MATTERS OF MOMENT

The Burma and Malayan Campaigns

FEW CAMPAIGNS IN THIS second World War have stimulated so much discussion or caused so much perturbation as the Malayan and Burma campaigns. That they have ended in the withdrawal of our forces is regrettable, but not indefensible. This is neither the time nor place in which to discuss the pre-war political aspect of the subject, but it is right, and our duty, to quickly learn all that can be learned from those who took part in the operations. Every crumb of information, every idea, is of value. Speedy communications, the "flash" story of newspaper correspondents, and piece-meal descriptive accounts have all tended to give a distorted picture of campaigns in which our troops fought with great gallantry against very heavy odds. We have, therefore, endeavoured to include in this issue of the Journal authoritative accounts of the operations, and readers will find in them a great deal of information hitherto unpublished. In each contribution there is much that will help those responsible for the future training of our troops, as well as valuable knowledge concerning the Japanese methods of waging war.

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How will the Japanese Conflict End?

PROPHECIES IN WAR are dangerous, but now that victory over Germany becomes more and more certain, even to hardened pessimists, many people in India and elsewhere are speculating on the possible outcome of the Japanese conflict. Will Japan, having consolidated her position in the captured countries, having acquired considerable economic advantages, and having secured a strategic hold on many key positions, crash with her co-gangsters in Europe, or will she require to be dealt with separately?

Many people feel that the countries occupied by the Japanese will have to be re-taken by force of arms, if only to re-establish the prestige of former rulers among Malays, Burmans and, indeed, all Far Eastern native peoples. For the last seven months these populations have watched with growing astonishment the temporary defeat of Britain's armies; their knowledge of the background of the picture—of how Britain stood alone for a year against the combined might of Germany and Italy, of how she had to fight with her back against the wall, is slight. Lying Japanese propagandists have intensified their efforts to contaminate the minds of these peoples, their work being assisted by Fifth Columnists ranged under the enemy's banner. Thus, at the conclusion of hostilities with Germany, there will be masses of people, ruled for decades by Britain, Holland and America, who will put their trust in the superiority of the power of Nippon over that of the Allied Nations. Such beliefs, firmly established, will not be erased by the restoration of those countries at the Peace Conference. The sight of Allied armies falling back before an overwhelming force of Japanese soldiers will not be effaced by discussions over a table thousands of miles away. Is the reverse of the picture—the driving home of smashing blows against the Japanese, the victorious march of Allied soldiers, the eviction of the enemy, to be the answer? If so, much may remain to be done after the German war machine has been broken. The struggle may be long or short, but given equality in numbers, equipment, air and sea power, the soldiers of the Allied Nations will show that they are more than a match for a nation which has by knavery and treachery temporarily established itself in the Far East. The triumphant Allied armies, routing an enemy who by that time may well be bereft of his naval superiority, will again bring confidence, hope and assurance to the peoples in that part of the World.

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The Remedy for Reckless Talk

GLARING EXAMPLES of the tragic results of reckless and careless talk have proved that much remains to be learned from lessons of the past. Notwithstanding the display of picturesque posters (and a special series might well have been drawn for India and the East) there is all-too-frequent proof that words whispered in confidence have led to disaster for courageous men. Innumerable examples could be quoted. Before the attacks on Norway large numbers of the public in England were aware of details of the forces before they left; the impending occupation of Iceland was made known to quite a number of people just after our troops left the shores of the Mother Country; the efforts of the Free French to capture Dakar was no news to masses of people in London, where it was openly discussed while the force was on its way; and in Hong Kong the arrival of the Canadian contingent was known fully a month before their ships were sighted—although Press telegrams were careful to say that the arrival was a complete surprise. In the East particularly responsible people might do most useful work in assisting to stop the spread of stories which obviously spring from the minds of Fifth Columnists and defeatists. These few examples quoted at random reveal a lack of self-discipline, the fruits of which accrue not to the unworthy persons disseminating the news but to men whose very lives are at stake and to a cause for which millions are fighting. Human nature being what it is, the possession of "inside information" is apt to give an individual an exaggerated opinion of his own importance; the desire to let others know he is in close touch with Higher Authority is irresistible; the news is passed on and improved upon. What is the remedy? Rigid discipline, iron determination and a resolve never to discuss what are obvious secret matters is the only palliative. Until everyone takes those inflexible rules to heart, danger will lie ahead, the lives of our kinsfolk will be threatened, and the result of the biggest war in history imperilled.

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ACTIVE RESISTANCE to German rule by the unfortunate inhabitants of occupied countries throughout Europe is obviously taking definite shape, but the conquerors have again made a blunder in their efforts to suppress insurrection. Brave people are not cowed by the firing squad, and Germany, by her brutal and cold-blooded treatment, is building up a wall of hatred which for generations will make the very name of Germany synonymous with persecution, ferocity and barbarity. News filtering out from France, Norway and Belgium proves that Hitler faces an increasingly disquieting situation. He is coming to realise that other nations are not of the same calibre as the Hun, that they are not to be regimented into mass automatons, and that although he may have over-run the countries he has still to maintain large armies of occupation to hold them down. The assassination of Heidrich, whose unparalleled cruelty was typical of the Prussian, is indicative of the temper of the Czechs, and a sign of the depth of their hatred of anything German. No one can deny that until the United Nations deliver their smashing blow the valour and gallantry of these so-called vanquished nations will be of inestimable value. Nevertheless, too much hope should not be based on the early effectiveness of this opposition; a wide gulf separates unrest and revolution —especially when the conqueror holds in his hands the large majority of the backbone of France's army, as well as its fighting equipment and munition factories. The days when hastily-erected barricades could be thrown up and successfully stop a determined enemy have gone; tanks, bombers, dive bombers, tommy guns and bren guns are no mean counters to the frenzied fervour of an angry mob of subjugated souls. Though news of attacks on Germans gladden the heart, and announcements of Hitler's butchery of innocent people cause gloom, sanguine expectations that widespread revolution is "round the corner" must be avoided.

Hitler's Quandary in Europe

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THOUGH HITLER may well have been startled when details of the Anglo-Russian treaty were announced, millions of people under his heel in Europe have good reason to herald it as the guarantee that the peace this time will bring in its train security and safety against a nation which, while professing peace, lives and works for war. Without doubt it is the most momentous political move which has taken place among European countries since the outbreak of war. That the two strongest Powers on the Continent should thus unite in a charter of security augurs well for the post-war position in Europe. The military alliance thus concluded pledges Britain and Russia not to enter into negotiations or conclude any armistice with Germany or her allies except by mutual consent; affirms the determination of both countries, after the war, to take all measures in their power to render impossible a repetition of aggression and violation of peace by Germany; declares that neither party to the alliance shall seek any gain or annexations at the Peace Conference; and agrees that the proposals are to remain in operation for at least twenty years. Thus has been laid the foundation of an edifice which will ensure not merely peace, but security—security for the crippled nations to build up anew, confident that at no time can the crafty Hun scheme and plan for a Third War. The effects of the treaty are not confined to the post-war period, however, for it has been officially stated that full understanding was reached between the two parties with regard to the urgent task of creating a second front against Germany in 1942, and this encouraging sign of the Allied Nations' strength will undoubtedly be the signal for even closer co-ordination between the countries fighting the Axis. To sum up, the new treaty will both contribute to the successful prosecution of the war, and to the realization after hostilities have ended of the principles of the historic Atlantic Charter concluded between Mr. Winston Churchill and President Roosevelt.

The Anglo-Russian Treaty

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MODERN WARFARE demands individual initiative. minds receptive of ideas, and fired with invincible determination to overcome obstacles. Wars are not won by armchair critics with one leg in the library and the other in the past. Nowadays every officer, high and low, must be satiated with a firm resolve to acquire from others ideas which will assist in winning the war. For that reason, if for no other, officers can, by careful and regular perusal of articles appearing in these pages, glean valuable knowledge of modern war acquired in many cases from first-hand experience. Officers who are already members of the Institution can, by recommending the Journal of the Institution to their colleagues, render them a useful service. Such co-operation will bear fruit in added efficiency, invigorating the faint-hearted and inspiring the enthusiast. Our object is not to build up a huge circulation but rather to disseminate as much useful information to as many officers as possible Members can also help in other ways, for among our readers are many whose fund of knowledge can be made available to a wider circle than their immediate friends. Such members could give valuable help to others in assisting them to formulate ideas, and, by thought-provoking contributions to our columns, increase their proficiency. This war will go to the nation which can mobilise its brain-power to the best advantage, and readers are invited to make this journal a rostrum from which their ideas and experiences can be conveyed to those anxious to acquire a wider knowledge of current military affairs.

Mobilising Brain-Power

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SALVAGE, as the dictionary puts it, is the act of saving. There was a time when it was regarded by the civilian as having a nautical connexion only, but for some time past it has concerned the Services and civilian activities. The objects of salvage are the conservation of our resources by the avoidance of waste, the recovery of materials or stores for re-

The Object of Salvage

use as they stand (or in some modified form) or for reduction to basic components. Economy of material is as important as economy in man-power—particularly in its repercussions on the use of shipping and on the national effort generally. Unnecessary waste in war is therefore a crime.

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Principles of Economy

The first principle of economy is to refrain from demanding, using, or hoarding material that is not actually required. The second is to prolong the useful life of material by careful treatment and early repair when necessary. The third is to return all unwanted material, serviceable and unserviceable, and all "empties", so that they can be put into use with the least damage or delay. The fourth is to retrieve all materials and stores that become derelict. Observance of these principles is an obligation which rests on everyone.

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Salvage By Defence Forces in India

In peace-time stores and equipments are jealously safeguarded in a variety of ways. In war, on the other hand, the country's purse is opened, and nothing is stinted. The effect of this change is unsettling, and tends to create a wrong attitude of mind. Sudden relaxation of peace-time control may result in undisguised prodigality—an antidote to which is "conservation" drill. If everyone did his duty to-day by making "conservation" a drill, taking steps to see that his subordinates did the same, waste would largely disappear, for conservation is synonymous with absence of misuse. Much is already being done by the defence services; returned stores depots are working and expanding; salvage units have been raised and are functioning both in and outside India. But much remains to be done, and the salvage organization will shortly be strengthened. Control will gradually be stiffened, and co-ordination tightened up.

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Civil Salvage in India

Civil, as opposed to Service salvage in India, is a problem entirely different from that which obtains in the United Kingdom. In peace-time India was a large exporter of salvage, and had not the plant and machinery to process her own salvage; moreover, collection and distribution over the vast distances involved, present a large problem. The Government of India (Department of Supply) has, however, done much to ensure a steady flow of usable salvage to consumers in India, and the process will be augmented. New plant is being installed and processes investigated to deal with the changed situation. Greater enthusiasm and effort are needed, and in that direction the Defence Services must play their part to the full.

Members are earnestly requested to notify any change of address to the Secretary without delay. Such cooperation will not only help to ease postal traffic at a time when mail services are over burdened, but will also ensure prompt receipt of the Journal each quarter.

THE START OF THE WAR IN BURMA

By J. G. S.

IT IS ALMOST exactly a year ago to-day since I arrived in India and sent to the Journal my article on Dunkirk. The long sea voyage out from Home gave me the time and opportunity to write that article, and a long spell of sickness has given me the time to write this one—time that I could have done very well without, but the rough must be taken with the smooth, and one cannot expect to do more than 29 years' soldiering without ever seeing the inside of a hospital.

Much has appeared recently in the Press about the second phase of the Burma war, *i.e.* from the fall of Rangoon until our forces were finally withdrawn into India, but not so much has been written about the opening phase of the campaign. This is only natural, as the fighting in Malaya, the Phillipines and the Dutch East Indies was occupying everyone's attention when the Burma campaign started. Nevertheless the first phase of the campaign held far more difficult problems for the Army Command than did the second. The small number of troops available had to be spread over vast distances, with the object of holding landing grounds and keeping invading Japanese forces as far away from Rangoon as possible for as long as possible.

