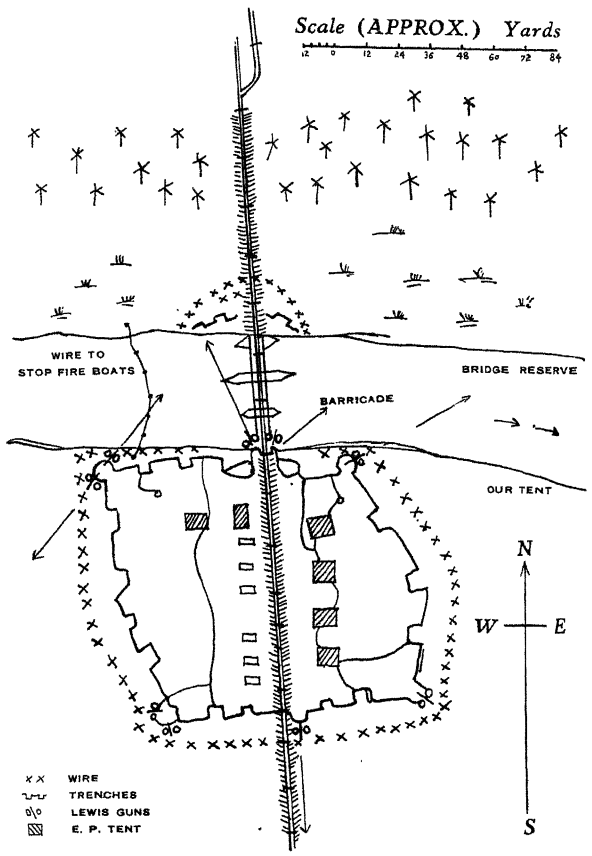
With the relief of Samawah and Kufah the most serious part of the rebellion was over. It is interesting to recall that while the Arabs were keeping us busy in Iraq, our forces in North Persia—"Norperforce" as it was called...were having inconclusive battles with the Bolsheviks! The force, which consisted of little more than a brigade, had its H.Q. at Kazvin and its main position at Manzil, S. E. of Enzeli (Pahlavi as it is now called). As the Bolsheviks advanced the force withdrew to Kazvin and vicinity "according to plan," whence they played a sort of hide-and-seek with their opponents in the mountains, with the Persian Cossack division every now and then joining in the fun. It was Norperforce that General Sir Edmund Ironside came out to command at the end of September 1920, but since its role by then was entirely defensive and continued so until it was withdrawn in the following Spring, it is to be feared that his command lacked interest and excitement.

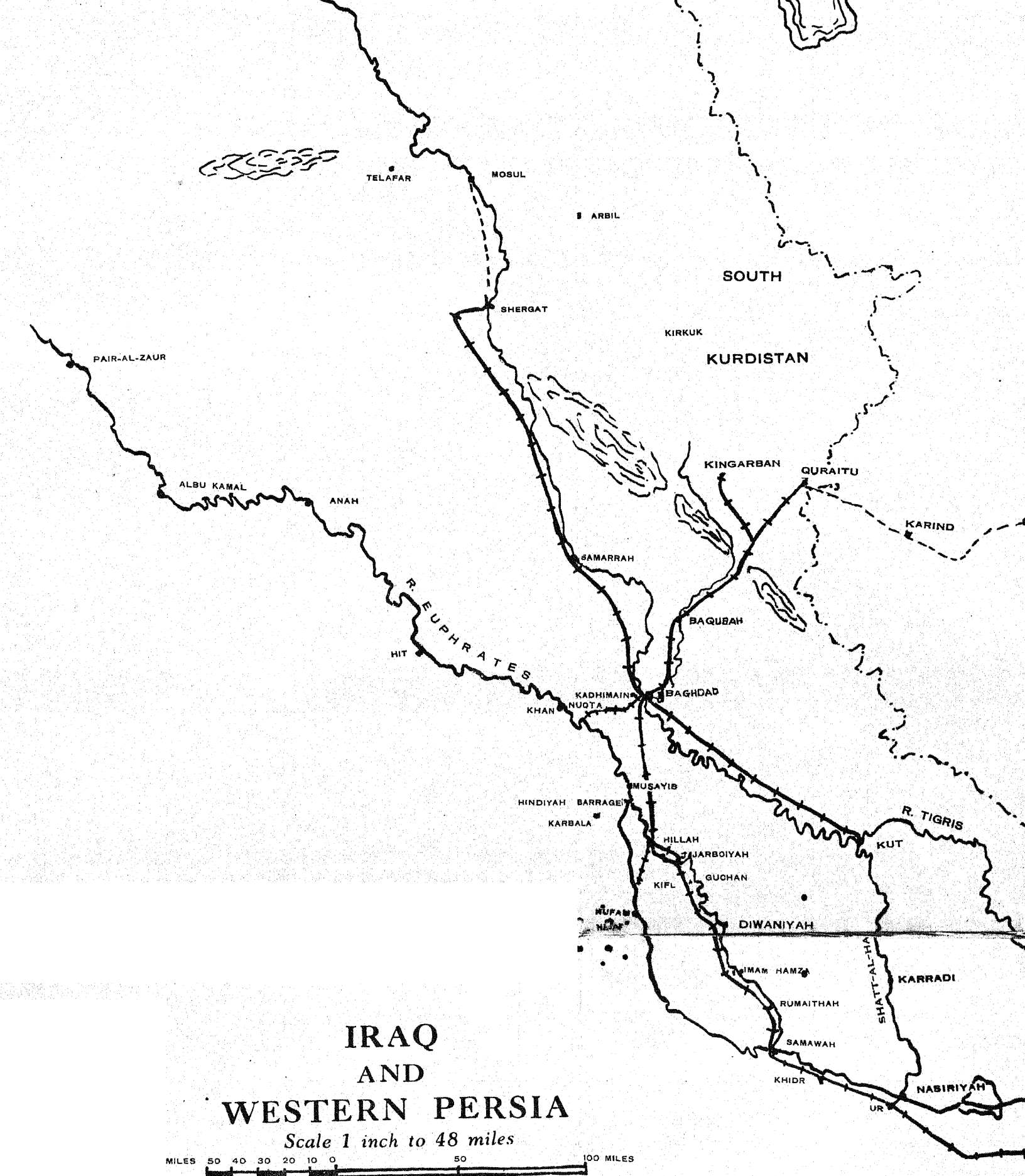
The final stage of the Iraq operations, which lasted until the end of the year, was the disarming and fining of those tribes which had had the temerity to seek arbitrament by force. To ensure that there should be no nonsense about this, columns were sent hither and thither over the countryside, and as a result rifles and rupees came in with gratifying regularity: altogether over 63,000 rifles, 3 million rounds of S.A.A., and some Rs. 800,000 were either collected or extracted. As a grand finale, in January 1921, two formidable columns moved into the Shatt-al-Hai, one from Nasiriyah and one from Kut, which met about half-way at Karradi and then returned to their starting points. Though the well-armed Muntafiq tribes inhabiting this area had been kept in check

Plan Showing Original Station and Camp



PLAN OF CAMP





IRAQ
AND
WESTERN PERSIA

Scale 1 inch to 48 miles

during the rebellion, it was thought advisable for the future peace of Iraq to show them that we were capable of moving into their country at will, more especially as our earlier attempts to do so, in 1916, had resulted in a somewhat ignominous withdrawal.

So much for the Iraq Rebellion of 1920. Though not perhaps fraught with the same dangerous possibilities as its successor in 1941, it had nevertheless been a period of frequent mishaps, even greater anxiety, and more prolonged fighting under very trying conditions. "Indeed," as General Haldane himself put it, from the beginning of July till well into October, we lived on the edge of a precipice where the least slip might have led to a catastrophe." All credit to him and his troops, therefore, for their courage and constancy. Our G.O.C.-in-C. certainly deserved well of the telegram he received after the relief of Samawah in October. It was from Mr. Winston Churchill, then Secretary of State for War, and read as follows:

> "During these difficult months your patience and steadfastness have been of great value, and I congratulate you upon the distinct improvement in the situation which has been effected by you."

RAISING A LABOUR BATTALION

By "Mugger"

"Raise a Labour Battalion," these were the orders that I received at short notice six months ago. Another officer and myself made up the entire British officer establishment of the unit at that time, and, for that matter, was all the Battalion consisted of for the first few days. I was soon to discover that except for two of the Indian officers, little assistance of much value would be at first forthcoming. Besides this, every one in the Area where the Battalion was to be raised was working to full capacity and could not be expected to give much time to my troubles. One Staff Officer in particular, however, was quick to realize that although it was only a Labour Battalion that was being raised, a considerable amount of exertion would be required to get it going, and, having lent an ear to some of my difficulties, produced assistance in the shape of drill instructors, etc., which helped very much to start the ball rolling.

Men soon began arriving in large numbers at a temporary Headquarters which was established in two rooms of another unit's lines. Food, clothes, stationery for the office, etc.,—no one knowing very much about how to procure these—had to be hurriedly obtained. The young civilian enrolled clerks knew absolutely nothing about army work. They had to be taught. With considerable effort stopgaps were produced by borrowing, and we thus managed to contend with the situation. Sometimes what appeared to be dreadful and hair-raising problems arose, but somehow we solved them. Contending with the office work was a most exacting task, and the issue of the first Part II Orders became an achievement in itself. I had to be always on my guard when signing a document of any kind. A ration indent on an Arsenal was once hopefully placed before me for signature.

Soon we were 300 strong and were forced to find accommodation elsewhere. This resulted in a move of a few miles, where the Battalion remained until it left India for Overseas some months later.

Gradually the unit took form. Squads moved up and down the parade ground and stacks of equipment rose up around the Q. M. Stores. Desertions and other military offences were frequent. Some concern was caused by a section of one company entic-

ing others to mutiny. Accusations of harsh treatment, of disrespect of religious prejudices and of inadequate food were lodged against me and anonymously communicated to higher authority. These things made life more trying than usual, but, gradually, with perseverance, the unit took shape in spite of all that was said and done against it.

After pay-days extra outbreaks of crime and drunkenness were to be expected. Discipline in the lines was none too good, and the local inhabitants had good cause to complain of latrine smells and of being awakened in the small hours by unruly troops preparing for parade. However, onwards we progressed, each week showing some improvement.

The provision of Sub-Unit Commanders was a problem in itself. All respectable men were being taken for combatant units, and although the recruiting authorities did their utmost, suitable leaders very seldom appeared. I used to move about the mass of humanity looking for individuals who showed an intelligent gleam in their eyes and who had a reasonably good physique. It was amazing how men of any quality stood out from the rest, and I eventually had a crew selected as a framework on which to build the Battalion.