This meant that the important principle of trying to concentrate superior numbers at the decisive point was continually warring with the necessity of trying to protect Rangoon. With the same object, *i.e.*, the protection of Rangoon, the troops in Lower Burma were tied to certain defensive lines until certain definite dates. This lead, perforce, to great difficulty in breaking contact when the time for withdrawal came, and to close-quarter engagements in country disadvantageous to us such as Sittang, which could easily have been avoided had the vital factor of Rangoon not existed. Also, of course, the troops in Upper Burma and the Chinese did not come into the first phase at all, and all the fighting fell on the 17th Division.

Once the second phase started, however, and Rangoon was given up, both divisions could be concentrated under a Corps Staff, on the Rangoon—Prome—Mandalay line, and the handling of the troops became infinitely easier. As General Alexander explained in his recent Press Conference in New Delhi, it was then difficulties of supply and re-inforcement more than anything

else which caused the withdrawal of our troops to India. Moreover, of course, the only two serious engagements and most of the casualties occurred in the first phase of the operations.

The events described in this article have already been mentioned in various articles in the Burma and Indian Press. The names of the Army Commanders, the numbers of the two divisions and nearly all the units have been mentioned in the Press already. The names of the Divisional Commanders and under, and the actual Brigade numbers have not however been mentioned in the Press, and they will therefore be omitted from this article—much as I should like to place on record the valiant and distinguished work carried out by many of those serving under my command.

Our lack of preparation for this particular campaign has been acknowledged both by the Prime Minister, Mr. Winston Churchill, and by the Commander-in-Chief in India. It was simply due to our having so many irons in the fire that we had not the men or the resources to be strong everywhere. Nevertheless, if we are going to benefit by the mistakes which were made, as we surely must, it is essential that we should be frank and clear as to how and why they occurred. We shall then be able to concentrate our thoughts, energies and resources for our counter-offensive.

Ian Hay in the Foreword to his "The Battle of Flanders" wrote: "The British Army, by traditional usage, always seems to be compelled to start a war from small beginnings, and either play for time or take desperate risks until it has built itself up into an effective striking force. The entire history of that Army is chequered with tales of early reverses or expensive resistances, redeemed in the end, as resources and experience accumulated, by the final crown of victory". This is as true in a smaller way of the campaign in Burma as it was of the Battle of Flanders.

Four months after arriving out from Home, *i.e.*, in October 1941, I was given command of a new Indian Division which was being formed down country. The division was unique as far as Indian Divisions went at the time, as the Infantry battalions were all pre-war regular battalions straight from the frontier. I was in hospital when the order reached me, and it was nearly three weeks before the doctors would pass me fit. However, I arrived on October 20 and found that I was in plenty of time, as only the Brigade Staffs and a nucleus of the Divisional Staff had arrived. I had three extremely capable Brigadiers and the foundations of a really good Divisional Staff.

Within the next few weeks all the battalions arrived, and they much exceeded my expectations. Although they had, of course been "milked" several times, they had a nucleus of trained N.C.O.'s and men, and were based on very solid foundations. Moreover, they had all been recently engaged in frontier operations, and were therefore already alive and alert, used to movement and patrolling. In fact, they were an ideal division to bring quickly up to the standard required with one important exception—they had practically no M.T. drivers and the whole of our transport was to be M.T. All battalions were commanded by pre-war experienced officers and the other N.C.O. s, although mostly very young and new, looked most promising.

We started at once on a comprehensive and progressive system of training in ideal country. The supporting arms and services were starting to arrive, and everything seemed set fair. The spirit in the division was just that blend of trust, training and thoroughness which one always tries for but seldom achieves.

Suddenly, however, I had a sad and unexpected blow. The G.O.C. of the 17th Division (I need not conceal its numbers as it has been mentioned so often in the papers) went sick, and I was ordered to take command of that division, which was then doing its final training before going overseas. The telegram said "immediately" and I went off next day, very sad indeed at leaving my own division, of which I was extremely fond and proud.

The 17th Division was in the throes of its final training. Fully mechanized, it had concentrated on its mechanized problems, and was accustomed to moving long distances (at rather excessive speeds!). In fact, what with the terrible roads and long moves, it was obvious that the vehicles would be in a bad way if we did not call a halt and concentrate on maintenance for the last week or so. Moreover, the whole of the thick battledress had to be drawn and fitted, and the first Brigade was due to leave 10 days after I arrived.

I was able to get a very good comparison between the men of this division and my own. These were all new battalions, some of which had had very handicapping teething troubles. Their higher training was far in advance of their individual and platoon training. Could anyone have foreseen that the whole division would be hurled straight into jungle fighting against the best trained jungle fighters in the world, it would have paid hand over fist to have sent the M.T. to workshops and devoted

the whole of the last month to minor training and the training of junior leaders.

In the few days available I spent as much time as I could with the Brigade that was due to leave first, and saw them start off in their M.T.—complete with their warm battledress. I was never to see them again and only heard later that they had been despatched to Malaya, where they were at once in action and had their Brigadier killed, while they themselves suffered very heavy casualties.

On Christmas Day I was summoned to G.H.Q. with my chief Staff Officers and told that my Divisional H.Q. and one Infantry Brigade were to proceed to Burma, while the remaining Brigade was to go to Malaya. This Brigade also I never saw again. General Hutton, who had been selected to command the troops in Burma, had already left. That evening I went down with a violent go of flu' and the senior members of my Staff were sent off by air without me. I was, however, hot on their heels as soon as the doctors would let me, and arrived in Rangoon on January 9.

The Japs had by that time invaded Burma and taken Victoria Point, our southernmost aerodrome. They had also carried out a somewhat severe air raid on Rangoon, from which the morale of the civil population never really recovered. In all subsequent daylight raids, as soon as the siren went, cars could be seen streaking for the open country at top-speed, and Rangoon itself became a city of the dead. As my seaplane touched the water the siren went; whereupon every activity ceased and we sat there an hour and a half, very much a sitting bird, until the all-clear went.

I found the Army Commander confronted with some really fearsome problems involving the defence of an enormous area with very few troops, and the development of air and ground defence of Rangoon—a dreadful bottleneck of a port. For some reason, the former appreciation had been that the Japs would invade Upper Burma from the direction of Chieng Mai and the 1st. Burma Division was disposed well to the north accordingly. It now appeared, however, almost certain that the Japs would be more likely to take the most direct route from Bangkok on to Rangoon, the loss of which would obviously be a crushing blow to us.

It was with the object of trying to block this main approach and to guard our aerodromes that my division was disposed in Lower Burma. The more of Lower Burma territory that was

given up, the closer came the threat to Rangoon. In fact, it was really the threat to Rangoon that dominated the strategical situation throughout this first phase of the operation. My orders were short and clear. I was responsible for the defence of Tenasserim from MERGUI in the south to PAPUN in the north. Speaking from memory the area was about 800 miles long and one glance at the map of Lower Burma showing the long thin strip of Tenasserim with the sea to the west and THAILAND to the east, will show how very vulnerable it was to enemy columns striking from the east. As soon as any of these, however small, entered Tenasserim, they were automatically astride our communications.

The troops at my disposal to hold this enormous area were as follows. At MERGUI, which was a landing ground, there was a battalion and half of Burma Rifles with some local Frontier Force. At TAVOY, another landing ground 300 miles to the north, there was a battalion of Burma Rifles. Again 250 miles to the north was MOULMEIN. This contained the Brigade H.Q. of the Burma Brigade and the third Battalion of the Brigade, a Battalion of the 12th. Frontier Force Rifles from India. The only permanent garrison for the whole of the enormous MOULMEIN area with its important aerodrome was the 8th Burma Rifles, consisting of stalwart Sikhs and P.M.'s enlisted from the Indian element in Burma.

My Divisional H. Q. was to be located in MOULMEIN, with the H. Q. of the Tenasserim Government. A hundred miles away to the east of Moulmein, guarding what was likely to be the Japs' main route of advance through the thickly wooded Dawna hills, was my second Brigade, consisting of one Burma Rifle Battalion, a battalion of the 9th Jats, a Battalion of the 7th Gurkhas and an Indian mountain battery. It will thus be seen that there were enormous gaps between units and that the line of communication was lengthy and unprotected.

The Japs, having already taken Victoria Point and being firmly established wherever they wished from Bangkok to Chieng Mai, were in a good disposition to raid Tenasserim by land, sea and air from positions directly at right angles to our main line of communication. In fact our landing grounds at Mergui and Tavoy were so close to the Japanese that they could only be used as emergency re-fuelling stations. The solution to the problem was, of course, a simple one—more troops. It was obvious that another two divisions between Moulmein and Toungoo would have made the Japanese infiltration impossibly

difficult and, with the Chinese forces gradually moving down from the North, would have held off indefinitely the threat to Rangoon.

As we know, however, with all available re-inforcements being hurried out to Singapore, those extra divisions were not available for Burma, and we just had to make do with what we had. We were, of course, to get re-inforcements later, and very valuable ones too, but on nothing like the scale required. Our preliminary dispositions were in fact the outcome of weakness based on bluff—and as the Japanese information of all our movements and dispositions was always excellent, our bluff was very quickly called.

As regards our Air Force, we were extremely lucky to have some most gallant and efficient American Volunteer Group airmen in Rangoon. They were civilians and free-lances, and were paid very handsomely for every enemy aircraft they shot down. Just as the old method in the British Army of purchasing commissions and seniority produced some very fine commanders, so this somewhat unorthodox volunteer procedure produced some very fine results. In all subsequent Japanese air raids on Rangoon, after the first one in December, their losses were tremendously heavy. The A. V. G. Group were of course gradually re-inforced by R. A. F. bombers and fighters as they became available from elsewhere.

The problem facing the Army Commander was indeed a knotty one. He had no military intelligence service and, from the time the Japanese invasion of Lower Burma started, no information came in from civil sources. As General Alexander told the Press in New Delhi the other day, about 10 per cent. of the population were pro-Japanese, 10 per cent. were pro-British, and the remaining 80 per cent. rather apathetic. The latter would, I am sure, have been actively pro-British had we been in a position to take the offensive. As it was, the organized Japanese minority had an influence out of all proportion to their numbers, with the result that the enemy got good information, food and guides and animal transport, and was always able to get hold of rafts and river boats when he required them.

After a busy afternoon at A. H. Q. I was on the point of visiting the Governor when the air raid alarm went again, and the whole life of the city came to a full stop. Eventually, however, I was able to get to Government House. Incidentally it was one of the most hideous buildings I have ever seen—a newer red brick edition of Portsmouth barracks. The Governor gave

me a most cheerful welcome—he had once been a subaltern in my regiment. I did not see him again until he and his Government had been forced to leave Rangoon for Upper Burma.

Since arising in Calcutta at 0300 hours I had put in a lot of work and was not sorry to get to bed. There were, however, two more air raid alarms during the night but the Army Commander and I were up betimes, as we planned to pay a visit to lower Tenasserim by air. The flight was a somewhat tricky one in view of the proximity of the Japanese Air Force, and the A. O. C. sent a fighter escort with us. There was a slight delay in getting off owing to disorganization caused by the night's air raids, but we landed at Mergui without incident after about two hours' flight. I was very pleased to find there, commanding the Burma Rifle battalion, a very old Indian Army friend—Army and Davis Cup tennis player—with whom I had played tennis in years gone by. He had an excellent show going with his F. F. R. well out, watching all the approaches.

We flew to Tavoy for lunch. Tavoy is a most attractive little place in the centre of the tin mining country. The battalion there, having the responsibility of guarding the aerodrome and the land and sea approaches, was very thin on the ground. Moreover, it was completely untrained, and I was not surprised, when the Japanese attack developed, that the defences were quickly overwhelmed. We arrived at Moulmein at 1600 hours, where the Army Commander left me to return to his H. Q. in Rangoon. We were both extremely pleased later on that we had done this trip on about the last date it could have been carried out.

Although I had never been to Burma before, every place had some sentimental association for me, as my people had been there during the whole of their I. C. S. service, and my father had died there. I was continually being welcomed by old friends of my father's—the first being the Commissioner of Tenasserim, who had been my father's D. C. in Moulmein. We established the very closest liaison from the start, and our ways did not part until I had lost almost the whole of Tenasserim for him, and his job automatically came to an end. His family, with whom I stayed for 10 days, until they had to be evacuated, were kindness itself, besides being an example of cheerfulness and determination to make the best of things at a time of considerable anxiety.