Later, personnel for an anti-aircraft platoon had to be selected from the non-combatants. This inclusion of a combatant platoon in the unit gave considerable moral uplift, and there was great competition to get a place in it. Why a large portion of India has been categoried as non-fighting seemed rather surprising as the so-called non-fighters that came to my unit took every opportunity they had to start a fight and, I am certain, could be formed into combatant troops. Get them overseas and arm them, and they would very soon be a useful body of men with which to confront an enemy.

And so did the unit develop, doing useful work in the Area in the meanwhile. Its *major opus* was the repair, which almost amounted to a reconstruction, of a mountain road. This was a great achievement, and having received the thanks and compliments of both the civil and military powers on this effort, I made the most of it to raise the morale of the men.

This raising of morale was one of the chief tasks that I set myself to do, and I seized upon every opportunity and introduced various schemes to accomplish it. One idea was that of Company flags and the award to them of silver or gold stripes for any good or specially good work of Sub-units. The Company that had constructed the mountain road mentioned above, received the

only gold stripe so far awarded. Another company already has four silver stripes on its company flag.

The reader must realise that the four enormous companies (approximately 400 strong each) were at that time each commanded by only one dug-out Indian officer, he being the only officer in it. This seems astonishing, but such was the case. Since then, one British Officer per company has been added. However, that was the unit W. E. on which I had to work, but wonders still do happen, for one morning, on opening the dak, I read that four more real live British officers were being posted to the Unit. Almost by the same dak I received orders for the Battalion to be ready to proceed overseas at a future nearby date.

There was little time to form an Officers' Mess, but we managed to collect the necessary items, and soon had a Field Service Mess of sorts running.

The preparation of records and field service documents for such a large number of men was an enormous task. Piles upon piles of sheet rolls (in duplicate), had to be prepared, and sacks full of A.B.s 64—the vade mecum of the soldier on service had to be completed.

The daily dak was of considerable dimensions, swelled by returning verified descriptive rolls and letters from anxious relations to the "Officer Commanding-in-Chief" of the Battalion, asking about their absent offspring or absconded husbands.

At last, however, the unit was up to full strength, nearly all equipment had been received and documents ready, and I could state on my weekly report to Army Headquarters "Unit ready to proceed."

All this time I had been working at high pressure and with horrible feeling that I was trying to raise a unit that stood on very thin ice indeed. The news of the British officer reinforcement had been a considerable help, but on their arrival they brought fresh problems with them which had to be dealt with and overcome in their turn. "All is not gold that glitters."

I feel that I must mention the fact that had I not been so fortunate as to find a few friends locally, I might have given up the task that I had been set. I received much encouragement from these friends, and their cheerfulness and bright outlook on life invariably went to cheer me up after a long, hot, back-breaking day.

Orders to stand down, and, orders to prepare to move were received and then at last we did move.

The monsoon was raging at the time we left our mobilization station. We were to move in three trains, H.Q. and 1½ companies in first train, and the rest of the Battalion in two other trains a day later. The first train was wrecked on its way to the port of embarkation owing to flood-water washing away part of the railway line. The other two trains were held up for a whole week. Meanwhile, the personnel of the first train crossed the Arabian Sea in the teeth of the South West monsoon.

* * *

EPILOGUE.

After Three Months Overseas.

On a sandy plain in the pale purple half-light of a dawning tropical day, 1,200 men are fallen in on parade. Short sharp orders and groups quietly move off and fade into the distance. These men have gone to their day's work and will not return to camp until evening. If you drive through the Base Ammunition Depot or Base Ordnance Depot with its widely dispersed branches, you will find these men working in groups, handling heavy boxes of ammunition and stores of all description throughout the heat of the day. Behind them these men have left an orderly camp, where the administrative staff of their unit is busy making preparations for the provision of food and water for those out on work and for the future maintenance of the unit as a whole. The anti-aircraft platoon might be seen swinging along towards the rifle ranges, and a smart quarter-guard may turn out to you, while the wail of pipes and the beat of *dhols* will signify to you that the unit pipe band is practising!

There are no drunks and practically no crime. Clerks know their duties, and the office work is proceeding smoothly. In the evening, when the men return, there will be football and volley-ball for those who were so fortunate as to have been off work that afternoon, and if a Saturday, then there may be a "Tamasha" that night. At retreat a bugler (none on W.E.T.s) will sound the call, and with the age-old ceremony the Battalion Flag will be folded away for the night.

"A Labour Battalion has been raised and is serving in the Field."

THE BATTLE OF AMBAR ALAGI OR THE FALL OF AN EMPIRE

By Capt. Shaukat Hayat

With the fall of Massawa, Eritrea, the oldest colony of the Italians in East Africa, was now virtually in our hands. The only enemy in the country at the moment was the small bands of Italians who had drifted away from the main positions. These were seeking protection rather than a battle, because the Abyssinians, who had been waiting for such a state of affairs for a long time, were now definitely making much of their opportunities.

At this point 4th Indian Division was recalled to Egypt. This left to 5th Indian Division, rather weak and war-worn after their assaults on the heights of Cheren and their storming of the defences of Massawa, the task of providing protection to the newly fallen foes, of looking after those hordes of prisoners, of protecting their long L. of C., and of maintaining the British prestige in the conquered land. Taking into consideration the extent of these multifarious duties, we thought in our minds that we were going to get the sorely needed break from that Italian chasing, in order to repair and replenish our losses of the past ten weeks. It turned out to be only wishful thinking. The powers that be decided to give no respite to the Italians, to strike while their morale was still at a low ebb and to see if we could not end the campaign before the outbreak of the rains in May.

The enemy was reported at two different places. One force of some 14,000 strong at and about Gondar in Abyssinia. Another of a similar strength, under the Duke of Aosta, the Viceroy and C.-in-C. of Italian East Africa, astride Asmara-Adis Abbaba road, some 250 miles South of Asmara.

The G.O.C.'s recce party came to a standstill some 40 miles from Gondar on account of a gigantic road-block the Italians had prepared with the help of Nature. It was along the Great African Rift, where the Italians had literally carved out a road on either side, by letting down their workers by ropes, a few years previously and was now so thoroughly demolished that it once again assumed its original form. It was now apparent that even if our Sappers succeeded in achieving the impossible, the passage over the temporary road would prove to be a hazardous task even

under the best conditions. With the danger of rains looming above us it was decided to abandon this line of approach, at least for the time being. Consequently, a company of SDF MMG Group was left to guard the frontier, and our allies, the Patriots, were asked to keep the Italian garrison occupied. The Abyssinians did not have to be asked twice, as this was an occupation after their own hearts. Soon some 25,000 of them were skilfully and efficiently carrying out their operations.

The second line of advance was taken up by the Divisional Cavalry Regiment. Soon a Squadron was on its way along the main road. The Italians had withdrawn in such a frightful hurry, and so great seemed to be their confidence in the Alagi defences, that they had not even taken the trouble of carrying out any demolitions on their way back. Consequently, this Squadron arrived at a Brigade Garrison Town called Qiha, over 200 miles from Asmara, without meeting any opposition. Here they met the first hostile force of any strength. As the forward elements of the Squadron entered the town they encountered a whole Italian Battalion, about a thousand strong, all ready to march back towards Alagi, 20 miles further South. The Squadron Commander, true to the traditions of the force, challenged this out-numbering force to surrender. Obviously, they had not expected us to get there so soon as the officers were still having lunch in the mess. They came out to meet our officers but flatly refused to discuss the terms of surrender unless our officers went and shared lunch with them. When, after partaking of a sumptuous meal accompanied by Chianti and followed by excellent Mokha coffee, our officers came out, they found the Italians mounted on vehicles, which in the meanwhile had been turned about to face Asmara. The Italian officers were awaiting orders to march their commands into captivity. A small party was detailed to show these the way back, while the rest of the Squadron proceeded further to gain contact with the main force.

Soon the Cavalry came across an obstacle against which they could not make any headway. They were face to face with a mountain wall of inhospitable-looking hills, precipitously rising to a height of some 11,000 feet. It was a mass of rugged and bare hills intersected by deep and impassable ravines—quite a fortress in itself. The Italians had made exceptionally good use of this, nature's insurmountable barrier. They had dug themselves caves along the tops of these unscalable heights. The cliffs were bristling with these dug-outs, from which pointed guns at anyone who dare assault these defences. Even the road running

from Quiha to Fort Tosselli was thoroughly demolished at the numerous hair-pin bends, and extensively mined. Any advance along it was impossible till the seven well-covered blocks had been cleared. In fact, if the defenders had been other than the demoralised and disheartened Italian Army of the East, this would have become a well-nigh impregnable line of defences.

The G.O.C., General Mayne, decided to attack the enemy. On account of various reasons such as the long L. of C. which now extended over very nearly a thousand miles from Port Sudan, the limited amount of transport available, and the duties mentioned previously, all the Divisional Commander could muster together for the siege of the Duke of Aosta's fortress, manned by some 12,000 men and guns numbering over 200, consisted of Skinners Horse, the divisional Cavalry Regiment the 18 R. Gharwal Rifles, and the 29th Indian Infantry Brigade, comprising the Worcestershire Regiment, 13th R.F.F. Regiment and 2nd Punjab Regiment. All these Regiments were below strength on account of the recent operations at Cheren and elsewhere. To support these we had two Regiments of 25 Pdr. gun/Hows., two 60 Pdrs. in action and two batteries of 3.7 Hows., all of these mechanically drawn.

The plan was simple and well conceived. The commander knew that the Italians themselves had used the eastern track running over the Flaga Pass to get round behind the Abyssinians, who were holding the same position against them in 1936. Secondly, they displayed unshakable confidence that the hill-top defences were unassailable. Thirdly, at Cheren we had attacked the centre and taken the flanks in detail from the rear. Taking these and the various other factors into account, the following orders were issued:

(*a*) The Gharwal Regiment to relieve Skinners Horse on the main road and demonstrate vigorously along it.

(*b*) Skinners Horse to proceed along the Flaga Track and demonstrate on that flank.

(*c*) Both (*a*) and (*b*) to intensify their demonstrations two days before Zero (4th May), (*b*) putting a feint attack on Flaga Pass itself, in order to stimulate an attack from that direction, drawing and pinning the enemy there.

(*d*) 29 Indian Infantry Brigade to put in an attack from the west, moving along the top of the hills, taking each feature in turn. It was hoped that the Italians would fall into our eastern trap and that this attack at Zero would come as a complete surprise.

The Gharwalis moved forward and succeeded in puzzling the enemy along the main road by a series of original ruses.

Skinners Horse advanced along the Flaga Track, meeting no opposition other than heavy artillery concentrations and a couple of road-blocks covered by mines. Four days before Zero the troop of Commandoes attached to the Skinners Horse was ordered to put in a night attack on the western spur running from Flaga (later known as the Commandoe Ridge). After a stiff night-march the Commandoes assaulted the cliff itself hauling themselves up by means of ropes. The Italians had allowed the Cliff to beguile them into a sense of false security, and the attack went as a complete surprise. The enemy gunner O.P. was found to be without any other protection and was captured. This success worried the Italians very much and they subjected our troops on the Commandoe Ridge to a terrific strafing. The next day Skinners Horse moved forward and occupied the lower slopes of the eastern spur (Wireless Hill) without any opposition. Here a number of deserters surrendered to us.

A patrol soon reported that owing to our shelling the enemy had abandoned Wireless Hill, Skinners Horse advanced and occupied it by the evening. Our troops kept their position so well-concealed throughout the next day that the Italians thought that we had not taken it, so a party of some 250 enemy came forward to re-occupy the hill. Our troops held their fire till the enemy was crossing a nullah about 150 yards from our position. When fire was suddenly opened it surprised the enemy so much that we were able to capture the whole party. Thereafter the enemy very heavily mortared us, cutting the Artillery O.P.'s line which considerably delayed our counter battery fire. That night Skinners Horse put in their final attack on the feature commanding the Flaga Pass. Two squadrons were employed for this task. As they had to leave their drivers behind as well as the carrier troops, they were very low in bayonet strength, each being no stronger than a troop. One of these made its objective, but the other met a hail of hand-grenades when some 20 yards from top. Some men fell, others stopped to attend them and got wounded themselves. The squadron that had got into position found it impossible to assist owing to the close nature of fighting and to the complete darkness, and the attack had to be abandoned. Though the attack failed in itself, it served the purpose of worrying the Italians about this flank. When the next day the 12 R. F.F. Regiment (so far on L. of C.) moved on to the Wireless Hill it helped to conform their fears and they were convinced that the

main offensive was coming from this direction. Consequently, they moved a considerable number of troops to this side.

On the night of 3/4th May, 29th Indian Infantry Brigade after seven hours' march over that treacherous bit of country formed up on Sandy Ridge. Early on the morning of the 4th the 13th F.F.F. Regiment led the attack on Pyramid, Fin and Whale-back. Within 40 minutes' picqueting, screens were seen reaching the tops of these features and a short but stiff hand-to-hand fight resulted in the capture of all those strong points. The Punjabis who were the next to go were not going to be outdone by their compatriots. They rushed forward and captured Elephant within 20 minutes. The comparatively easy progress here showed that the Italians had never expected an attack from that quarter and had weakened the garrisons of these very important posts to reinforce the eastern flank. On the capture of Elephant it was found that what had looked like a plateau joining this feature to Middle Hill, Little Alagi and Bald Hill was no more than a razor-edge very well covered by enemy M.G.s, mortars and guns on those features. The next day the Worcesters did manage to get up to the lower slopes of the Little Alagi, but only to be beaten back by a shower of grenades and M.G. fire from the caves. They had to fall back on to Middle Hill which the Punjabis had secured. After this the advance from this direction came almost to a standstill. The Italians, however, tried hard to dislodge our troops by counter-attacking us. Though their 4-inch mortars succeeded in making our position fairly unhealthy, all their attacks were repulsed with heavy losses to themselves.

On the Flaga front it was discovered that the track reported beyond the pass was non-existent. Therefore the cavalry was brought back to the main road to relieve the Gharwalis, who in turn took its place back at Flaga. On this front the 12 R.F.F. Regiment attacked and captured Gumsa, taking 1,000 prisoners and 7 mountain guns.

The Gharwalis on arrival, formed a new Brigade with the 12 R.F.F. Regiment and the Commandoes, but this Brigade was soon forced by the early rains to withdraw, except the Gharwalis.

Even without the rains the track was in a precarious condition. The porterage of supplies over so many miles and then hauling them up by ropes took almost one battalion to maintain another. The Gharwalis however pushed forward towards the Twin Pyramids and the Triangle, in order to exploit our success on this front up to date.

The Patriots now arrived on the scene and volunteered to do their bit. They rushed up in swarms over the Twin Pyramids. Soon however we found their tactics at variance with the well-established customs of the British Armies. They reached their objectives, collected all the trophies that were to be found, slung them round their belts, and returned to the starting line proudly displaying the fruits of their toils. When the Gharwalis went forward they discovered that the Italians had once again taken possession of the features. They had to be attacked and captured all over again. Progress beyond this point was made impossible by well-controlled hostile fire from the Triangle, the Ft. Tosseli, Ambar Alagi, and the forward slopes of Bald Hill.

To resume the narrative of the force in the West, the 29th Indian Infantry Brigade on being held up, consolidated its gains and turned towards the South-West. The 13 R.F.F. Rifles after an approaching-march, which lasted some six hours during the night, over extremely difficult country and under pouring rain, attacked and captured the first two objectives on Castle Hill, to the South of Amber Alagi. As one of the companies advanced towards the third objective it met a most familiar object, which had succeeded in expending most of the white yarn in the Italian Empire. The enemy in the position had hoisted the white flag. The Company being used to this form of adornment all over the housetops and the surrendering positions in the past, unsuspectingly advanced to secure prisoners. As they were making the last 50 yards they fell victims to the most villainous type of treachery used even by the conquerors of Abyssinia. They were welcomed by a shower of hand-grenades and an artillery and mortar barrage. Seventy three men in this company fell a prey to this foul play. There, however, was the Pathan Company of the Regiment just behind, a witness to the foul murder of their comrades. Unheeding the hail of M.G. bullets and the artillery concentrations they rushed forward with their famous war cry, and what they did to the Italians in that position, is nobody's business.

The South African Bde. which had to pass through to go to Egypt now arrived from Dessie. It was an extremely creditable performance, as they had to get over some impossible road-blocks to reach Alagi. They were put under our Div. Comd. Their gunners started pounding the enemy main positions from the rear. The only snag about this support, however, was that if their long-range guns missed the narrow target of Alagi the shells would have

landed in our Divisional Headquarters Thanks to their superb gunnery such a situation did not ever arise. The next day, 14th May, the South Africans attacked the Triangle, but by the evening all they could achieve was to secure a footing in the lower slopes, the following day the S. A. Artillery supported the Gharwalis, who attacked the feature from the North. They got up without meeting much opposition because most of the Italians had skedaddled from the position overnight.

Meanwhile, the Divisional Cavalry had kept the enemy pinned down to the Bald Hill by various ruses such as sending carrier patrols along the main road and mortaring Bald Hill. They captured Cannefat a day before the fall of the Triangle, thus getting within small arms range of Alagi itself.

The Italians were all forced into Alagi-Bald Hill area, where life was being made most unpleasant by our gunners. If any of the cave-men ever dared to peep out of his hole he stopped a shell or two. Consequently, the Italian Haven of Refuge was rapidly assuming the ugly aspect of also becoming their grave. Alagi was not intended to hold such big numbers. Therefore, what with the multitude now herded together there, and the rotting dead bodies, existence was becoming rather insanitary even for our foes.

Desertions amongst their numbers now become rife. Their morale got to such a low ebb that on the slightest excuse they gave up the struggle. Reports of incidents where the Italians surrendered without putting up much of a resistance became more and more common. One of them that I heard was that of an N.C.O. who was out on a road reconnaissance, with a couple of men, when he perceived some movement under a culvert. Considering it to be a jackal or some such animal he threw his staff at it. To his horror he saw 40 Italians come out and surrender themselves. He had to keep all his wits about him to bring his prisoners back without disclosing the strength of his available force. Another similar incident was reported by an officer of the Worcesters who was out with a small patrol and encountered some enemy far superior in numbers. The enemy's party had apparently captured some patriots and were leading them back towards Alagi. On meeting our patrol, without trying to ascertain our strength, the enemy laid down their arms. The Officer faced with the problem of handling so many with so few, armed the patriots with the Italian rifles to help his escort the prisoners back.

Although our troops were all round and within a short range of the Fortress, our own supply problem was getting rather acute.

In order to maintain 29th Bde., supplies on locally commandeered mules now had to leave the base 24 hours previously to get to the forward troops, while for the Eastern Force the supplies had to be carried over more than 15 miles of difficult country. In addition, clouds were now hanging unpleasantly above us as a reminder of things to come. It was, therefore, decided to put an end to our task by resuming the attack on Alagi from all directions before the rains made the situation really precarious. 19th May was the day appointed for the advance.

As it turned out, the enemy were in a worse pass than ourselves. On the morning of 17th May, while I was having my morning cup of tea, I heard a tumult just below my H.Q. Someone was asking questions as to where I was, and an offended Jemadar was saying that if they did not hand in their arms, they would be produced before me. As the tempers seemed to be getting rather frayed, I considered it an opportune moment to intervene. The first person I saw was the sleek-looking Italian interpreter who had put me through it five months before when I was taken a prisoner. He heaved a sigh of relief on seeing me; evidently he was worried as to whether our troops employed the same tactics as our allies, the Patriots. On enquiry it transpired that this party had walked in under a white flag, and our troops wanted to disarm them. Despite the Italian claims of being envoys, my men were having, nothing to do with the white flags. I was shown the Duke of Aosta's request for their safe conduct, as they were the envoys of peace.

Having been blind-folded they were taken to the Divisional Headquarters. The General wanted a more responsible envoy, so the poor Italian Colonel had to climb back all those 11,000 feet to send another representative with full powers to negotiate the terms of peace. The new envoy had to be in by 1300 Hours. Armistice was proclaimed till 2100 hours that night.

Our representatives ceremoniously went out to the Rendezvous at 1245. There they waited and waited without the other party's appearance. At 1630 hours, although the Italians were seen moving about their positions, there were still no signs of their envoys. This gave rise to suspicion and doubts in our minds as to the genuineness of the Italian proposals, and our representatives returned rather disappointed. Orders were issued to resume operations at 2100 hours and to give them no rest, when a frantic request was flashed from the Duke's H.Q. asking us not to resume hostilities and if possible to control the Patriots. Then

followed an explanation about the non-appearance of their representatives. Apparently they had left their H. Q., but when the fire had ceased our Abyssinian allies had taken the decision to do their bit before the fun was really over. They had seen the Italian General Envoy coming down the hill with his four senior staff officers, so they pounced on them, laid them out and stripped their dead bodies rather thoroughly—an indignity which very nearly started the war all over again. The local villagers were now playing havoc even in the Italian lines.

The Italians quite naturally flatly refused to sacrifice any more generals as peace-offerings. Consequently, we sunk our pride and sent our own party up. They were given a rousing reception by the defenders, but on seeing the sights and smelling the prevailing odours they soon realized why the Italians did not resist for as long as they had proclaimed originally.

Our terms included a flat refusal to the suggestion from Rome that the Duke of Aosta and his Staff should be permitted to remain in their caves for the duration. The rest was a nicely worded invitation virtually amounting to an unconditioned surrender.