The first person to greet me on the aerodrome was old Subadar Budh Singh, of the 15th Sikhs, whom I had taken leave

of 26 years before with a nasty bullet hole in his chest which looked like being the end of him. He had somehow managed to join up with a Kokine battalion which was being used for aerodrome guards, and here he was, grey-bearded and rather blind, but alert and tough as ever. He insisted on taking me off at once to his quarter guard which he had been coaching up for days for a good old "present arms" (he had never heard of the introduction of the new drill) after the real 15th Sikh pattern. We had all too few Sikhs in the Division—and what a grand show they put up later on when the Japs attacked the aerodrome!

I found that only the air echelon of my Divisional H. Q. had as yet arrived, but that they had been working like Trojans at the many problems, chiefly administrative, that were awaiting urgent solution. I had two busy days looking round Moulmein, meeting a great many people and looking at troops and defences. What a fascinating place Moulmein must have been in peace time, with its high pagoda ridge, its rivers and jungle—its "Burmah girl a settin"! with her cheroot and her picturesque garments! The Commissioner's house stood right on top of the ridge and got every bit of breeze that blew.

Looked at from a defence point of view, however, it could hardly have been worse. The smallest perimeter, which would include the aerodrome and the river front quays, to which ran our main line of communication from Rangoon by steam ferry from Martaban, was 25 miles round. On three sides were rivers, crossable everywhere by boat and raft, and on the third side there was thick jungle, through which ran innumerable tracks. Moreover, the quays and railhead at Martaban, 6,000 yards across the water on the far side of the Gulf of Martaban, had also to be held—and what bombing targets the whole place presented! The Commissioner's house alone, with its flag flying, gave an irresistible target to any airman. I firmly insisted on the removal of the flagstaff, and the house survived for over a fortnight before it took a direct hit from a shell.

On January 13, with my G. I., A/Q and C. R. E., I set off to visit the other brigade up the Dawnas. We had about 100 miles to go, through most picturesque jungle, including two river crossings by ferry. The latter was a tedious business even for one car, so it may be imagined what a long business it was for troops. I felt certain that, if such crossings had to be attempted in face of air opposition, utter chaos would probably result, as there was only one ferry, operated by Burmese boatmen. This did actually happen a little later; the ferry, with a

lorry on it sank in midstream, and the remainder of the M. T. had to be destroyed. My C. R. E. of course, was very quick off the mark with the introduction of every sort of improvement to this very prehistoric method of river crossing, but there was not time for them ever to materialize.

On arrival at Brigade H. Q. we went straight up to visit forward Battalions, and to see the excellent demolitions which had been prepared in case the enemy advanced this far in force. These demolitions had been so sited that whole sections of the road would fall down a precipitous slope; they did, in fact, delay the enemy's advance for at least 10 days.

We climbed a hill to a so-called view-point that merely enabled us to see the tops of a lot more jungle in front of us. In this form of warfare one realized at once what a tremendous advantage lay with the attacker, particularly if he were in superior numbers. He had merely to go on infiltrating forward on a wide front, concentrating eventually on a pre-arranged objective. The tendency is for the defence, in an endeavour to block every route of advance, to make too many detachments, which only detract from strength at the decisive point. The ideal would have been to have feelers out in all directions, consisting of platoons with wireless sets. Unfortunately we were so short of wireless that sometimes we could only give one set to a battalion.

I found the Burma Rifle battalion of this Brigade riddled with malaria—so much so that the Brigade really only consisted of two Battalions. The intelligence officer of the Brigade had been resident in this area for many years, and had many friends on both sides of the border. He informed me that, within about a week, a Japanese division would start advancing towards Moulmein on this line. It appeared at first as though he had exaggerated the numbers, as the initial advance was quite a weak one, but the information he gave me was absolutely accurate, and was for some time the only intelligence we and H. Q. had to go on. Having had a long talk with this officer, who was most unfortunately killed in the first clash, I decided that I would at once incorporate civil officers with local experience in my Divisional Staff.

On January 15, the remainder of my Divisional H. Q. arrived, and we had our first visit from Japanese aircraft. We had a warning system in Moulmein, but not a good enough one to keep aircraft stationed there. From our own point of view I was thankful when the system broke down and we only took

cover when the aircraft were overhead. Whilst we had the sirens, all civil labour closed down for several hours during the day.

About 1100 hours the O. C. Tavoy rang up to say that a column of 300 Japs was approaching Tavoy from the East, and that he had sent two companies out to engage them. The Japs weren't supposed to do this sort of thing at all: having taken Victoria Point they should have invaded Tenasserim from the south, thus allowing each of our posts to withdraw, after the maximum resistance, on to the next one. It was obvious, however, that with our scattered dispositions and enormously lengthy lines of communication, the east-to-west advance continually had us in a quandary, and threatened to cut off portions of our forces to the south of the axis of their advance. They continued therefore, to make all their main advances from east to west right up to the fall of Rangoon and after. Having seen how weak Tavoy was, I ordered O. C. Mergui to re-inforce him with half a battalion. Meanwhile the defensive weakness of Moulmein was worrying me a lot—it was extremely important that it should be held and strongly defended, but we had no men and material.

The Q problem which faced my staff at this time was a particularly difficult one. We were responsible for a line of communication which stretched from Mergui right back to the Sittang bridge. Supplies came by rail and road from Rangoon to Martaban—then came an awful bottleneck of 6,000 yards of water, over which everything had to come by steamer, and then on again to the two forward Brigades by river, rail and road. Train and river services were run by civil personnel, who just would not stand the bombing, and we were gradually forced to take them all over, and the Banks, post offices and telegraph offices into the bargain.

On January 16 I had my first meeting of the defence committee. This consisted of myself and my senior staff officers, and the Commissioner and his senior officials. They put all their knowledge and experience of the country at our disposal, and opposite numbers, military and civil, got down to tackling their problems together. I have often worked with I. C. S. and political officers in India, but have never met any crowd of civilians who were so efficient and so helpful as those drawn from the Burma Civil, Canal Service, Railways and the business community who worked with us for the first two months of the war in Burma, The D. C., Moulmein, and the D. S. P., Moulmein,

were two of the most efficient and the most stout-hearted colleagues one could ever wish for in times of stress. The D. C.'s wife ran the civil first-aid posts, and the minute the alarm sounded she was off down into the bazaar, setting the highest example to Europeans and Burmans alike. The strain was eventually too much for the D. S. P., who was evacuated to India, a very sick man. He was a great loss.

As more districts of Burma were invaded, many of the junior civilians became out of a job. I think the Army could have made far more use of them and of the evacuated business community. They had the priceless advantage of knowing both the people and the language. In the same way I think that the Political Service in India could now spare many of their under 40 officers to join the Indian Army. These could well be replaced by older officers or even by retired officers, of whom there must be many with the necessary experience.

A force of 14 Jap bombers escorted by 5 fighters bombed Moulmein on January 17. They did very little damage, but the Burmese population started a steady evacuation into the surrounding country and labour, which we needed badly, became very hard to get. Meanwhile the news from Tavoy was not good. The O.C. had little confidence in his troops, and they appeared to be putting up very little resistance to the Japanese, who were reported to be strongly re-inforced.

Two days later Tavoy fell. This meant that Mergui was completely cut off, unless we could evacuate the garrison by sea to Rangoon. This again depended on secrecy and careful planning. A start was made at once, and my naval L.O. was sent down by sea to help. Brigade H.Q. from Moulmein, with their third battalion, went down towards Tavoy to assist any parts of the garrison the civil population who had managed to get away by road. They did yeoman work there, and passed through refugees of all sorts, including the O.C. Garrison who, after a hectic four days and 250-mile trek by road, was on the point of a nervous breakdown.

Next day the expected Jap advance through the Dawnas started, and we certainly had plenty to think about. The Japs supported this advance by intensive dive-bombing attacks. One company of the 7th Gurkhas was bombed for four hours; the noise and the moral effect in the thick jungle were very great, but the actual casualties extraordinarily small.

Faced with an infiltration advance of this nature through dense jungle, particularly with such scanty communications, it is

extremely difficult for the local commander to get any reliable estimate of the strength of the opposition. Extremely varying reports reached Brigade H.Q. The Brigadier would certainly have been in the wrong had he let the enemy get round behind him on to the demolitions. He therefore decided to make certain of blowing his demolitions and, having done so, withdrew his force on to Kawkareik. Here, as already mentioned, the ferry broke down and the small pool of M.T. which was the only transport available had to be destroyed, together with all equipment and food which could not be carried on the men.

The Brigade then had a very trying 60-mile march into Moulmein: this was forced on them by dwindling supplies rather than by enemy action. The net result was heavy losses of transport and equipment, with few casualties inflicted on either side. The road, however, was most effectively blown, and the demolitions slowed up the rate of the Japanese advance for several weeks to come. The action rubbed in again the evils of too many detachments and too much dispersion, which had been forced on us by lack of troops and complete lack of information.

On January 21 Jap aircraft were very active over Moulmein. With the exception of 4 Bofors on the aerodrome and two last—war A.A. pieces at Martaban, we had nothing with which to oppose them. Two of our fighters did land in the afternoon just as a formidable force of Jap aircraft came over. The pilots refused to see their aircraft destroyed on the ground, and very gallantly tried to get up and make a fight of it; the odds, however, were too great and they were both shot down. The bombing started a really bad fire in the bazaar, which took the Sappers several hours to get under. It did, however, complete the evacuation of the Burmese population, which might have been difficult to enforce.

I decided that evening that all European and Indian women and children must leave. The aerodrome was already virtually out of action and the only other route, by ferry steamer to Martaban, was becoming more precarious daily. The European women were all working in important jobs, either in the office or in the hospitals, and we were as loath to let them go as they were to give up their jobs. Divisional H.Q., now in the forefront of the battle, was ordered further back, and a general redistribution of forces had to be made to fill the very long gap which still existed between us and Rangoon.

On January 23 the B.G.S. from A.H.Q. arrived, and we spent most of the day looking round the Moulmein defences. It was

obvious to us both that, with no defences to speak of actually constructed, and with the length of perimeter that must be held, the proposition was a difficult one. One Brigade was the most that could be spared for it, and the eventual withdrawal of that Brigade might be a difficult if not impossible operation. However, the Army Commander was still hoping for re-inforcements of at least a division, and the loss of Moulmein would greatly increase the air threat to Rangoon and also the danger of troops being landed there by sea.

That day we had a great air success over Rangoon, the bag being 19 Jap aircraft for certain and another seven probables. The Air Force naturally pressed hard for the retention of Moulmein, and it was decided that it must be held as long as possible by one Brigade consisting of the 12th F.F.R., the 8th Burma Rifles. (Sikhs and P.M.'s), two batteries of Burma Rifles, a mountain battery and the aerodrome defences, consisting of the Bofors guns and the Kokine Battalion aerodrome guard.

In addition to the above troops we had the Brigade withdrawn from Kawkareik, which was being reformed and re-equipped at Martaban, and one of the original Brigades of the 17th Division just arrived from India, at Bilin. This latter Brigade consisted of a battalion of the 7th Gurkhas, a battalion of the 17th Dogras, and a battalion of the 10th Baluch. The Brigade was very far short of being fully trained, and, of course, had no experience of jungle warfare. It had, however, a full complement of carriers, which came in very useful later on for road protection.

Divisional H.Q. moved back on January 24, to Kyaikto, where I shared the P.W.D. bungalow with the Commissioner; H.Q. was established in the local jail. From now on there were indications that Japanese forces were closing in on Moulmein from the east and from the south. The Army Commander and I spent the day there on the 28th and on the morning of the 30th the Japanese attack started. By the evening about two Japanese regiments were in contact and the garrison was virtually cut off. The telephone, however, was never cut; I was in constant communication with the Commander. That night I informed the Army Commander of the situation, and he left it to me as to what action I should take.

Up to nightfall we were doing very well. The Japanese were obviously using good troops as the employment of their artillery, the co-operation with their air arm and the skill and determination with which the infantry pressed forward were all

first-class. In places, however, they suffered severe casualties, and the aerodrome defences, which had been entirely re-sited and re-constructed, proved a very hard nut to crack. Had we had the troops and material to construct proper perimeter defences, and another Brigade to put into it, I am convinced that Moulmein could have held out a considerable time. As it was, however, the situation deteriorated rapidly, the defences were penetrated in several places and the aerodrome cut off. The ferries were still intact, and on the Moulmein side of the water, but it was obvious that the strain on the crews was proving almost too great. Once the crews or the ferries went, all chance of evacuating the garrison would go too.