The next day, the Italian and our sappers had cleared most of the road-blocks. Then, judging from the weight of their decorations, what looked like some three hundred generals and staff officers heading a procession of some 6,000 prisoners marched past and honourably laid down their arms. What could be a more satisfactory and befitting culmination to that glorious advance into the Italian Territory started sixteen weeks earlier.

These operations not only succeeded in the recapture of the recently conquered Empire of Abyssinia but they also achieved the magnificent result of removing Italian East Africa completely from the Map. Moreover, they tended to prove that libellous appreciation of the capabilities of the Italian armed forces, that if the Italians were our allies it would require twelve divisions to hold them, as opposed to only three to fight them if they were our enemies.

Why did the Italians miss the opportunity of invading Sudan, and what was the reason for the collapse of their army of the East, which had superiority, both in men and materials, to the extent of ten to one? The frivolous answer in American slang would be that they were yellow. But on the other hand, one had seen some brilliant examples of heroism and gallantry on the part of some Italian units. The reason for these being spasmodic rather

than consistent throughout was, apart from our superior generalship, to be found in the following qualities:

(1) Morale;

(2) Training, determination and initiative;

(3) Bayonet; and

(4) Confidence, cohesion and co-operation.

Taking each in turn one found that:

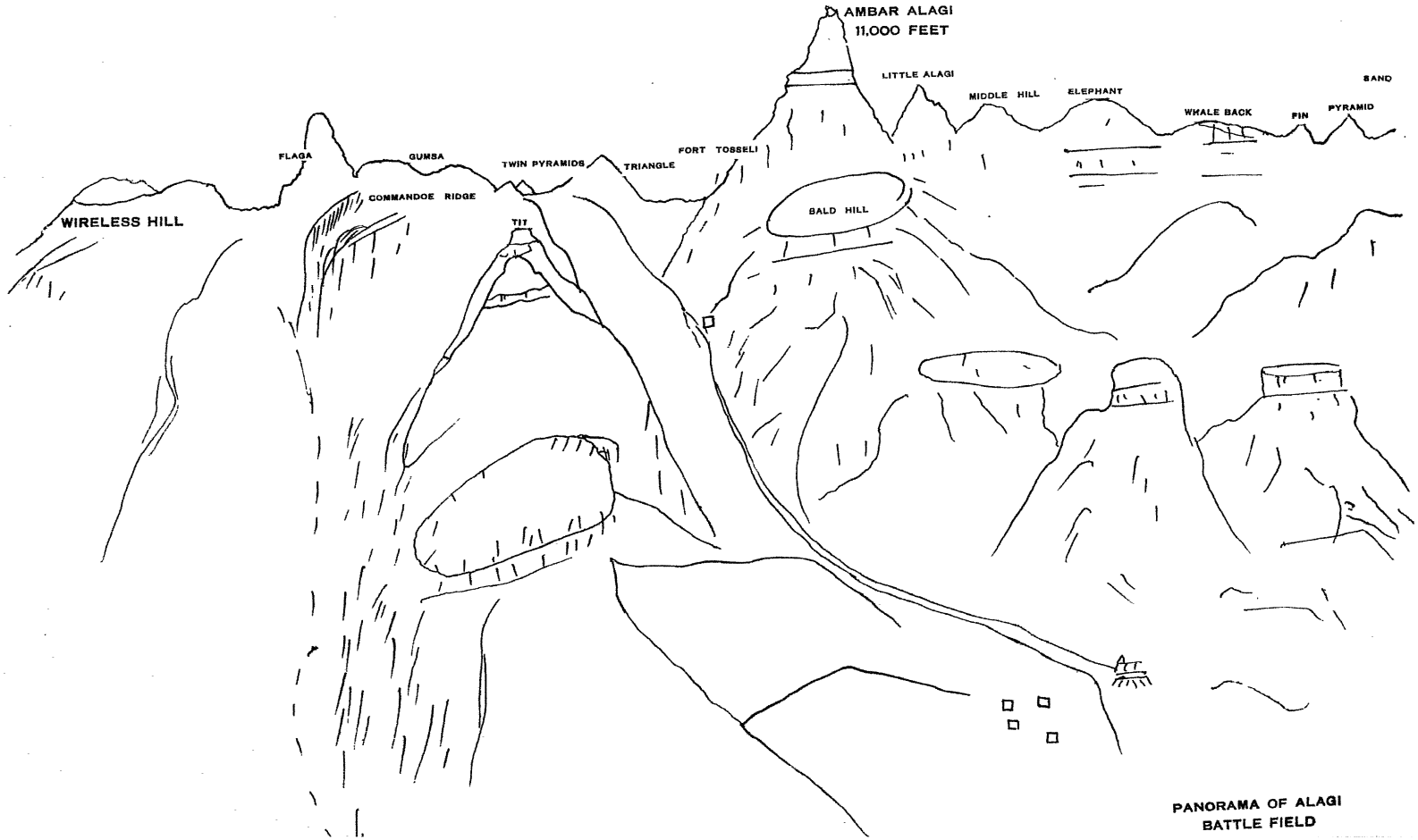
1. The Italian General when decidng to withdraw some 200 miles into the well prepared defences of Cheren, had apparently not taken the morale of his troops into account. Consequently, when the troops were suddenly ordered to withdraw, for want of reasons, assumed that the end had come and that we had arrived with something colossal instead of only the two Indian Divisions which we had. This demoralised them considerably. On the other hand our Generals had taken pains to build up the morale of our troops by well-conceived limited advances, so that when we really started, our morale was already high and every step forward tended to increase it. As time went on the Italians got more and more disheartened until at last they gave up the ghost altogether. The apologists for the Italian Generals used the lame excuse that having been faced by superior numbers, the generals had decided to withdraw. This did not improve matters for the Italian troops.

2. While our Junior Officers, N.C.O.s and men had been given an intensive training both in leadership and use of commonsense and initiative, a majority of the Italians displayed a complete lack of all those all-important qualities. The determination of our troops proved the dictum that "no position is impregnable for determined troops." There were in every phase of this advance, numerous and brilliant examples of courage, determination and the use of initiative by our junior leaders, N.C.O.s and even men. It was these qualities which to a large extent paved the way for our ultimate success in this junior leaders' campaign.

3. The successful use of the bayonet by our troops during these operations, proved even to the sceptic who termed it as the dead arm of the past, that it was still very much alive. Even the best Italian units did not stay to face it.

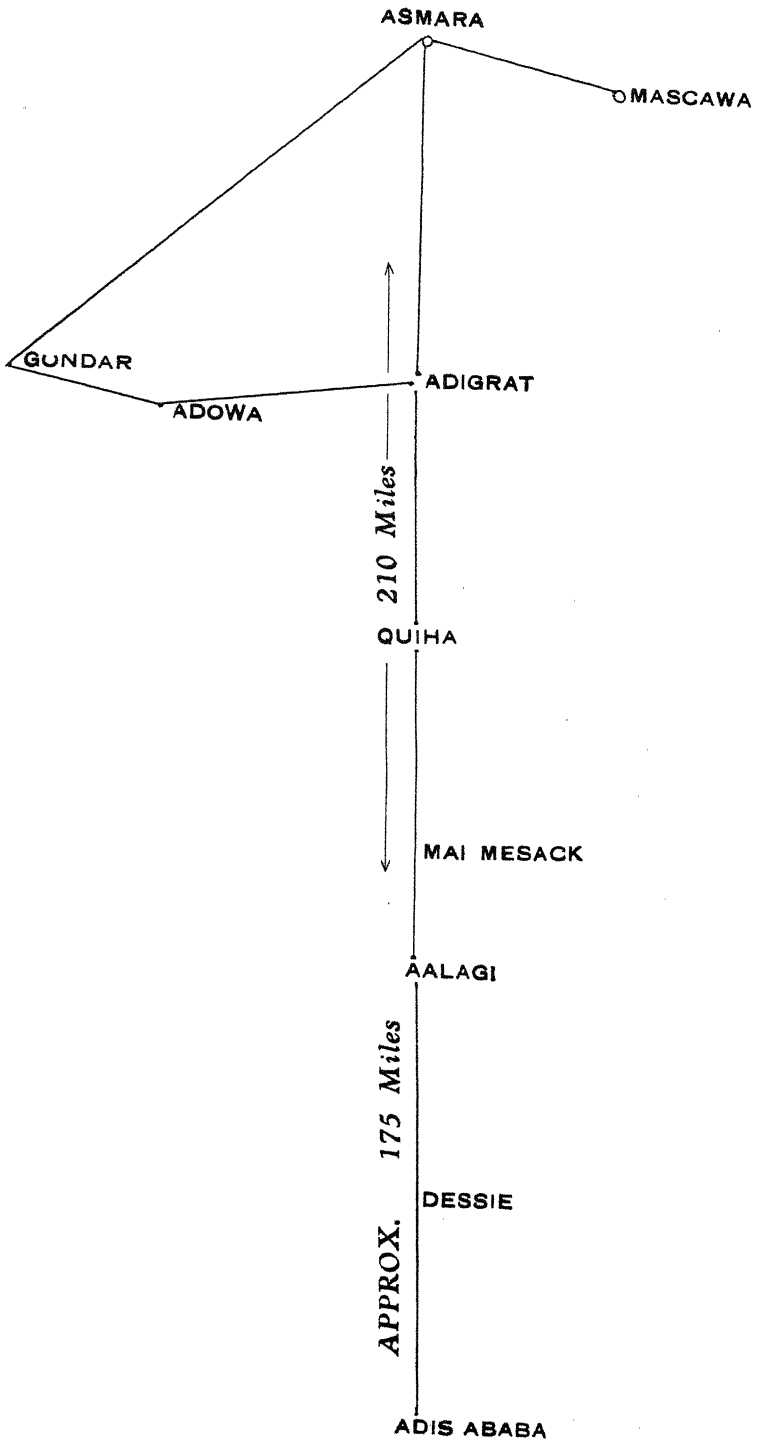
4. The Italians generally showed a lack of confidence in their cause, objected to the German domination of their country and criticised their leaders for the war and the general inefficiency. Co-operation and cohesion within the force was missing. The Blackshirt (Fascist) Army could not stand the sight

of the King's Regular Army, who in their turn loathed the sight of the so-called political imposters who wished to usurp their rightful place in the regular armed forces. Their generals, like their leaders, were unpopular. On our side the troops displayed great confidence in Providence, their cause and their officers. Understanding and cohesion within the force was magnificent. There was excellent co-operation between the Arms and the Services, between the Army and the Air Force, and, above all, between the British troops and the Indian troops. This last is evident from the following story. The G.O.C. was going up to inspect an O.P. position. On the way he saw an Indian Section post where two of the British Gunners were being entertained to tea and refreshments by the garrison. On his return the General stopped at the post and asked the Indian section if it was a practice with them to treat all passers-by to tea. The answer was, "No, Sir, but the soldiers you saw having tea with us were our Gunners." Those Gunners belonged to the 5th Division. It was this spirit of friendship and comradeship which won for the 5th Division a place amongst one of the most successful formations of our times.