After a final talk with the Brigadier I ordered him to withdraw if he could at 1700 hours, and we arranged for Rangoon to put up as strong an umbrella as they could to cover the operation. There was a lot of confused fighting in the streets of Moulmein as the garrison fought its way down to the quays. They were only just in time, as the nerves of the ferry crews were at breaking point; it was obvious that they would only do one trip—indeed one could hardly have expected non-military personnel to do more. The journey across under shell and machine-gun fire was a nightmare. Several craft were sunk and a number of men drowned. There were many deeds of gallantry performed, the 12th F.F.R., the Mountain Battery, 8th Burma Rifles and the R.E. particularly distinguishing themselves.

That the bulk of the Force was withdrawn safely in broad daylight under every sort of difficulty reflects the greatest credit on the commanders and troops concerned. There were a good many casualties, and we lost four Bofors, four mountain guns and a good deal of equipment, but very little transport, as we had evacuated most of it beforehand. The Brigade, however, had inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy and had given Rangoon an extra week's respite, every day of which was precious.

On the Martaban side every Staff officer was working night and day, sorting out units and feeding and re-equipping the men.

Our new dispositions, though considerably stronger than they had been, were still ordered mainly with the idea of giving up as little of Burma as possible, and so allowing Rangoon elbow-room and giving time for the southward move of the Chinese armies. This resulted in some cases in battalions being as much as 40 miles apart, which of course, from a purely tactical point of view, was not good.

We were now disposed as follows: the southernmost Brigade with its H. Q. at Thaton, had one battalion there, and one down at Martaban, which the Japs were obviously already nibbling at. They had been bombing and shelling it from Moulmein ever since the latter place was evacuated. A third battalion was at Paan on the Salween—an obvious line of approach from the east, and a fourth battalion at Duyinzeik, an important river-crossing connecting Thaton with Paan. The Brigade was as concentrated as possible to cover the places they had to hold, but battalions were yet so much separated that a Brigade battle was impossible.

The next Brigade was at Bilin, with one battalion 80 miles to the north at Papun, the northern limit of my responsibility. At Kyaikto was the Burma Brigade which had been in Moulmein. This Brigade had to find detachments as far back as the Sittang bridge, for which I was responsible. This was a large and vital railway bridge over the Sittang river on which our communications with Rangoon depended. Sappers were working night and day to enable it to take road as well as railway traffic. The road from Kyaikto back to Sittang was just being made; it was in a terrible state, feet deep in thick dust and running through dense jungle.

During the next week, whilst the enemy were making a close reconnaissance of our positions, I got a very welcome addition to my strength in the Gurkha Brigade from the 19th Division. I had asked for this Brigade as soon as I got orders to come to Burma, as I knew what a tower of strength they would be in the close jungle fighting we were likely to experience. Unfortunately they arrived very short of pack transport, of which we were so greatly in need. They were located between Kyaikto and Bilin in Divisional reserve. As I had now got four Infantry Brigades and was soon to get a Tank Brigade, I was given a B. G. S. in addition to my G. 1.

On January 10 the Japs took Martaban by a combined sea landing and land attack. The battalion of the 7th Gurkhas defending the place was heavily outnumbered, and had been subjected to a week's intermittent air bombing and shelling. On the 12th the Baluchis at Paan were heavily attacked by about four times their number of Japs and overwhelmed. They were a young battalion with very few old soldiers and a number of very young officers, but they fought like veterans. They were heavily dive-bombed and subjected to intense mortar fire. The

Japs pressed in from all sides and the fighting became hand-to-hand. The C. O. was killed, but the companies fought on under their own officers as long as any organized resistance was possible.

It now became so obvious that the wide dispersion adopted was likely to lead to defeat in detail that the Army Commander's sanction was obtained to the concentration of the Division behind the Bilin river. The Japs tried hard to circumvent this by forced marches through the jungle. We, however, were based on a road and railway, and in spite of their getting a considerable start, we were back with all our stores and transport complete, in time—but only just. As the K. O. Y. L. I. got into their position they met a Japanese battalion and the whole Brigade was soon in action.

From the 15th to the 20th two Brigades fought what was estimated to be a whole Japanese Division on the line of the Bilin river. The fighting was close and hard, but in view of the danger to Rangoon, we had orders to hold this line until A. H. Q. gave permission to withdraw. The 4th, 5th and 7th Gurkhas and the K. O. Y. L. I. distinguished themselves particularly, and wherever ground was lost, regained it by counter-attack. Our Air Force supported us most effectively during this battle.

By the 19th it was obvious that large numbers of Japs were passing round our northern flank. Only one fresh battalion, the 12th F. F. R. remained in hand at Kyaikto, and they were put in on the left flank of the forward brigades to try and stem this infiltration. Their action was partially successful, but there was every indication that the enemy had been strongly re-inforced. We learnt later that a complete new division had been passed round our northern flank with orders to "cut off and destroy the 17th Division at Sittang."

Orders were received on the 20th to withdraw. The forward brigades broke contact extremely skilfully as soon as it got dark, and the enemy followed up warily, having gained a wholesome respect for the hitting-back powers of our troops. So ended the Bilin battle, the most severe engagement of the Burma campaign, and one in which our troops acquitted themselves well. It was the first time the situation admitted of our giving battle in force, supported by some artillery and on ground of our own choosing. Although increasingly outnumbered, we had not given way a yard until ordered, and so again given Rangoon and the higher command another valuable week's respite. The troops, however, were desperately tired—I have only seen troops as weary during the last stages of the Dunkirk operation. Whether they

would ever be able to make Sittang before fresh Jap troops cut in behind us was a very moot point. Morale was extremely high and that helped enormously in keeping troops on the move.

A few days before the Bilin battle started, the Army Commander had had a very narrow escape from death in an aeroplane accident. He and his A. D. C. had gone on a liaison visit in two Lysander aircraft. Both aircraft were compelled to make a forced landing. The A. D. C. was told to make a parachute jump—what a horrid moment!—and did so successfully. The pilot of this aircraft made a crash landing, but escaped with his life. The Army Commander stuck to his aircraft; the machine caught fire on landing, but he managed to pull the unconscious airman out alive; unfortunately he died later in the day. The Army Commander, though terribly bruised and shaken and with water on both knees, came to visit me a few days later, and concealed his injuries so well that neither I nor my Staff knew that the accident had occurred—altogether a very gallant performance.

After the withdrawal from Moulmein I brought a business man with years' of experience of Burma on to my Staff and made him my chief Intelligence Officer. From that day our information started to improve, and we were able to give A. H. Q. a few probable forecasts and appreciations. Early in the Bilin battle he gave information of the danger of our being cut off at Sittang; after Sittang he gave an extremely accurate forecast of the probable Japanese action in cutting the Rangoon—Toungoo and Rangoon—Prome roads and of the route the Japs would probably take in getting to Mandalay. It made me realize what a handicap we suffered from, as compared with the Japanese, in not having prepared beforehand for this campaign.

On January 20 the Japs landed troops by sea about 12 miles south of Kyaikto. We had only a few military police and local frontier force to observe and delay them. On the 21st the withdrawal from Bilin continued, covered by the 3rd Gurkhas, who had been laid back beforehand into a covering position. Divisional H. Q. was now rather in the forefront of the battle, but we could not move back until the rearguard arrived. All through the night of the 21/22nd the weary troops came in to Kyaikto and after only a few hours' rest were pushed on again. Kyaikto was held by the few battalions which had been re-organizing and were not fit to take part in the Bilin battle. During the night the B. M. P. lost touch with the coastal landing troops, and the situation in that direction became obscure and somewhat uncomfortable.

At 0600 hours next morning, after a busy night, the B. G. S. and I were pouring out our morning tea when with loud jackal howls Japanese troops, probably the sea-landing people, who had crept through the jungle, attacked Divisional H. Q. and the railway station. It was still quite dark, and bullets from every direction smacked up against the walls of the jail. The Employment Platoon were at their alarm posts and inside them the officers of the Divisional H. Q. Staff, with drawn revolvers, took their posts.

The Japs were using their favourite, and very effective, device of coloured bullets to inform one another of their whereabouts and of the targets they were engaging. One would have appreciated the firework display more as an outside observer. We got through to Brigade H. Q. on the phone, and a company of the 12th F. F. R. was sent up to re-inforce. It started to get light—the attack had not achieved the surprise expected and the Japs drew off.

The withdrawal by Brigade groups on to Sittang continued during the 22nd. The bridgehead defences there had been considerably strengthened and now consisted of the 12th F. F. R., the remainder of the 10th Baluch, a large detachment of Burma Rifles, a company of the newly-arrived D. W. R. with some mountain guns and A. A. guns. Divisional H. Q. was at the Mokpalin quarries with the Gurkha Brigade. Enemy air action throughout the day was very severe. Our fighters did their best to give us some protection and shot down several enemy bombers.

The Sittang bridge was just ready to take wheeled traffic, and from the late afternoon, all through the night, a steady stream of transport and non-combatant units were passed over. The Japs dared not bomb it until every effort to capture it had failed. It really looked as though we were going to get over in time. That evening a Staff officer from A. H. Q. arrived with information that the Tank Brigade had arrived, was disembarking with all speed in Rangoon, and would join me as early as possible.

At 0300 hours, with the roads getting clearer of transport, the march was resumed. Everything was absolutely quiet. A. H. Q. had informed us that it was likely that the Japs might try and land troops by parachute on the open ground west of Sittang, and take the bridge from that side. It was imperative, therefore, that the Gurkha Brigade should get across as early as possible. On approaching the bridge we found that a lorry had overturned in the middle and for three hours the bridge was

blocked. What vital hours these turned out to be! I went forward to consult the C. R. E. and have a look at the bridge defences.

Eventually the bridge was opened, and Divisional H. Q., Gurkha Brigade H. Q. and the 4th Gurkhas passed over. Suddenly, from the thick jungle to the north, a heavy Japanese attack was put in on the bridgehead defences—the defences gave —and the Japs looked to have got the whole bridge. A counter-attack was quickly organized and most determinedly carried out. The bridgehead was regained and the Japs withdrew, taking my A. D. M. S. and several other officers with them. They were, however, soon strongly re-inforced and they interposed a solid ring between the bridgehead and the remainder of the division. We had failed by six hours to get across intact.

We were now opposed by two divisions—a completely fresh one which had been working round our northern flank for days, and the somewhat mauled one with which we had been in action at Bilin. On the East bank of the river the 3rd and 5th Gurkhas were at once in action in a determined attempt to join up with the bridgehead defences. Behind them the other two brigades were soon engaged. The fighting developed early into a really close jungle battle over which no one above a Battalion Commander had any control. It was a soldiers' battle and a junior leaders' battle. Our troops gave as good as they got, but they were unable to break through to the bridge.

On the west bank we had only Divisional H. Q. and Gurkha Brigade H. Q. and the 4th Gurkhas, and we should have been hard put to it if the expected parachute landings had taken place. After a preliminary wireless message telling all brigades the situation, communications broke down and it was only possible to tell from the noises of battle approximately what was happening. At 1500 hours the bridgehead defences were very heavily and accurately shelled, and the bridgehead again lost. The 4th Gurkhas, the only remaining battalion, was put in to re-take it, and the situation was once again restored. The night was quiet and a few men crossed over to our side of the river on rafts.