PANORAMA OF ALAGI
BATTLE FIELD

Rough Plan of L. of C.



THE INDIAN DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL

By Lieut.-Col. H. Bullock, I.A.

The blue-and-red ribbon of the Indian Distinguished Service Medal is familiar to all who have served in India, but it is not generally realized that relatively few of these medals have been awarded—only about 4,200 in all, of which all but about 1,000 were for services during the War of 1914—18—and, moreover, no connected account of the medal has ever been published. Further, the I.D.S.M. has now existed during the reigns of four sovereigns and has from time to time undergone changes of design.

The following account, though not exhaustive may be of service to regimental annalists and to medal collectors, as well as of some general interest. The statistics, which I have tried to keep simple, show that the I.D.S.M. has always had a very high place among the orders and medals which are conferred upon the forces of the Empire. It is interesting to compare the figures for the I.D.S.M. with those for the D.C.M. and M.M., of which about 25,000 and 115,000 respectively were awarded during 1914—20 alone.

The Indian Distinguished Service Medal was instituted by Royal Warrant dated 27th June, 1907, and the first awards were notified in the *Gazette of India* in the following month. The obverse, *i.e.* front, bore the head of King Edward VII, crowned, surrounded by the words "EDWARDUS VII KAISAR-I-HIND": a design which appeared on the obverse of the Delhi Durbar Medal, 1903, but so far as I am aware on no other. The reverse, *i.e.* back, bore the words "FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE," in three lines, within a wreath of laurels. This reverse has never been varied subsequently.

During the reign of King Edward VII few medals were issued, as the King died within three years and only one campaign in which Indian troops were engaged took place during the period.

The number of Edward VII I.D.S.M.s awarded was:

Original awards, July 1907	...	48
Gazetted 1st January 1908	...	10
Mohmand operations, 26th June 1908		56
Gazetted 1st January 1909	...	5
Gazetted 24th June 1909	...	5
Gazetted 1st January 1910	...	9
		133

Two of the recipients were subsequently awarded bars, making the total number of medals without bar 131.

During King George V's reign, 1910—1936, a very large number of I.D.S.M.s was issued, owing to the War of 1914—18 and post-War operations, and the longer reign. Details are as follows:

Year	*Medals issued*	*Bars issued*	
1910	7	-	From June 1910 to July 1940
1911	9	-	
1912	8	-	
1913	10	-	
1914	12	-	
1914—20	3,174	25	Aug. 1914 to 31st May 1920
1920	151	3	1st June to Dec. 1920
1921	237	6	
1922	75	3	
1923	56	2	
1924	23	-	
1925	8	-	
1926	3	-	
1927	3	-	
1928—9	nil	nil	
1930	26	-	
1931	8	-	
1932	2	-	
1933	21	-	
1934	5	-	
1935	19	-	
1936	14	-	
	3,871	39	

These figures for the period 1914—20 are principally taken from the official *Statistics of the Military Effort of the British Empire during the Great War* 1914—18 (London, 1922), page 554; and for the remaining years from the *Gazette of India*. They may not be absolutely complete and accurate but may be taken as reasonably so.

The medals awarded during George V's reign, at any rate up to about 1930, were in all respects similar in design to those with Edward VII's effigy, except that the head of the new King was shown on the obverse, and "EDWARDUS VII" gave place to "GEORGIVS V". There was, however, a minor variety which was issued to some at least of the Indian soldiers in the British Expeditionary Force in France and Flanders, 1914—18: it was evidently struck at the Royal Mint in London, instead of at the Calcutta Mint, and has the English pattern of scroll

suspender and scrolled attachment to the medal, which are easily distinguishable from the Indian-pattern suspender and claw attachment. If, as appears probable, the design on the obverse of the I.D.S.M. was changed about 1930 to a new pattern with a Latin inscription "GEORGIVS V D. G. BRITT. OMN. REX F.T. INDIAE. IMP."—as was done for example with the Indian General Service Medal and the Indian Long Service and Good Conduct Medal—there is a second type of the I.D.S.M. with George V head, of which less than a hundred can have been issued.

Of the present type of I.D.S.M., with King George VI's head (which is understood also to have the Latin inscription, and not "Kaisar-i Hind"), the awards to date are:

Year	*Medals issued*	*Bars issued*	
1937	80	2	
1938	24	--	
1939	8	--	
1940	31	--	
1941	57	--	(to 20th Sept. 1941.)
	200	2	

It is understood that no medals were issued with the effigy of King Edward VIII.

The I.D.S.M. has on occasion been awarded to members of the Royal Indian Marine, now Royal Indian Navy; and I have an example given in 1919 to a Sikh sepoy of the Malaya States Guides.

By far the most uncommon examples of the I.D.S.M. are the 41 which have a bar added for a second act of gallantry. The particulars of all recipients of these are:

Date of Gazette of India	*Recipient*	*No. & date of Gazette of original award*
17th Aug. 1917	Sub. ALI DOST, 106 Hazara Pioncers ..	4/1910
17th Aug. 1917	Sub. FAZAL SHAH, Bahadur, 1st S. & M.	187/1916
17th Aug. 1917	Sub. MIT SINGH, 47th Sikhs ..	1386/1916
1st Dec. 1917	Sub. NANDU GURING, /1 Gurkha Rif. ..	849/1916
22nd Dec. 1917	2475 Daf. JOT RAM, Cavalry ..	1151/1917
3rd May 1918	1937 Daf ALLAH DITTA KHAN, Lancers.	not traced
3rd May 1918	2026 A/L/Daf. SIBHA SINGH, Lancers ..	not traced
3rd Jun. 1918	1985 Hav. KHARKE PUN, Gurkha Rif. ..	L. G. 15-3-1918
3rd Jun. 1918	3374 Naik DEWA SINGH, Rifles ..	356/1915
19th Jul. 1918	Jem. AMIR SINGH, Cavalry ..	598/1917
26th Jul. 1918	Risldr. FARMAN ALI KHAN, Rifles* ..	not traced
26th July 1918	Jem. PARTAB SINGH, Rifles* ..	not traced
25th Oct. 1918	Sub. AKBAR KHAN, 51st Sikhs F. F. ..	1388/1916
8th Mar. 1919	Sub. AMAN GUL, 27th Punjabis ..	1360/1917
22nd Mar. 1919	Jem. NARBAHADUR GURUNG, 5th Gurkha Rif ..	680/1916
27th Jun. 1919	41 Hav. NUR MAHI. 1st Signal Co., S. & M.	89/1919
24th Oct. 1919	422 Naik CHANDU RAM, 27th Punjabis ..	9/1918

*Apparently, Burma Mounted Rifles.

Date of Gazette of India	*Recipient*	*No. & date of Gazette of original award*
24th Oct. 1919	Sub.-Maj. FARMAN ALI, M. C., I. O. M., 92 Punjabis ..	528/1915
1st Aug. 1919	Sub. FAUJA SINGH, Guides Infy. ..	527/1908
17th Oct. 1919	Sub. HUKMI, 48th Pioneers ..	728/1915
6th Apr. 1920	3376 Hav. SAMUNDER KHAN, 17th Fd. Co., 3rd S. & M. ..	1357/1917
6th Apr. 1920	573 Hav. BADLU, 1/76 Punjabis ..	1160/1915
6th Apr. 1920	3069 Hav. GANESHA RAM, 104th W. Rifles	1357/1917
6th Apr. 1920	1546 Nk. RAMBAHADUR RAI, 2/7th Gurkha Rifles ..	1160/1915
6th Aug. 1920	Sub. KUMBSING GURUNG, 4/3 Gurkha Rifles ..	1/1920
6th Aug. 1920	Jem. RANBAHADUR SAHI, 2/9 Gurkha Rifles ..	313/1915
10th Apr. 1920	Sub. SANSAR CHAND, 52nd Sikhs ..	2086/1919
20th Aug. 1920	Jem. SUNDAR SINGH, 1/66th Punjabis ..	1357/1919
19th Mar. 1921	Sub-Inspector SHER KHAN, Ind. Tel. Dept.	584 1919
26th Mar. 1921	567 Hav. MAGHAR SINGH, 2/41 Dogras (formerly 1/69 Punjabis) ..	1938/1917
5th Aug. 1921	Sub. MANSUR ALI, 1/102 Grenadiers ..	525/1916
7th Oct. 1921	Risaldar AMIR MUHD., 5th Cavalry ..	2332/1920
7th Oct. 1221	3049 Daf. GULISTAN KHAN, 10th Lancers	846/1920
7th Oct. 1921	3256 Nk. GANU SAWANT, 114th Mahrattas	2076/1919
1st Apr. 1922	Jem. LALBIR SUNWAR, 1/7th Gurkha Rifles ..	693/1920
1st Sep. 1922	3557 Hav. TEKBAHADUR KHATTRI 2/9th Gurkha Rif. ..	not traced
20th Sep. 1922	3536 Nk. MAN SING RAWAT, 1/39th Garhwal Rifles ..	1062/1919
19th May 1923	Sub. QUDRAT SHAH, Tochi Scouts ..	944/1922
20th Jul. 1923	167 Hav. DHERU KHAN, 2/13th F. F. Rif.	1388/1916
10th Dec. 1937	Jem. SAKTIPARCHAND MALL, 1/9th G. R. ..	not traced
21st Dec. 1937	Sub. DALIP SINGH, 30 Indept. M. T. Sec., RIASC ..	not traced

TWO WARS

By Captain C. P. Chenevix-Trench.

During the last few months there have been frequent references in the Press to the similarity between this and the Napoleonic Wars. It is commonly believed that the newspapers are always wrong, but this is by no means so. There is quite often an element of truth even in leading articles, and in this case there is more than usual. Too much is made of the changes in the art of war brought about since 1918: too little of the essential similarity between this and other great wars of movement, particularly that which ended in 1815.

In 1789 a new political creed exploded in Europe which replaced in its adherents' minds all politics and all creeds. It owed something to the American example, but developed most fully in France. Although fiercely nationalist (its song was addressed to enfants de la Patrie) it soon began to propagate its ideas throughout Europe.

Substitute Germany for France, Italy for America, and the previous paragraph might have been written of the National Socialist Revolution during the last decade.

Purges, executions and concentration camps became common place, enforced by Committees of Public Safety and People's Courts. The European Powers took the gravest view of these horrors, but they took no action until they found themselves threatened. Then they formed alliances against the aggressor.