At 0400 hours the Gurkha Brigade Commander in charge of the Bridge defences reported by telephone that Japanese pressure had increased, and he could not guarantee to hold the bridge for more than another hour. Military history teems with difficult decisions over bridge demolitions, but I cannot recall a more difficult one than this—to blow a bridge knowing that

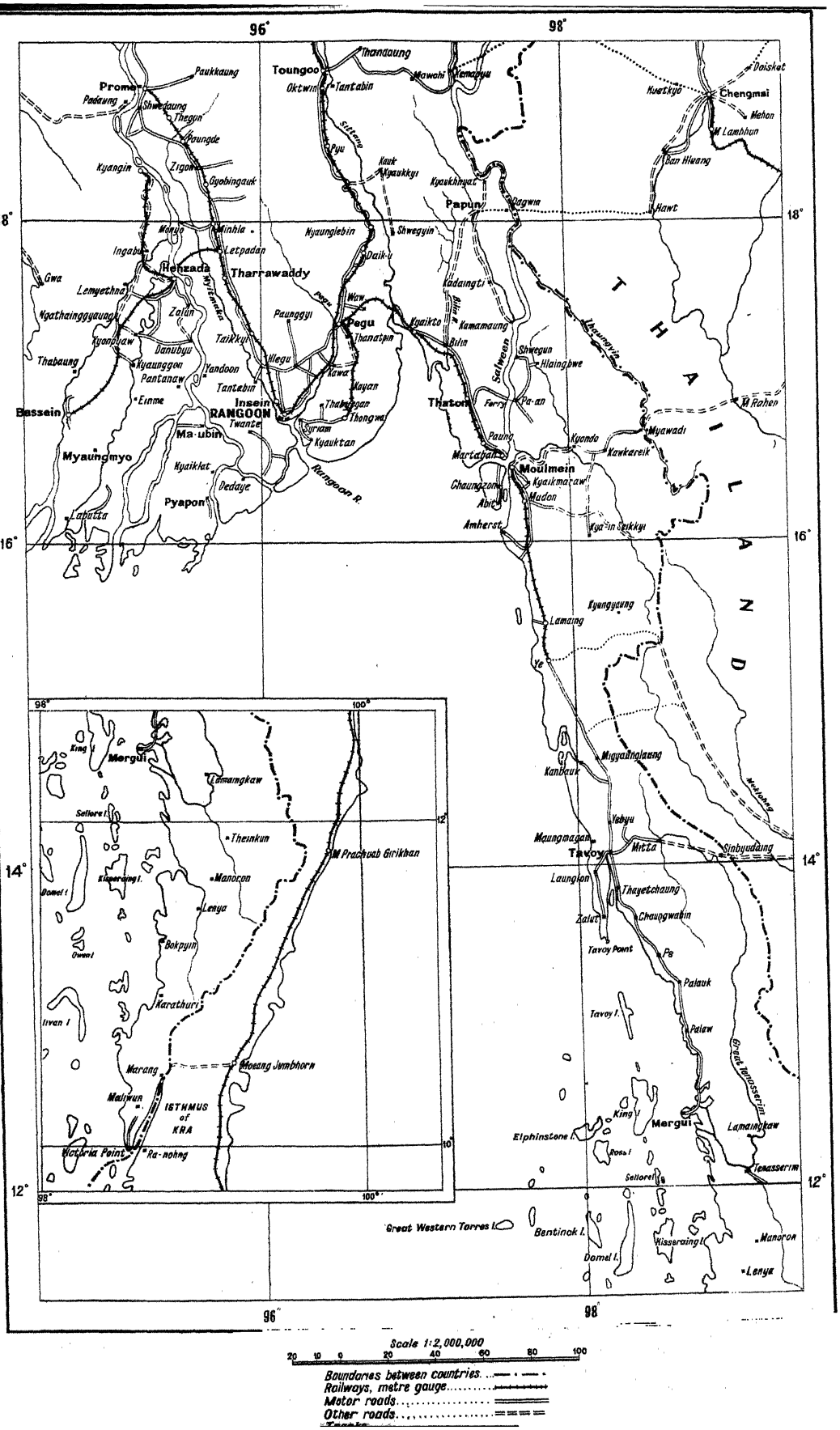
three quarters of one's own troops are on the wrong side. However, there was no doubt whatsoever as to the right course. If the Japs had got the bridge, not only could they pass a whole division straight on to Rangoon, but, with both banks of the Sittang in their possession, the chances of getting more of 17th Division over would be very small. I told the Brigadier to blow.

The bridge was most gallantly blown by the Sappers under close fire. The effect on the Japanese was immediate: having failed in their object they drew off and parties of our men, in broad daylight, started to swim and float themselves over. The Sittang is a nasty river to swim and men who did so had to divest themselves of most of their clothes and certainly their boots. On arrival at the far bank they then had some distance to walk on stony ground. The feet of officers and British ranks unused to walking barefoot were in an appalling state.

The Divisional Staff now had a problem of evacuation, re-clothing, re-equipping and feeding, before which all former problems faded into insignificance. Fortunately the Japs definitely had had enough, and allowed us to run trains and lorries to within a mile or two of the river to bring back the wounded and lame. Their casualties had undoubtedly been heavy—an escaped officer estimated that there were 2,000 Japs dead in the vicinity of the bridge alone. Our losses had also been heavy—three valuable C. O.'s killed and many other officers and men, besides heavy losses in guns and equipment. In an action where so many gallant deeds were done, it is somewhat invidious to single out particular units. The 3rd and 5th Gurkhas, however, distinguished themselves particularly, as did the two British battalions, the K. O. Y. L. I. and the D. W. R. The latter battalion had only just arrived and had to be put straight into action.

The Sittang battle is a fitting climax to the first phase of the operations. We learnt many lessons from them which will be, or have been, incorporated in the various training memoranda. No one will deny that in Burma we were unprepared for this type of fighting, and that our troops were completely untrained for it. No true picture can be obtained of the early fighting in Burma unless it is clearly borne in mind that long lines of communications and dispersions were forced on us by other factors than tactical necessity.

It has been said that the troops were road-bound and M. T.-minded. We should have liked more animal transport, of course, for tactical movement and actual fighting, but without



Scale 1:2,000,000

20 10 0 20 40 60 80 100

Boundaries between countries.....

Railways, metre gauge.....

Motor roads.....

Other roads.....

our railway, good M. T. road and modicum of M. T. we could not possibly have maintained troops so widely dispersed or got them back so quickly to other dispositions. In the latter phases of the operations, tactical necessity could be put first and dispersion was only necessary to gain cover from the air. It would be idle to compare this type of operation with the battle of Flanders. The tempo is much slower and the commander has a long time—too long—to think. I am convinced, however, that jungle fighting demands a higher standard of individual training, specialist training and junior leading than any other type of warfare that exists.

BURMA: A NEW TECHNIQUE OF WARFARE

By Lt.-Col. G. T. Wheeler

IT IS TOO EARLY to write a full account of the campaign in Burma. The enemy would learn much from such an account for many of our manœuvres must still be inexplicable to him, as his often were to us. It is also reasonable to hope that the full, unexpurgated story of the campaign will never be written for it would be sorry reading in many places. The credit which is due to the British and Indian troops that fought the enemy can hardly be overstated, and the more fully their deeds are related the better. The tale of the Indian refugees, the crumbling of the "home" front of Burma, and the striving for comfort and safety in rear areas are matters that will never be fairly told, so they should remain untold.

To some extent the Japanese have introduced a new technique of warfare. Napoleon over-ran Europe largely because he taught his troops to live on the country, and so achieved a degree of strategical mobility that left his enemies gasping. The Japanese have done the same, but added a standard of tactical infiltration that can be called amazing. This combination of strategical mobility and tactical infiltration produces a most annoyingly ubiquitous enemy. The Japanese is most dangerous when there is no news of him and no contact with him. At such times he nearly always proved to be either where he was least wanted or where it was believed impossible to go; these were frequently the same place.

The Japanese Army has done much preparation to achieve this degree of mobility. The men have been thoroughly trained physically and tactically, and their junior officers have been imbued with a strong offensive spirit which carries them forward without apparent regard to events on their right or left. There is, however, nothing in this aspect of their training which we cannot equal and better. The mental background of the Japanese soldiering is, however, something that we shall not equal during the course of this war. The Japanese are a military nation, which we are not, and they have assiduously cultivated a military and ascetic spirit by every available means of propaganda. Japanese cinemas show films of a single Jap beating many foes with a sword, they extol contempt of comfort and

teach in every way the superiority of their race to other people and to luxury.

In the same period we have preached against war and developed a standard of luxury life which has no place in war. We cannot reverse these facts in a few years, so we must accept them, and look for compensating assets. The first asset is not hard to find. We have a high standard of living and allied to it is a very high industrial capacity. Our potential, if not actual, output of weapons of war could make the Japanese armies look like tribal lashkars; yet in Burma the standard of armament was about equal; we were more heavily armed, the Japanese more appropriately for the country. That must be put right, and it will only be done if both emergency and imagination are used.

Much of our equipment is quite unsuitable for use against the Japanese. Our 3-inch mortar is too heavy, particularly the base plate; any metallurgist would halve the weight without difficulty. Ammunition boots have no place in the jungle. We have no quickly-laid booby traps for use in the ideal setting which jungle provides; no coloured smoke for signalling, no raft-making gadgets, no life belts, no "jungle" tanks, no handcarts. There is a lot of lee-way to be made up, if we are to barter our superior industrialization for our need for comfort and imported food.

A second asset which we should be able to exploit is our superior wealth. The subject is a delicate one, for wealth in war is largely spent below the level at which decent people breathe freely. Japan has some Allies now who are accustomed to react to money. They should be treated on the grand scale and brought in from the highest in their ranks. As a nation we have rather forgotten the possibilities of buying high commanders. The practice is still popular in the East and we should have a seat in the market.

The last asset which comes readily to mind is the Air Force. The Japanese rushed us in Malaya and Burma. He drove us from our airfields one by one by taking risks with his bomber force which we have learnt not to face. When we, like plumbers, come back with our tools, we must accept risks to rush him off his forward landing grounds and establish the fact beyond all doubt that any Japanese aeroplane which perches within reach of our main bomber force is virtually written off. That is what he did to us in Burma, working at the end of a L. of C. which was longer than he had foreseen; for presumably he did not foresee his rapid move northwards from Rangoon.

The Air Force, too, needs some alterations in its equipment. The first need is probably a slow-falling bomb which bursts on impact with a tree top. The effect of such a bomb would be shattering. Targets for it, which could only be areas, would be easy to find at night when the Japanese lights his fire without discretion (or need for it), and could be found by day as soon as our Intelligence has regained close touch with the local yokels. He lies up in the jungle by day.

The fear of being encircled in the jungle is ever-present, more so than anyone without jungle experience can realize. The sound of shooting in one's rear is unpleasant. It can of course be produced most easily by dropping squibs from aircraft; and this should be done. It is a potent weapon because it loses no force when it is known to the enemy and disregarded by him; it can then be used as a cloak for encircling troops.

The use of aircraft for marking the route for night marches should be examined. Two nights before the Japanese put down a road block north of Rangoon, an Engineer colonel spoke to a Staff Officer at the cross-roads, eighteen miles north of Rangoon and five miles south-east of the eventual site of the road-block:

"That is where he's going to cut us off", he said, putting his pencil point on the exact spot.

"How do you figure that out?" asked the Staff Officer.

"Come up the road a bit and I'll show you."

They walked a few hundred yards up the road to a place where the trees cleared. The engineer officer pointed to the opposite hill, on which three fires were burning. "Those three fires are here," he pointed to his map again, "and if you produce the line it cuts the road at M.S. 23., which is where we shall be cut off in due course."

That was interesting because it proved true. In the case of the Jap it is probable that the fires would be started by an officer's patrol moving a day or two ahead of the main body. They use their officer's patrols with a freedom that amounts to impertinence—and get away with it. In our case, however, we could lay our line of fires more quickly and more accurately by incendiary bombs from aircraft. A special slow-burning incendiary might be necessary. They need not, of course, be exactly on the route as that would invite an ambush.

The Japanese used Arty. R. planes in broad daylight; this would be rated a bit old-fashioned in any other theatre of war. However, our planes are so superior in quality, and should be so superior in quantity, that the time may well come when we can

safely do the same. Ground observation is so difficult that we would be well-advised to train for the eventuality of complete air mastery and the consequent phenomena of daylight Arty R.

Let us leave equipment. There are high-browed experts paid to devise what the army wants, and they still have pay to earn. Organization is not quite so high-brow, though it is at present too complicated for our needs. The Chinese battalion has a strange organization in our eyes, for over half the unit is unarmed. They are, in effect, only doing within the battalion what we do within the army, and it is doubtful whether we produce as many armed men per million as they do.

The tail of a modern British Army has to be seen to be believed. A good porter is much more efficient than many other forms of transport; he carries nearly half-a-mule load, eats one-tenth of a mule's ration in weight, and occupies one-fifth of a mule's road space. In addition he lies down when being bombed and so remains alive much longer than a mule, in war as he does in peace. There is, therefore, a strong case for following the Chinese organization and including at least one, probably two, porter companies in each battalion.

The Japanese solution to the same problem is to use local inhabitants and prisoners of war as porters. There is a legal aspect to this; but it tends to confirm the value of porters as a means of transport. Porters only solve the problem of 1st Line Transport. The Japanese appear to have no rearward transport echelons; they exploit local resources to the full, using bullock-carts, hand-carts, elephants and vehicles captured from us. It is unlikely that we could meet our demand from these sources of supply, so we will have to provide 2nd and 3rd Line Transport as at present. Both can *normally* rely on finding a road on which to work. For abnormal moves, and it is abnormal moves that win battles, we have the advantage of being able to supply by air.

The Japanese advances were often astonishing, but there was always a calculable limit to them, imposed by his need to wait for his transport echelons. The Japanese infantry formations carry about seven days' stores with them; at the end of each seven days they have to halt until the bullock-cart convoy—or whatever it may be catches them up. This is a restriction of movement that our penetrating columns can avoid by air-borne supply.

Possibilities of supply by air are so extensive that they should be examined with great imagination. When dealing

with the German there are many difficulties in the way of operating in his rear; apart from all others there are masses of administrative troops there. This is not so with the Japanese who move forward like an advancing shop window with practically nothing behind. Everyone who has been there agrees that it is much more restful to be behind the Japanese than in front of him. This special feature of his armies gives a quite new importance to supply by air. It should, as has been said, be re-examined, and not by the conservative party.

The organization of rearward troops and higher headquarters is at present unsuitable for the type of war which the Japanese force us to wage. When we have the initiative we may be able to carry the elaborate organization that follows the steel-head of our armies; but even then we should be better without it, for its worst sin is that it consumes transport out of all proportion to its size. It is, however, far easier to say that headquarters and L. of C. troops should be reduced than it is to specify where the reduction should come. Let us consider headquarters first.

An officer who had been up all night walked into a neighbouring headquarters in his own line of work consisting of eight officers. They were all having breakfast. He said that he wanted an officer to do a short job lasting about an hour. One of the breakfasting officers said at once: "There you are, I knew this headquarters wasn't big enough. We want another officer already." There were eight having breakfast, and a job for one, making a total of nine, so mathematically he was right. If there is a flaw in his mathematics there is also a possible opportunity for reduction of headquarters.

Every staff officer should be on the average of being overworked, and many are not. We have allowed ourselves to slide into the habit of always increasing our staffs during rush periods, and never decreasing again when conditions allow. The disease is cumulative because every unemployed staff officer writes letters which are unnecessary and causes needless work elsewhere when they arrive. Burma has seen some headquarters heavily reduced by sickness; the reduction in efficiency was not equivalent, if existent.

Another source of expansion in headquarters is the inefficient individual. The British character, steeped in years of euphemistic confidential reports, is averse to removing any individual from his post if any alternative is possible. The inefficient staff officer can usually be reinforced and left in peace, and

this is done. Japanese methods have been quoted; but the cure for the inefficient officer should be sought among the "liquidating nations"! It would be rather exhilarating to see a message which read "Colonel X unsatisfactory. Inform widow and send replacement." It will never, of course, be sent in English, but it is being sent in other languages. Successful armies speak those languages too.

L. of C. troops do a variety of jobs. Many of them just work at unskilled tasks. The Japanese use local labour, which, though basically unwilling, prefers the work to the alternative. Total war must surely justify the offer of the alternative, and it is only an offer, because none will accept it. Several thousand Indian refugees have perished because labour was unavailable to make the road from Assam into Burma. Many fewer refugees would have made the road, though a threat of force would have been necessary to halt them for the work. Judged solely by results it would have been right to use that threat.

The tactics of the campaign must be treated somewhat sketchily. In fighting the elusive Japanese it is the platoon, or even the section that counts most of all. The Japanese attack boldly in small parties; when these meet resistance they do not rush forward to their death, they withdraw, often hurriedly, and re-appear elsewhere, usually on the flank or rear of the defenders. If, in the meantime, the defenders have moved intelligently they still hold the odds; and it is the very junior leader who has to be intelligent—and quick.

It goes further than that, for a high degree of confidence within each section and between each section is required. When the Japanese is slipping about around a position it may be good tactics to leave one section where it has been located by the enemy and move the rest to ambush him when he re-attacks. The left section must be prepared to fight it out, with confidence that its colleagues will see them through. This is open to the charge of being facile theory; for it is no easy task to stay in the jungle whilst being attacked from apparently all sides by an invisible enemy. The section is, however, armed for the job and can fairly be expected to do so, *provided* it knows that it is part of a well-laid plan to destroy the enemy, and not a human sacrifice. The plan must be simple of execution, ingenious or, at any rate, imaginative of conception and must carry the faith of all.

Tactics higher than the platoon are largely matters of co-ordination. Once objectives are allotted to platoons there is little else to be done except to try to follow the progress of events

and keep the action on a mutual-assistance basis. Our present wireless resources are insufficient for the achievement of this. The Japanese supplements his wireless with such aids as company battle cries, different coloured tracer bullets for different sub-units and a basic attacking drill which leads certain sub-units automatically into certain general areas; by these means his commanders can keep a fairly accurate picture of the progress of their troops.

Strategically it is impossible to deny the Japanese very high praise. He appeared throughout the campaign to base his strategy on the question: "Now what is the move that the British and Chinese will like least?" He then made that move, however seemingly impossible it might be. The best instances of this were his intercepting move from Paan to the Sittang Bridge and his sudden attack on Monywa. The former was made through reputedly impossible country; the latter with a speed and by a route that had not been considered feasible.

There is no doubt that we have got to take a leaf from his book and base our strategy on what we want to do, rather than on what we calculate is administratively possible. We must decide what we want to do and then work out ways and means of doing it, however unconventional they may have to be. We cannot outmanœuvre the Japanese if we adhere to the administrative limitations which are now accepted. The Army in Burma has already learnt to jettison some of these; for instance the accepted method of forming up twenty men and marching them in a soldier-like manner into a 3-ton lorry, has died. One officer stands in front of the lorry, another loads from the rear; when the officer in front reports that a man has fallen over the driver's cabin the lorry is known to be full. The record was seventy men on one lorry. They were Gurkhas, said to be loaded in two layers standing up, but such stories sprout exaggerations.

There is a tremendous growth of peace-time administrative theory and practice that has got to be cut away; in itself it is probably ideally right, but it is dangerous because it produces formulæ and other impediments to improvisation. Improvisation is bound to be needed whatever resources are available; the Japanese are masters of it. They improvise road and river transport, they improvise for supply of rations from local sources and they even improvise clothing for patrols and assault forces.

We had to improvise the organization of our transport, for there was never enough for such units as we had to be confined to their proper role. All units worked as a pool and carried men

or stores according to existing urgencies. Tanks were used as troop carriers; four men on the outside of each tank; and transport lorries were eventually used to tow guns. The American jeeps, which were an entirely unauthorized windfall, did every sort of transport duty—from reconnaissance to recovery. They proved to be the perfect General-Purpose vehicle, and justified their name, which is derived from the letters "G.P."

Perhaps the most unorthodox improvisation that was resorted to was the use of G.H.Q. staff officers as stokers on the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company's boats. Crews had deserted. The boats had to be kept moving, and, at the time, no other reliable labour was to be found.

Before leaving administrative matters there was one point which, though obvious in itself, came to light with vivid clearness at many times during the campaign. It is that when any commodity is known to be short it will disappear at once. The reason, of course, is hoarding. On several occasions there arose doubt whether there was sufficient petrol to meet all demands. Petrol stocks, already small, just vanished. It is the result of the human desire of every lorry-driver to be able to continue serving his unit for as long as possible, and probably cannot be prevented.

The valuable facts to remember from an administrative point of view are, first, that it is dangerous to disclose impending shortages before it is necessary to do so, and, secondly, that when a shortage has been announced it will be followed by an apparent, but unreal, absence of the store in question. There will, in fact, be large hidden reserves of it.

During the withdrawal up the Chindwin there were rumours of a possible shortage of food; and although stocks ran low in some places, an enormous amount of food was jettisoned by individuals (to the benefit of the deserving refugee) and no one had need to miss a meal. This human trait might well be exploited as a means of transporting certain supplies for which normal transport did not exist.

For instance, if a shortage of, say, lubricating oil were foreseen at any point along the axis of movement, a rumour to that effect at some stage where it was plentiful in bulk, followed by a search of vehicles at the point in question would almost certainly solve the problem of moving the oil from its bulk storage to where it was wanted. It would have been carried in every sort of container, including water bottles, which no order could have achieved so well.

Finally, let us examine some of the popular conceptions and misconceptions about the Japanese soldier. It is said that he does not take prisoners. This is only a half truth; it would be fairer to say that he is not interested in taking prisoners. At times, noticeably when Burmans were present, he will kill prisoners in a completely barbaric manner. Normally, he will use them as labourers until he wants them no more and then neglect them so that escape is easy. He very seldom surrenders himself, and on the few occasions when he has, he has always tried to escape even in the face of certain death. If one is taken prisoner by the Japanese one should attempt escape at the very first moment, and normally one will succeed. That is the general experience of Burma, but it is probable that his divisions vary widely in their treatment of prisoners, as they do in fighting capacity.

The courage of the Japanese is hard to assess. He is very dependent on the example of his officers; and units which lost their officers frequently lost all courage. There was no conclusive evidence in Burma that he feared either the dark or cold steel, as has been stated. He moved and attacked very fearlessly by night; and in close fighting he showed no exceptional aversion to closing with our troops. His main weakness appears to be bad marksmanship; his fire was never anything like as effective as that of our troops, though some of his sniping is fair. There were indications that the rank and file broke when their leader had gone, also that in defeat he packed up and resigned himself to death. At Kyaukse a number of Japanese hid in a culvert when hard pressed by Gurkhas and made no attempt to make a stand.

It is difficult to avoid being prosaic when considering what manner of training is required to fit men to defeat the Japanese. Probably the first requirement is to instil a pride in hardihood and contempt of comfort. The Japanese will insist on fighting in difficult country where our superior machines cannot be used. He will have to be chased out of those places, and that will best be done by men who take pride in their ability to out-climb, outmarch and finally out-flank him.

The saying that "any fool can be uncomfortable" has done much harm, chiefly because it is true; but it is more honest to say that "only a good soldier can remain efficient in the absence of comfort," for the fool will not remain efficient when his folly has denied him food, sleep and other comforts. The good soldier

will, provided he has had time and opportunity to harden himself for the ordeal.

The next requisite is resourcefulness. There must be no problem too difficult for the soldier who is to run rings round the Japanese. He may have to make a raft, hoist a mortar up a cliff, enforce a local guide or porter, hide in a tree-top or lay a booby-trap. A party of Japanese soldiers drove up to one of our Brigade Headquarters lying in the bottom of a bullock-cart. It was one way of getting there, though it proved to be a bad one.

A necessity which exploits two of the Japanese weaknesses is that of snipers. A good sniper will have endless chances of killing the Japanese officers, for jungle country lends itself to selective sniping. In addition, the bad marksmanship of the Japanese reduces the risk that a sniper runs. For all that a jungle sniper, who will normally work from a tree, requires to be a brave man, and better results are likely to be got from training a brave man to shoot well, than from hoping that a good shot will prove to be brave.

The first round in Burma has gone against us through no fault of the British and Indian fighting troops. Some of the difficulties against which they fought have automatically disappeared with the loss of Burma. There were others which can still recur if the unity of our war effort is not one hundred per cent. The soldier no longer wins battles unaided; he has a right to the whole-hearted help of men in top-hats, in overalls, and blue.

SOME VIVID MEMORIES OF MALAYA

By Major G. T. Hayes, M.C., I.M.S.