"Germany is encircled by the pluto-democracies," bellowed Hitler, an uninspiring echo of Danton's terrible challenge. "The kings of Europe rise up against us; we will hurl in their faces the head of a king!"

The motives underlying the aggressive spirit differ; in the one case the fierce idealism of 1789, in the other the racial nonsense of the 1930's combined with shrewd economics. But the result is identical; all democratic, all socialist ideas were thrown overboard, the army took control, and democratic France and National Socialist Germany changed into military dictatorships.

The aggressor country appeared to start with many handicaps. All the European Powers were actively or passively opposed to it. Its armies were outnumbered, its generals inexperienced, its trade vulnerable to blockade and its own people by no

means unanimous in support of the dictator. The greatest navy in the world led the opposition in alliance with the most famous army.

But many of the imponderables were on its side.

Its armies fought with a fire and enthusiasm which could not be matched by its enemies until its very victories created such a spirit among the peoples it had defeated; Austria after Austerlitz, Prussia after Jena, Spain after the occupation of Madrid and Britain after the evacuation of Dunkirk rose purged and invigorated from the most crushing disasters.

The inexperienced generals were not mentally constipated by misleading lessons of recent campaigns, and developed a speed and technique which dazzled their slow-thinking, slower-moving antagonists. Directing their countries' policy were dictators who had the most utter contempt for considerations of honour, for the sanctity of treaties and for the rules of war.

The greatest military powers in the world, Prussia in the 18th and France in the 20th century, turned out to be the most hidebound in strategy, sluggish in manœuvre and feeble in morale of all European Powers.

The blockade was countered by the conquest of Europe, the most ruthless and efficient organization of its resources and a counter-blockade of Britain.

Throughout Europe a Fifth Column undermined the opposition of the allied countries; everywhere were found Tom Paynes and Quislings who favoured the Revolution. Though the conquered peoples later recovered their souls and revolted, Spanish guerillas, German Tollenbund, Serbian comitadjis and Czecho-Slovac saboteurs were unable to save their countries from defeat and occupation.

Only England, the greatest naval power in the world and fortunate in her geographical position, remained in the field. Deeper than any considerations of politics or alliances was the determination not to make peace while the English way of life was threatened, and in particular while a hostile great power held the European coast-line opposite Kent. (It had long been an axiom of British policy that this would mean defeat. It is being proved to-day, as it was 140 years ago, that we can overcome this grave strategic handicap.)

"The so-called strategy of British Cabinets," wrote Philip Guadalla, "has always consisted of a large number of divergent gestures."

He wrote this of the campaigns of Toulon, the Netherlands, Sweden, Sicily, South America and Corunna. Recently our efforts in Norway, Dakar, Greece and, very nearly, Finland have demonstrated our perennial affection for such gestures. Even the force which we evacuated from Dunkirk (all our gestures end in brilliant evacuations) was so small beside the huge French and German armies as to be scarcely more than a token army.

It is an advantage of sea-power that it enables us to make such gesture: a disadvantage, that it tempts us to do so at unsuitable times and places.

In both wars our powerful allies have been utterly defeated, leaving us alone. The same danger faced us in 1940 as in 1805. To win the war quickly, both Napoleon and Hitler had to invade England. Napoleon believed that he only needed a Channel clear of the British Fleet for 24 hours; Hitler needed a clear sea and sky for as long. So the first care of British strategy was the prevention of invasion. The great air battles over England during the summer and autumn of 1940 were as decisive as the battle of Trafalgar; like Trafalgar, they made it impossible for Britain to be suddenly defeated, though she could still be blockaded or stalemated. And the war went on for a long time after Trafalgar.

The second object was the maintenance of her sea-borne trade. It was not, perhaps, as vital then as now. None-the-less, Napoleon hoped to wear us out by building up a new order in Europe under French leadership, from which British influence and trade would be excluded by his Continental Decrees. His battle-fleet, after Trafalgar, was negligible; but his privaters forced us to convoy our merchant shipping with frigates just as we do to-day.

It was not enough to avoid defeat by blockade or invasion; there still remained the problem of how to achieve victory.

We had to face the fact that we could never land in Europe a force equal to the Grande Armée. But the Grande Armèe had to defend the coasts of Europe from Poland to Dalmatia; it was a very long front. Therefore we should be able to land a force in some part of Europe which would have local superiority, and irritate the Empire like a running sore, hindering the creation of a New Europe until our blockade did its work.

Or until 'something turned up;' as it did in 1812, when Napoleon invaded Russia in spite of the non-aggression pact which he had signed with her.

Our land strategy was thus to harass the enemy with well-trained, well-equipped, locally superior forces until our blockade and his own ambition brought about his downfall. Our greatest General was Wellington, expert in defence and withdrawal, 'master of the cautious advance and the limited pounce.' It would have been very convenient if we could have kept open a running sore in the Balkans in 1941. As it is, we shall have to make our forces in the Middle East play the part of the Peninsular Army. They are commanded by another 'Sepoy General.'

The enemy's strategy was the blitzkrieg. There is nothing new about 'lightning war.' Tanks and bombers have merely developed the attack to the point where it can compete with the art of defensive warfare which was so highly developed between 1914 and 1918. Napoleon's blitzkrieg was as dazzling in speed and as devastating in its effect on the leisurely 18th century armies as Hitler's is to-day. It was achieved by the same methods, very rapid movement, the massing of overwhelming force at the decisive point of the attack, and a ruthless pursuit which he achieved by living largely on the country and by making demands on his men greater than the enemy could make. The march of the Army of the Coasts of the Ocean from the English Channel across Europe to encircle the Austrian army at Ulm averaged 16 miles a day for hundreds of miles; a staggering speed for any unmechanised army and unheard of at that time. The pursuit of the Prussian army after Jena was as relentless and as decisive as the pursuit across France in 1940.

Napoleon's methods were made possible by brilliant improvisations on the part of his subordinates. The capture of the Dutch battle-fleet by cavalry charging across the ice (*) is, perhaps, only equalled as a daring and unorthodox operation of war by the capture of the island of Crete without command of the sea entirely by air-borne forces. And surely the two German Fifth Columnists who secured the bridge at Maestricht had heard of Lannes' and Murat's exploit on the Danube bridge before Austerlitz.

The Battle of Austerlitz was probably the supreme Napoleonic masterpiece. It has been judged the second tactical masterpiece in the world, the first being Hannibal's victory at Cannae. At Austerlitz Napoleon's left wing was in position on a strongly entrenched hill which formed a pivot of manœuvre.

* Napoleon had nothing to do with this action, but it is, for all that, a good example of Napoleonic warfare.

Davout's Corps on the extreme right succeeded in drawing the enemy left into an attempt to outflank him. The allied command sent more and more troops to extend and advance their left flank; when the 'battle was ripe,' Napoleon's hidden reserve, Soult's Corps, advanced out of dead ground, smashed through the weakened enemy centre and swung right to drive the whole allied left wing with shocking losses into the marshes in their left rear.

One hundred and thirty-five years later Hitler—with his left pivoted on the Siegfried Line, his hidden reserve behind the Ardennes in the centre and his right drawing the allied advance into Belgium—duplicated the whole battle on a rather larger scale.

The answer to the blitzkrieg to-day is the same as it was then: counter-blitz where we have sufficient strength (which will not be often, as the first essential is overwhelming force at the decisive point, and sea transport, formerly the fastest, is now the slowest method of moving an army); and 'scorched earth,' guerilla warfare and all-round defence at other times.

It is generally realized that the Spaniards and the Russians during the Napoleonic wars gave us an example of guerilla warfare and 'scorched earth' methods. One would imagine, though from reading and listening to our military correspondents, experts, spokesmen and commentators that all-round defence is something new. It is no newer than the all-out attack, to which it is the obvious answer. It is certainly as old as the British square.

Linear defence is an excellent form of defence provided the attack is not too strong. It succeeded at Agincourt in 1415, and generally on the Western Front during the last war, both periods when the defence was in the ascendant. It has the great advantage of bringing the maximum fire to bear on the attackers. Wellington's infantry stood in line to meet the dense, impetuous columns of French infantry, and blew away the head of those columns by superior fire-power.

But the line could not stand the charge of the French Panzer units (Cuirassiers) and other cavalry. To meet a cavalry charge the British infantry formed square; the line became a series of cavalry-proof, all-round-defended pockets between which the Panzer forces could pass with considerable losses, but on which they lost their momentum and formation. When they were suffi-

ciently disorganized, the British cavalry drove them off by a counter-attack assisted by fire from the squares. Let anyone who wishes to conduct a modern defensive battle study that of Waterloo.

A great deal has been written of the suffering of civilians in this war as if it were something new. As a matter of fact, it is a new idea that civilians should *not* suffer in war. Up to and during the Napoleonic Wars it was an accepted rule of war that a besieged town which held out after a practicable breach had been made in the walls should be given over to sack by the besieging army. Probably the citizens of Coventry, Roterdam and Mannheim suffered no more than those of Saragossa and Badajoz.

The Napoleonic Wars lasted 23 years. What grounds have we for hope in a quicker victory?

We may base our hopes on four main factors:

1. The support we shall obtain from enemy-occupied countries.
2. The greater efficacy of the modern blockade.
3. The development of air-bombing, and
4. The help we are obtaining from the overseas empire and the United States.

Eighteen months ago the Prime Minister described Britain as "the only champion now in arms of a world cause." In the Napoleonic Wars, too, we were often alone; but it was a long time before we came to be regarded as the champion of anything more than our own interests. The kings and emperors fought for their own crowns, and the peoples of Europe were inclined at first to welcome Napoleon as a liberator. It took many years of French exploitation to arouse among them a nationalist sentiment; and this only grew into revolt after the bloody, drawn battles of Eylau (1807) and Aspern-Essling (1809), the surrender of Dupont at Baylen (1808) and the retreat from Moscow in 1812. But when the break-up came it was final the long-suffering French people themselves welcomed Wellington's advance across the Pyrennees, and at last even the Marshals deserted Napoleon and took service under the Bourbons.

We are, perhaps, inclined to indulge in much wishful thinking about the effects of the blockade on Germany. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that Europe to-day, in spite of the development of 'ersatz' substances, is much more susceptible to blockade than it was 140 years ago. Then, Europe was almost self-sufficient in the necessities for maintaining life and taking it.

If coffee was unobtainable, bread poor in quality and wool scarce, no one could expect the Grande Armée or the French morale to collapse quickly because of this. But now there are a large number of substances which can neither be obtained in sufficient quantities nor manufactured in good enough quality for the needs of a total war. German reserves and ingenuity may postpone the shortage for a long time, but hardly for 23 years.

This inevitable shortage and the consequent collapse in morale may be hastened by heavy air-bombing of the enemy's factories, communications and great cities. The necessary air-superiority can be achieved through the huge resources of the British Empire and the United States. In the Napoleonic Wars the empire was undeveloped and the United States non-belligerent or hostile; now they are becoming important sources of supply, virtually free from the threat of enemy bombers.

In 1815 European Democracy was decisively defeated; by 1848 it was shaking every throne in Europe. Will Fascism rise from the ashes of defeat to trouble the world again?

It may well do so if we make the mistake which was made at the Congress of Vienna, if we merely re-build the pre-war Europe buttressed by a few guarantees and sanctions. Whether we like it or not, we are fighting more than the Luftwaffe and the Reichswehr; we are fighting an idea, and the only way to defeat an idea, however false, is with a better idea. The re-establishment of the conditions and boundaries of 1935 is not a better idea; it shows a lack of ideas, even though we may be able to enforce it with a bigger stick.

THE QU' HAILANDS OF ENGLAND

By "Rs. As. Ps. Retired"

[*Being a digression on where to settle in post-war England—town, country or Qu' Hailand Spa.*]

While toiling through a bath of blood and sweat and tears and constantly jogging ourselves to remember that we must "go to it" and follow similar slogans of stern duty, it is meet and right that we should cock an enquiring eye at the place in which we will settle when we are entitled to a bath of the more rose-scented variety—the days of retirement in a bombed, poor, but pleasant England.

It happens that I have lived in "town" itself, in an industrial city, in the heart of the country, in a seaside resort and in a Qu' Hailand Spa. As to every Indian Army officer comes the day when he must choose between one of these, it is possible that my experiences (bound up as they have been with the need to reconcile my Indian-acquired tastes with the 'necessity of supplementing my pension and educating my children) may be a guide to others. You may argue that as one can arrive at no decision now, such ponderings are futile. Well, let us leave such single-minded thinkers to their straight and narrow path; I find it pleasant to wander off that dull road and dream my dreams of living under various pleasant conditions, tempering my dreams with a few practical-pointed shafts such as the difficulty of finding a job near my favourite bathing bay or of catching a sizeable trout in Piccadilly. I hope in giving my little picture of life in each place, to take into account the post-war angle.

Needless to say, my tastes will suit few as well as myself, but in order that the reader may judge how far or near my experiences will tally with his desires, I give my dream of retirement. It has six ingredients: to settle in a humble house, to have my children under my roof, to get a job to supplement my pension, to see a little of town, a lot of trout and plenty of friends.

WORK AND PENNIES

To those whose private incomes equal or exceed their pensions the problem is simple—they merely pour out their filthy lucre till their greedy lusts are satisfied! But the majority find that finance lays a cold delaying hand on their shoulder which-

ever way they step. The two coldest hands are those of, firstly, that unknown spectre who reduces a pension of say £800 to about £745 because of (God forgive him!) the "fall in the cost of living" and, secondly, the Collector of Income-Tax who with a leer presents the following little sum:

Pension—£745.		
Tax free—(*a*) Earned income relief 1/10	=	£ 75
(*b*) married and two children	=	£240
Tax free ...	=	£315
Balance taxable	=	£430
Taxation—First £165 @ 6/6	=	£ 53-12-6
Next £265 @ 10/-	=	£132-10-0
Total tax due	=	£186- 2-6

leaving you with £558-17-6 or considerably less if you have completed your children's education, less still if you have no children and practically nothing at all if you have no wife! And quite right too!

If you have any income over this the Collector quietly pouches exactly half.

That kind of arithmetic, even if the tax remains as low as 10/-, brings out that the job which we thought would be desirable on retirement has become a necessity and this has a distinct bearing on our choice of locality.

Well, who am I to say where we will find work in England; we may make (or lose) it in the fields, in the pigsties or in the hen coops but I feel that in general it will be more likely to be found in towns, London or in an industrial city. I've tried both.

"THE LONDON I LOVE"

I don't expect everyone will hate London as much as I did but I fancy I will not be alone in my views. I disliked the petrol fumes and noise perhaps more than anything and though I admit one *can* live very cheaply there, it is a form of cheap living for which life in India has ill-prepared us. To live well, a big income is needed and even then we are cooped up in a flat or in a suburban house with, instead of a dusty sprawling compound and its mysterious basket hidden discreetly at the back, merely a 5-foot brick wall separating us from Mrs. Smith's scanties flying bravely on the line next door.

Theatres, cabarets and similar expensive so-and-sos of the flush days of leave see us but rarely, and the principal entertain-

ment is the cinema or a walk to the nearest park with the dog if he has survived life in the flat.

Golf or a day in the country? Yes, but it certainly entails a tiresome journey as one of an endless stream of cars to get there.

An evening's trouting? Oh yeah!

Well, there's the London I love—patently a biassed view but of course one must remember that I am obviously not one of those fortunates who can appreciate one of London's greatest advantages—the varied possibilities of satisfying a love of art in any form.

Incidentally, if London still appeals to you and you would like to settle there, I feel, I should sound a note of warning on the house situation. The bombing of London has materially reduced the accommodation available and it is reasonable to expect that there are further reductions to come. Moreover, a number of houses now used as residences have been so shaken that a few winters' rains may make them scarcely worth repairing, so finding a house there will not, taking the most optimistic outlook, be as easy as in pre-war days.

However, there are still lots remaining and (facing a charge of extreme irrelevance to which I freely plead guilty) I would tell of a recent visit to London, a distance of round about 150 miles. I drove 125 miles by car across some half a dozen counties, passing through innumerable villages, several small towns and three cities without seeing any trace whatever of war. True, one of the cities had been bombed and by going out of my way I saw some demolished houses as well as old ladies having tea at the café as if they had never heard of a bomb. I passed into London by train feeling a bit of a hero till I saw a slip of a girl of 13 travelling off to tennis alone swinging her racket! On emerging from the main railway station in London and gazing round with expectant eyes I saw, believe it or not, no sign in any direction of bomb damage. Nearby was a long stretch of trim grass with neatly arranged rows of tulips—hardly what I had expected. I travelled down to the House of Commons and could see no trace of damage to the blooming place (charge of extreme irreverence) till I walked round to another side where I admit I did see its scars.

Of course I did not happen to visit the more heavily hit areas but it does show that all London is not flat and perhaps, therefore, my view that houses will be hard to find is unduly pessimistic.

However, let us return to our muttons which naturally enough we find around

"THE LITTLE GREY HOME IN THE WEST"

Holding the views I do on London, I was lucky to be offered a soldiering job in the heart of the country with a famous trout river meandering along.

Instantly, one great advantage strikes one—houses are much easier to come by and there is usually more room to swing a cat indoors or outdoors should you feel so disposed. Just at the moment the house situation is very grave—in fact they are almost unobtainable—because though bombs are dropped here from time to time they are not, we feel, dropped with real malice, and so this is a "safe" area and houses are scarce. But this should not be the case in peacetime.

Well here I find my "humble home" and my "sizeable trout" which my wealthy friends most generously allow me to beguile from the water. What joy these occasional evenings are by the river many a reader in India will appreciate. After contenting oneself for years with mahseer spun out of a hot stony banked river, it is just plain Heaven to approach a stream on tiptoe through a mass of thigh-deep foxgloves and to throw a dry fly from one lush grass bank to that rising trout just under the leafy bough at the far side. And how hard it is to keep one's eye off the varying countryside—the spring lambs, the unhumped sleek fat blissful cows, even the clean pink baby pigs, to say nothing of the daily changing chestnuts and blossoms, buttercups, cowslips, pale primroses, brave bluebell and the honeyed meadow sweet. And to be awakened from this reverie, just as the sun sinks, by a screaming reel.....

Ah! there *are* good things still even in 1941.

But perhaps your wife is not one of those who loves you even though you fish—perhaps she is one of those who hates you because you fish! What then? You'll note that so far I have achieved only two ingredients of my dream and that there is no "little of town," no "children under my roof," few friends and in peacetime, I fear, no jobs.

Possibly one could do without the town part altogether if all the other amenities were included, but unfortunately as a rule good schools and universities are not at hand in the heart of the country. Of course one might argue that in any event the children would have to be away at universities or boarding schools; to this I reply that after a life's service in India many prefer to have

the family under one roof, and, secondly, that the one roof solution may be the only one financially possible on retirement. However, I will return to this aspect later. Anyway, meanwhile, let it be noted that there are no suitable schools in most country districts.

Financially I was much better off in every way in the country than in London or any of the places I shall describe later.

Friends? Yes, and very nice ones but they live so far apart that one rarely sees them. There is, for example, only one tennis club which fits our needs but this serves the whole county and so distances are great and games cannot be counted on except on one day a week. My friends are generosity itself with regard to their grouse moors and trout streams, but then I find that I can secure no pleasure of my own within my means which I can ask them to share.

Before leaving the country, there is one advantage of serious import to-day—food is easier to get and queues are shorter. No doubt this advantage will diminish when peace comes, but not, I feel, for some time.

And so it was with pained regret though with anticipatory interest that I found myself transferred to

THE PROVINCIAL INDUSTRIAL CITY

The provincial city, as I viewed it in advance had, bearing in mind my dream, certain solid advantages compared with London or the country. A reasonable choice of houses of a modest type should be available, schools and a university might fill our needs, a job would anyway be more likely than in the country, and if there were no trout in the local park lake, at least there ought to be a greater chance of making friends than in vast London and of seeing them more often than in the scattered countryside. Golf too, and a day in the country would be nearer.

I found that some of my vision came true but only to a limited extent. The golf, the day in the country and the schools all worked out according to expectations, and the factor of "all under one roof" was nearly accomplished by sending one son to the local school and the other to the local university. Detailed enquiry proved, however, that while most provincial universities cover every career, this particular one only dealt with my son's subject at a very low standard; the standard at another was so much higher that we fell to the temptation of sending him off there.

As far as theatres and cinemas were concerned, this city of course put the country in the shade not only in comfort but in the

quality of the films and sound machines, while in the little theatre we saw occasional first-class London shows and, to our relief were able to afford the best seats.

Houses there certainly were in abundance and the furnished house I took was complete in every detail an enthusiastic housewife could ask. It was small, everything was completely modern, everything in the right place, near the shops, no houses opposite (there was a park with a lake) nothing was slightly dingy, nothing old, nothing rambling and *it had no soul.* No such house in such an environment could; it could never be a "home" and we felt damned in a prim suburbia as we have never been damned before.

"Too hard to please," you say.

All right, try it. I'm only giving my reactions; and try the Sunday walk along the lake with all the others.

Friends are certainly easier to make and easier to see often than in London, but I fear they found they had little in common with me, and the intensity of their local interest put up a veil which nothing could pierce; unless it is one's own "home town." In short I felt clean out of water. This aspect has, to my mind a distinct bearing on the possibility of getting a job and holding it down in a provincial city. However, little I see myself as acceptable to London men when a job is on offer, still less do I see myself as acceptable to provincial eyes.