DURING the last war the period of "waiting to go over the top" was one of the most nerve-racking moments for thousands of our soldiers. No such worry assailed many of those who took part in that short but gallant campaign in Malaya. Indeed, to the newcomer the atmosphere was almost fantastic. With the Japanese approximately 80 miles to the north of the first town to which I was sent, the general public were living in a complete "fools' paradise". Dancing and social gatherings were the order of the day. Yet just around the corner was the grim spectre of death, of men fighting for their lives, of women and children being bombed and of soldiers holding out against, at times, very heavy odds.

The complete picture of the campaign can only come from official despatches, but here are some incidents both of military and human interest which may be interesting and useful to your readers.

The methods adopted by the Japanese in order to hoax our troops were on many occasions extremely clever. It was a common occurrence for the Jap, dressed in an allied uniform, to attempt to approach our posts after dark, shouting "Don't shoot, we English." In daylight, trails of rice were frequently seen pointing in the direction of unit concentrations further in the rubber plantation or jungle; to the unwary it seemed that they had resulted from a hole in a sack carried by a coolie.

Direction arms of sign-posts were used upon which to hang a piece of cord, kept in position by a small stone at either end of the string, and indicating concentrations of troops in one or other direction. At times ice-cream vendors and itinerant traders dressed in white clothes attempted to engage troops in conversation, thus acting as a decoy.

Before our gunners could come into action in rubber plantations they had to cut down quite a number of trees to get an arc of fire. This being the case, they were only too pleased when it was possible to bring the guns into action in an area of open country, but they had to be on the lookout for tethered oxen in the vicinity, as these were frequently so placed as a signal to aircraft.

One afternoon a gardener came on to the lawn in front of a certain Divisional Headquarters. Having worked strenuously for some hours with a scythe he departed. No one had paid any particular attention to him until later the Staff Captain happened to walk across the lawn and noticed that a large arrow, about 20 feet in length, had been cut out of the grass, with its apex pointing towards the house. Washed clothes were also on occasions placed on the ground or hung in unobtrusive positions to indicate the positions of troops or unit headquarters.

In the jungle at night, life presents a very different atmosphere, as any who have sat up in a machan realize. All sounds and movement, irrespective of their origin are magnified and usually misplaced as regards their location. To one unaccustomed to the atmosphere, the sharp hollow sound of a rubber nut as it bumps its way to earth amongst the branches would make one peer through the darkness with rifle ready for action.

At night the enemy would advance to within a few hundred yards of our posts, and then detail off a small party to the rear. This latter squad would indulge in hand-clapping, imitating shells in their flight, and sometimes firing small arms, while the main body would put in an attack from the flank. Should the attack fail, as owing to the refusal of our troops to be misled it often did, the Jap would climb up a tree, tie himself to a branch, and make a general nuisance of himself until he was located.

Our troops soon appreciated the value of these tactics, and in putting counter-measures into operation inflicted many casualties. It was a striking fact that when the Jap was played at his own game he had no alternative to offer. Should our patrols contact the enemy in lesser numbers, the latter invariably adopted the tree-climbing method, firing at our troops from the rear after they quite unsuspectingly passed beneath the closely packed jungle trees. The result of this type of jungle warfare was well seen in medical units on evacuation of the casualties, the vast majority of wounds being located in the back of the head, chest and loins.

But it was not only in jungle warfare that the Jap showed his cunning. I remember one evening, after we had evacuated to Singapore Island, our beach defence troops had noticed numbers of large tea chests floating down the Strait. More with the intention of indulging in a little target practice than anything else, a corporal fired a burst of machine-gun fire at a large

chest. He was surprised to see a rifle thrown out over the sides, followed immediately by a Japanese soldier, who swam as fast as he could for the opposite shore. Incidentally, as three-fifths of the Island was under rubber cultivation, it was very easy for any of the enemy to remain under cover and signal any required information to the mainland by lamp.

Time and again the thoroughness of the training of the Japanese soldier was evident. Especially was this the case in regard to first-aid. I remember two Japanese wounded men being brought to the Tan Tock Seng hospital on Singapore Island, in which I was temporarily serving. One of them attempted to snatch a pistol from one of our Indian officers with the intention of committing *harakiri*, but when, with the aid of signs, we showed we were just as anxious to preserve his life as he was to dispose of it he abandoned the attempt. Later one of these men offered to help in attending to our casualties. He was excellent at first-aid, and was capable of removing superficial foreign bodies without supervision. From others I have had proof of the high standard of first-aid training given to the Japanese troops.

Their uniform was somewhat unorthodox. It consisted of a white-coloured sarong around the loins, a straw hat, long knife or sabre carried on a belt and slung across the shoulders, a small canvas bag containing rice, quinine, hydrochloride, and about fifty rounds of .35 ammunition. I saw a very good instance of the close association between the Jap and his German ally. It was in the form of a damaged automatic rifle which was carried by one of the wounded men referred to above. The weapon was smaller than our rifle, weighed about 7—8 lbs., and contained 8 rounds in the magazine. There was no attachment for a bayonet. The only lettering on the rifle was the word "Hamburg" on the left-hand side above the bolt cover.

Incidentally, an amusing incident occurred at this hospital. For some days there had been considerable artillery fire aimed at the vicinity of the hospital. One afternoon some small arms fire was heard at the back of the building. Though it was obviously quite close, we were not unduly alarmed until one of the medicine bottles on a side table in the dressing-room fell to the floor in pieces. An R.A.M.C. sergeant who happened to be attending to a patient at the time thought that the sick attendant had clumsily knocked it over, and told him so in no uncertain language.

Next moment a ricochet off one of the sterilising drums made us realize that the open window in the room was evidently serving as a target. I am afraid I cannot give a lucid description of the events taking place outside the room as we felt very comfortable lying on the floor, while occasional bullets splattered off the walls, fortunately without any further casualties. The noise, however, grew louder, and the frequent crashing of panes of glass, combined with the Japanese now-familiar cry of "Banzai" was not conducive to calm of mind. After what seemed like hours we heard the noise of the familiar "Tommy" gun, or, as one sepoy called it, *Thompson Sahib Bahadur ki banduq*.

Aerial bombardment on the mainland was at times very fierce. On the lines of communications the bombers usually came in three's, in arrow-head formation at about 3,000 feet. The practice was for the leader to bomb the transport on the road, while his companions let fly with machine-guns balanced over the side of the plane, as the transport personnel made for cover in the rubber plantations on either side of the road. From experience we learned that it was safer to take cover in the ditch by the roadside, as by the time one was out of a truck and into a plantation one's arrival usually corresponded with the beaten zone of machine-gun fire from the plane. Casualties from this aerial machine-gunning, however, were not frequent, owing to the fact that the gunners had to fire blind through the rubber trees.

In at least one case I saw the tragic results which followed the selection by Brigade or Battalion headquarters of a prominent house. My medical unit had been ordered to take up a position on the Sedenak Rubber estate, there to establish a main dressing station. In selecting a rendezvous on the estate the most prominent building, the manager's house, was given a wide berth and we settled down in a small hollow about half a mile away.

Because of our past experience of the predilection of neighbouring units for prominent houses as headquarters, we made a large sign in brilliant red and white, with the notice in large letters: "Unexploded Bomb", and placed it on the avenue leading to the manager's house. In spite of this a Brigade headquarters was established there that night. Immediately we struck camp and moved to a safer area.

Next morning at 10.00 hours the bombers came, and after several excursions over the target all was quiet, save for the

intermittent crackling of burning rafters of what was once a substantial residence.

Everyone was in a high state of tension when the order came for complete evacuation to Singapore Island. The Causeway between the island and the mainland was sufficiently wide to take three streams of traffic, and it also had a single-line narrow gauge railway. It was hoped to be able to convoy all troops across, except the rear bridgehead troops, who were to come across in launches after the Causeway was demolished. One-way traffic was the rule on the Causeway. Should a truck have the misfortune to break down during its passage the drivers had orders that it was to be thrown into the Strait.

A full moon was due on the night of January 31—February 1, the night on which the evacuation was timed to take place, and as in the moonlight the Causeway and vicinity would show up very clearly, it was anticipated that heavy aerial and artillery bombardment would take place. The first transport containing troops crossed over at 1900 hours, and until 0600 hours the following morning there was a continuous flow of traffic in three lanes. At the latter hour the last vehicle was signalled across, and there followed the rear bridgehead troops piped by the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders.

Operations went without a hitch, but instead of the heavy bombardment anticipated, only one shot was heard in the vicinity of the Causeway. Everyone realized the strategic importance of the operation. Everyone's nerves were taut. Indeed, on hearing a report from a Tommy gun, two officers who happened to be sitting on the edge of a slit trench, snatching a hasty meal, went head over heels into the hole, accompanied by bully beef and hot soup.

Needless to say, our days on Singapore Island were busy and exciting. Shelling and aerial bombardment made life a hazardous affair. During the night of February 14—15 we heard rumours of an impending capitulation. I had had orders to report with a party at the docks; buildings were smouldering along the water front, and broken telephone wires were strewn over the roads. As the boat on which we were told we were to embark was nowhere to be seen, and as it was rumoured that the "Cease Fire" was soon to be sounded, our small party of six decided to take cover in a partly demolished godown for the day, and make an effort to locate a boat after dark.

As nightfall came we left our "bolt-hole" and began our search for a small boat, but without success. Next day we again

took cover. All shelling had ceased, but we saw no sign of the Jap. Once again as darkness fell we set out and by very good fortune one of the party found a rowing boat about 14 ft. in length. In his excitement he forgot to mention a minor detail —there was a hole in the floor. An empty bully beef tin soon repaired this.

With our shirts tied together to form a rope we lowered the boat to the water's edge, and prepared to allow her to take the strain. She did this with a vengeance, ripped our shirts, and entered the water with a resounding wallop. Quickly we placed four gallons of water on board, 36 army biscuits, and some tinned fruit. We had three oars, with the stronger man pulling on one side against the other two.

None of us knew anything about navigation; we thought our destination, Sumatra, was only 30 miles away. There was a large oil tank aflame on Pulau Bukum, and using that as a beacon we started off. As dawn broke we were some way from Singapore and had just landed at a small island. During the day we waited ashore, keeping an eye open for anyone who might be there. But nothing happened to disturb the calm of this tropical island. During the day we made substantial pads for our hands (which had suffered through rowing) from mango leaves.

After dusk we embarked again, and headed due west. The night was uneventful and extremely monotonous. Dawn came and with it depression. We had left Singapore forty hours before and by our calculations should now be able to see the Sumatran coast. Water and food were running short. About 1000 hours we sighted a small white sail on the starboard bow —or as the sepoy who originally sighted it remarked: "On the same side as the whole in the boat, Sahib."

After much waving of a shirt tied to an oar we attracted the attention of the fisherman. He offered to pilot us to another island called Murro, where we were assured a substantial launch was obtainable for about 100 dollars, which we luckily possessed. Arriving on the island, things looked promising, but on making inquiries we found that the motor launch belonged to two Malayans, who were loath to part with it, even for double its value.

Our friend took us to a small shed, where we ate ravenously off rice and fish. Later that evening we managed to persuade the Malayan owner to let us have his boat, and with ample rations and water provided by some other helpers, and with the

aid of a piece of paper on which were diagrams, we set out. Our craft went along at about 4 knots. At dawn we sighted the point we were making for, reputed to be about 10 miles from the coast. At 1000 hours we heard the intermittent drone of three bombers flying very high. We turned off the engine in order to lessen any chance of the wash from the propeller attracting attention, and lay down on the deck. We saw the 'planes pass over and restarted the engine.

Hardly had we done so when we saw a bomber had broken formation and was turning back on its course. We turned the engine off again and as he came round our stern we jumped into the water. At a height of about 500 feet one bomb was released, and we all dived. When I came to the surface it was to find that one of our party was missing, and the launch was beginning to settle down. We tried to locate our casualty, but without success.

Selecting a nearby island we swam to it. Water was a prime necessity, and by digging with the aid of steel helmets we managed to locate some, though it was very muddy. A pair of khaki trousers acted as a slow but sure filter. For three days we occupied ourselves in building a bamboo hut, and on the fifth day we spotted a substantial launch with a dinghy in tow, well off shore.