Frankly I felt prim, pasty and podgy, and loathed every minute of it.

THE SEASIDE TOWN

It was a strange chance which sent me in war-time to a well-known seaside town where on peacetime leave I had spent so many hours beautifully wasted on the beach. To those who retire with very young children, the seaside town has one obvious outstanding advantage and this can usually be followed up by good Prep. schools on the spot. Yachting too provides a recreation for those who are not so mentally deranged as I am about fishing; it is healthy, not too expensive if taken up permanently, and what better for turning young men into men? And by the way, now that I think of it, you can of course work in with it a little sea-fishing!

I found that a seaside town had several desirable qualities—golf and the country were near 'at hand as well as the sea, the shops were good and the town clean and bright. The cinemas and theatre were as good as those of the provincial city. Nice houses were to be had but at a very high price. In some places,

as well as a good Prep. school, a good day or boarding Public school is to be found but in practically no case is there a university of repute; this latter may well be a deciding factor.

The choice of the actual seaside town is of primary importance from two angles—friends and post-war conditions. My seaside town was pretty hopeless from the point of view of making friends as there were in the main two great communities—the imposing army of landladies who cater for a glamorous army of blondes. This however though general is not universal as there are many seaside towns with a residential community large and varied enough to meet the needs of most temperaments.

The present-day picture of my seaside town compared with it in the heyday of peacetime brings home to me the sad deterioration which has occurred in some. Those which are bombed fairly regularly or are likely to be invaded have suffered an exodus of not only visitors but the visitors' money and so vanishes the flowers, paint and so on, which that money provided. The army of blondes has been replaced by an army of less glamorous appearance which fills the curtainless windows of the empty hotels and boarding houses; hobnails in place of pink nails patrol the wired and protected beach. Of course no one complains of this to-day —it is all in the day's work—but will we like it in peace? It will take a considerable time and a lot of money (higher rates?) to restore it to its pristine glory.

For those to whom the seaside still appeals, let me end on a pessimistic note! Not only are jobs a rarity but I found by actual statistics that the cost of living was markedly higher than in the country or small town.

Having by now damned most parts of these isles, allow me to take you finally for a short trip to.

THE QU' HAILANDS

By this I mean, of course, not specifically town, country or seaside resort but those centres, maybe in the country or at a Spa where Qu'hais congregate. I tried such a one. Of course the various factors which weighed for and against my inclinations in each of my experiences, weigh equally in Qu'Hailand. It is the Qu'hais more than the place I am considering.

You, young reader, may say "God forbid that I should join the Qu'hais." Yeeess? But remember that one day you *must* be one yourself and perhaps a crack about the good old days of 1941 may not be so unacceptable as you now feel. Though I

found, I admit, a certain air of decay (to which I no doubt contributed) in the particular place I chose, I found more hospitality and more of a language I understood there than anywhere else in England.

If (I repeat if) I can ever find a Qu'Hailand which includes all the ingredients of my dream, I'll fly there.

THE SOLUTION

Have I found a solution?

For you? Oh! No. Choose your own poison. But I've found my own—a compromise.

It is a house in the country within less than an hour of London whence my younger son can go to a day-school (he has a wide choice within a few miles) and my elder can go daily to a London University. I can get my little bit of town and when I am satiated with the evils of the great city can so easily reach the balm of my country home. I fear I shall see less of my spotty trouty friends than I would like, but I do not despair. I can certainly get coarse fishing locally and can at least visit the trout once a year at the perfect season—spring. Here, too, my prospects of seeing plenty of my friends are rosy for we are an even community. A few pass me graciously in their Rolls, and I do occasionally see rather more of Mrs. Smith's scanties than I had hoped, but anyway they are not so near as just over a 5-foot wall.

The job? Ask Hitler, but I feel that when the war does end I shall be in an area in which I have a better chance than in most, of accepting work without the necessity of moving from the small niche I have carved for myself and mine.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

12th December, 1941.

SIR,

Our Military Leaders and Statesmen combine in their reiteration of the essential need for the stimulation and continued maintenance thereafter of the rate of recruitment to all branches of the Defence Services.

Wise and weighty words on this topic were uttered some weeks back at the initial send-off from Lahore of the Touring Train. The Premier of Bengal shortly afterwards announced his intention of conducting a whirlwind recruiting tour in his province; a few days later the Labour Member in the Governor-General Executive Council suggested some eminently practical and practicable instructions relating to the liaison of the civil and military branches in the matter of recruiting. Then the Duke of Devonshire in a public speech alluded to the great voluntary effort being made in India, with special reference to the recruitment aspect of the question.

It is clear, and the argument needs no labouring, that men are needed, and will continue to be needed (in ever-increasing numbers) for as long as the present emergency lasts.

The point arises whether some System—simple, sure, practicable and economical—could not be devised to implement the present ways and means of recruiting, to act as a certain and steady feeder to our main current of new entries (the present method of supplying which is itself a highly organized and complex mechanism). I believe that there is such a one, almost all ready to hand, and needing only a little careful planning and co-ordination to enable it to function well from the start, and to continue to function satisfactorily.

I refer to our complicated and smoothly-running civil provincial Education Departments.

Would it not be possible, Sir, for the civil Liaison authorities to evolve a simple scheme, in conjunction with all heads of provincial Education Departments, whereby the organization of the latter could be used to bring home to the villager the great opportunities for helping the Motherland and himself and his family which are lying open to him almost at his door? (In these days

of rapid transport and incredibly speedy communications we are apt to overlook the fact that there are thousands of populous villages to which the battery wireless set is unknown: which never receive even a vernacular newspaper: which are far removed from a by-road—let alone a main or district one, and from the railway line) which would be willing to help—if only a simple way of helping were shown to them.

Now all of our soldiers have been, for varying periods, in a village school. At least once a year, and more often three times, they have had their progress examined by the Assistant District Inspector of Schools. They know him well. Their relatives know him well. He is (he has to be) a man of great authority and trust, of knowlege and of good repute. Most of his rural journeys are made on foot. He mingles freely with all classes, from the Deputy Commissioner downwards. A lot of his extra-inspection time is spent in discussing affairs with the village folk, in keeping in general touch with them on all aspects of their daily life. He is, very often, the only regularly-visiting official of the provincial government from the tehsil and district headquarters that they can ever be definitely certain of seeing, or of hearing of his presence in the locality, from one year's end to the other. (After all, nearly every village has its school nowadays, and even if there is not a school in a particular village, there's usually one in an adjacent one.)

If, therefore, liaison between the A.D.I.S. and the nearest recruiting officer is once established: if the A.D.I.S. is empowered, under clearly-defined instructions, to do his level best to rope in as many likely men as he can by means of discussion, persuasion, meetings, carefully-prepared literature and so on: if he and his Staff could be granted a capitation fee for every man finally and definitely enrolled: I feel confident that a steady additional stream of suitable men from the remoter areas could, at practically no cost, be obtained to swell the ranks of our Indian Army.

The submission is made to you, Sir, that the idea, along with its concomitant implications and ramifications is, at any rate, worthy of consideration and discussion.

KHABARDAR.

NOTES ON SOME BOOKS RECENTLY PLACED IN THE LIBRARY

"Action Stations—The Royal Navy at War," by Rear-Admiral H. G. Thursfield.

A copiously illustrated and brief account of each of the many branches of the Royal Navy and a summary of its activities in the present war. It describes the work of the Destroyers, the "Little Ships" such as Sloops, Trawlers, Motor Torpedo Boats, etc. Battleships, Cruisers, Submarines, and of the Fleet Air Arm.

"Engines of War—The Mechanized Army in Action," produced in collaboration with the War Office.

It gives a short, vivid and as far as national security allows, a complete and freely illustrated picture of the various branches of our modern mechanized army, finishing with a short chapter on its technical training.

"War in the Air," by David Garnett.

A very clear account of the position of the R.A.F. in 1939 before the commencement of war, the work of the different Air Commands, a comparison between the R.A.F. and the Luftwaffe, and the tasks of the R.A.F. in the different theatres after the outbreak of war.

"From Dunkirk to Benghazi" by Strategicus.

This book is an attempt to select, now, what will prove to be the significant features of the war, and, dealing with them episodically, to group about them the events, which are logically connected with them. After describing the Battle of, and the Surrender and Fall of France, it goes on to describe the Battle of Britain. The air attacks on London and other cities are described in detail, and the story of the British Counter Air Offensive is recounted. The book finishes with the tale of the Italian invasion of Egypt, and later of Greece, and of the British reply in Libya.

"The Battle of Britain, 1940," by J. M. Spaight.

Commencing by describing the German air attack, it discusses the threat of invasion, and the attempted blockade of Britain, and our counter-offensive. After dealing with

German reports of their successes in the air, it has something to say on our Defence by day and by night, and ends with a summary of what has been described in the book and the conclusions drawn.

"The Strategy of Indirect Approach," by Liddell Hart.

This volume reproduces a book published by this author in 1929 under the title of "The Decisive Wars of History" and adds to it a few extensions of former chapters and some fresh chapters. The first part of the book consists of a survey covering wars from 490 B.C. to 1914 exemplifying the indirectness of approach and its results. It then goes on to "construct a new dwelling house for strategic thought" and gives a concentrated essence of strategy. In its second part it surveys the World War on its various fronts from 1914 to 1918, and in the last, part III, it discusses Hitler's strategy before and after the outbreak of war in 1939.

"The Red Army Moves," by Geoffrey Cox.

The story of the campaign between Russia and Finland, 1939-40.

"The Eastern Question—A study in European Diplomacy," by J. A. R. Marriott.

The original work consists of a study of this question upto 1914. Since then, the author has had it republished three times, bringing it up to date on each occasion. The present volume takes the study up to 1939.

"Suicide of a Democracy," by Heinz Pol.

The author starts by describing the birth and growth in France of the political body known as the Cagoulards. He then discusses the Fascists of France and their leaders, De La Rocque, Doriot, Deat, Bergery, Maurras, and others, and the work of Bonnet and the Fifth Column. The career of Mandel, ending with his attempt to find support in North Africa for the continuance of the War, is described. The effect of the Maginot Line on the French outlook is his next subject, and after a description of the concentration camps of France the book finishes with the tale of the collapse of the country.

"The Viceroy and Governor-General of India," by A. B. Rudra.

An historical and analytical study of the position of the Viceroy and Governor-General in the Indian constitutional system. Part I of the volume deals with the position of the Govenor-General under the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919. In Part II the author makes an estimate of the place assigned to the Governor-General by the Government of India Act, 1935.

"Military Science To-day," by Lieut.-Colonel Donald Portway, R. E.

A short, illustrated account of the development of various branches of military activity in which scientific principles are involved, treated mainly from the soldier's point of view.