Our shirts failing to attract attention this time, we decided to fire off our last two rounds of pistol ammunition. This did the trick, and slowly they hove to and we could see three soldiers getting into the dinghy. They were Dutch, and after putting us aboard the dinghy we embarked on the launch and headed once again for Sumatra. On all sides we met with warm hospitality, although the Dutch population now had their own worries.

After a 300-mile journey on top of a bus we eventually reached Padang, on the west coast of Sumatra. There I found a number of our casualties in the military hospital, and was able to relieve a Dutch M. O. for a few days. A week later news came that a British destroyer had arrived in the harbour. The Captain agreed to take us and our casualties to Ceylon, and four and a half days later we landed once more on friendly soil.

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION—PAST AND FUTURE

By the Hon. Harold Nicolson, M.P. *

IN LOOKING at the reactions of British public opinion towards foreign countries and events, I have often noticed that our optimism takes refuge in certain comfortable phrases. It is a very dangerous mental habit. "Human nature at bottom is the same the world over"; "War settles everything"; and "Collective Security" are instances. Another phrase which today is beginning to undermine our commonsense is "Federal Union." The phrase is catching on. It seems to be something new, but in fact it is a matter to which few people are giving serious thought.

There are a great variety of federal theories. Some believe in world federation, some in a federation of English-speaking peoples, some in all sorts of federation, but all these varying forms have two principles in common. One is that in international affairs there should be a surrender of sovereignty, which sounds very republican to some people, but which means (if it means anything) that a nation will consent to be ruled by the opinion of other nations as to its vital interests.

If people take it as that and accept it, well and good, but what I am so frightened about is that this phrase "surrender of sovereignty" will seem a great, wonderful, idealistic action which will produce results by itself.

In dealing with international organization it is tremendously important not merely to think of the facts before you think of the theory, but always to take concrete instances, and in the light of them to examine your particular theory. I think this war will show, as the 20 years since 1919 have shown, that idealism is not enough. It is not enough to think of some lovely theory and vary the facts so that they fit the theory.

For instance, this phrase "surrender of sovereignty" means that we should be governed by the opinion of other people in our own vital interests. Suppose the federal authority decided that in the interests of world peace it would be a good thing if Asiatic emigration were allowed into Australia; Australia would be opposed, we should back her and we should be outvoted.

* In an address to the Royal Empire Society in London.

What happens then? That is the question which must be answered.

Take another instance; the federal authority may decide that in the economic interests of the world it would be desirable that piecegoods should be manufactured in those areas where cotton is actually produced and where labour is very cheap. I do not suppose the representatives of Lancashire (England) would agree to that. It would entail enormous sacrifices, but our objections would be outvoted. Would that be popular? Apply similar instances to the United States and ask yourself whether any United States administration would be prepared to make sacrifices where their vital interests were concerned, on the vote of other people.

There would be a Federal Parliament elected, to which the Federal Council would be responsible. That sounds lovely, but how many seats are to be given to each country and on what principle? There is no democratic answer. One cannot say that the powerful countries will be given more seats than non-powerful countries, or that the old countries will be given more than young countries, nor that advanced or civilized countries will be given more than unadvanced or uncivilized.

They will have to go back to the democratic system of one man, one vote, and you obviously get, inevitably, to the point where you have one vote for every million inhabitants of the country concerned, which leads to a position which nobody but a fanatic would deny was utterly impossible. China would have 420 seats, India 360, Japan 90. Germany 80, Great Britain 45, Australia 6 and New Zealand 2. The British Empire would be in an overwhelming permanent minority. Would we place our interests at the disposal of an elected body wherein it would be impossible for us to get a majority vote?

When people discuss international organization the ideas and ideals of the federal unionists blur their minds. I wish to bring home to you as urgently as I can that international organization can never be viewed on the shifting sands of reason. It must always be based upon the rock of organized force. That is the thing we have to get into our heads. Fortunately we have very considerable experience. We have had for 20 years an international organization, and if we analyse, examine and study the workings of the League of Nations, we shall find, I think, that that institution and its Covenant and Charter are about the most intelligent form of international organization which the mind of man has yet devised.

There has always been in the past a tendency to international organization. The individual expanded into the family, the tribe into the city state, the city state into the community. Even the Greeks, who were the most individualistic people in the world, had some sort of League of Nations to advise and sometimes to decide affairs which were not always merely the affairs of the local city.

England became united under the Danish menace, and the United States only became united after the most horrible civil war history has ever known. Force makes for unity and human beings left to themselves have a natural tendency to dis-unite. Therefore we must learn from the experience of the League, whose constitution I consider and will always consider to be about the best written document ever conceived—the wisest, the most sensible, the most precise, written constitution which can be devised for international organization.

I am perfectly certain the League failed not because it was a bad idea, but because it was too good, because it was too idealistic, because it was based upon an assumption of international behaviour, of good international conduct which, had it been a correct assumption, would have rendered any League unnecessary. If people were as good as that; there would be no need for a police force. The League created a body of law but did not create a force to see that that law was carried into effect.

In the 20 years' experience of the League we did learn many useful and encouraging lessons for the future of world organization. We learned that it is possible to create an international secretariat from men of great ability who developed a League mind, a loyalty to something quite outside the interests of their own particular countries. The Secretariat of the League was a great creation, which, if properly expanded and used, might be of the very greatest value.

There were three main mistakes. It was first based upon the assumption that peace and the desire for peace was natural to human beings and that if an atmosphere of reasonableness could be created, compulsive powers would not be needed to enforce doctrines. The second thing we have learned is that the ultimate sanction for law-making must be not ultimate or potential, but actually convincing. The League promised to do everything for everybody, everywhere, at any time, and the League failed very largely because of its inflationary tendency. The third lesson is that men will not readily go to

war (which is a horrible thing to endure) except in their own interests or in interests which they realize to be their own.

What I think we ought to do, what our minds should be working at, is not to scrap the League of Nations, not to scrap the Covenant, but to examine with great care where that splendid machine went wrong in the last 20 years and to consider what parts of it can now be improved. That is the way to approach international organization in the future, not by starting a new idea which is not borne out by the facts, but working on the very close experience we have had and improving where we have gone wrong.

It is to-day easier to indicate the improvements needed than it was in 1919. We now know that the League is no good at all unless it has power. We also know that it is very difficult to give such an organization the appallingly complicated apparatus needed to enforce that power, but unfortunately in modern warfare the aeroplane has become so important that it is not impossible to devise some method for post-war settlement in which the air forces, both civilian and military, of all the members of the League should come under the League, and that will give the power it has hitherto lacked.

The second great necessity is not to allow the Covenant to be broken within the tiniest point without punishment. We must never have another Manchuria or Abyssinia, we must not let one single instance pass without mobilisation of the League. We must have areas of responsibility; we must say if the peace is broken within a certain geographical area we will go to war.

These suggestions are not wholly made without experience, and it is a comforting thought to know that we are getting closer to that sort of line of action. The Atlantic Charter has laid it down almost as a principle that aggressor powers can be defined as aggressor powers; it gets away from the theory that human nature is the same all the time; it lays it down that aggressor powers shall not be denied anything except the power to go to war. Thirdly, the Atlantic Charter makes it clear that areas of co-operation are not only possible but necessary. An outstanding example of the development of this idea is the recent Greek-Yugoslav and Czech-Polish agreements. This is about as far as federation need, to my mind, go.

I look forward to a League of Nations which will be inspired with very much the same ideals as the old League, which will work with very much the same machinery, but which will have infinitely more power, will be more efficient, will not allow

little slips and exceptions, and, working through an air force controlled through League agencies, and working through areas of responsibility will give conviction to all law-breakers, and establish an elastic, non-rigid system by which alone peace can be maintained.

TRIBAL CONTROL ON THE FRONTIER

By B. Bromhead

LORD CHELMSFORD, then Viceroy, made this reference to Waziristan when speaking in Delhi on August 20, 1920: "We hoped that if they (the Mahsuds) were left alone they would leave us alone. This hope has, I regret to say, proved fallacious, and the time has come when we can no longer shut our eyes to the fact... We have decided with the approval of His Majesty's Government that our forces shall remain in occupation of Central Waziristan, that mechanical transport roads shall be constructed throughout the country,... and that our present line of posts shall be extended as may seem necessary. It is not possible to set any limit to our period of occupation..."

That same year saw the complete defeat of the Mahsuds and the deep penetration of their country by military columns. Owing to a post-War lack of funds, little further action was taken until the operations leading to the military occupation of Razmak in early 1923, but the present policy in dealing with the Waziristan problem was given birth to in 1920.

The basis of the policy was to be control of the tribes by military forces stationed deep in the heart of tribal country, with mobility increased by the construction of mechanical transport roads. Political control was to be further supported by civil armed forces of Scouts to replace the old Frontier Militias. These latter had been drawn in large part from the areas in which they served, and the local elements as then constituted had not been able to withstand the current of revolt. The new Corps of Scouts were to be enlisted from men of a more reliable composition and foreign to the areas in which they served, and in addition their standards of training, administration and equipment were to be greatly raised.

Speaking in the Indian Legislative Assembly in 1923, the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India said: "The Government policy is a Forward Policy in a very real sense. It is a policy of progress. It is a big step forward on the long and laborious road towards the pacification through civilization of the most backward and inaccessible and therefore the most truculent and aggressive tribes on our border. Come what may, civilization must be made to penetrate these inaccessible mountains,

for from this inaccessibility arises the economic stringency, crass ignorance, wanton insolence and barbaric cruelty which spring from a sense of security. These are diseases for which civilization in some form or shape is the only cure. It may be thought visionary to talk of the civilization of the Mahsud but you must take long views on the frontier . . ."

The policy was in reality a compromise between the old Forward Policy and the Close Border Policy and was designed primarily to keep the peace of the border, to prevent raiding, and gradually to improve economic conditions and standards of civilization. It was hoped to do this by peaceful means without resort to military force. A further requirement of this policy has also been to prevent large-scale incursions by our tribesmen into Afghanistan.

The object of this article is to review the years that have elapsed since this policy was started, to look at the results of this military occupation, and to make suggestions for the future.

As the first years passed Waziristan settled down to a time of quiet, so much so that it seemed as if the problem had been solved.

One matter of interest during this time was the help given to Nadir Khan by the Waziristan tribes in his defeat of Bachao Saqab and the capture of Kabul. This and later incursions by our tribes in attempts to interfere with events in Afghanistan show the necessity of some form of control over their country, and also indicate the degree to which they are drawn towards the affairs of Kabul. If on the one hand the tribes are affected by what happens in Afghanistan, they are also to an increasing extent influenced by events in British India, and so before going further, concurrent political happenings will be mentioned, for the birth of the new policy in Waziristan synchronized with the start of democratic control in India, and it is obvious that the application of this policy must be in tune with future Indian political developments.

One of the first Acts of the New Indian Legislative Assembly constituted under the Reforms Act of 1919, was to pass a non-official elected members' resolution to recommend changes in the Frontier Province's administration, and Government responded by appointing the North-West Frontier Enquiry Committee, 1922, under the Presidentship of Mr. (now Sir) Denys Bray. The Bray Committee was not specially intended to consider the tribal problem but could not ignore it and in its report made the statement that "Forced by the sheer process of reasoning on the

majority of our Committee . . . in existing conditions it is not merely inexpedient, for all practical purposes it is impossible, to separate the Districts and Tracts." This Committee was one of the first of many signs to show that the Indian politician reciprocated the interest taken by the tribesman in his progress.

The Frontier remained peaceful for some years preceding 1930. In that year, however, political repercussions from administered territory jolted the tribal areas into a lively appreciation of the fact that change was in the air, and ripples of unrest flowed in varying strength across the Frontier, stressing the close unity of the Districts and Tribal Tracts.

From 1930 onwards, a period of comparative peace again followed in Waziristan, but to the North, where perhaps the tribes were more affected by political intrigue and less under armed control, military operations had to be undertaken against the Mohmands and their neighbouring tribes.

Further South also feelings of unrest gradually increased with the years and with political changes, culminating in the election of a Congress Ministry to the newly-formed Provincial Legislature of the Frontier Province. These feelings of unrest were further stirred by inter-communal hatred brought about by such incidents as the publication of the Rangila Rasul newspaper article, the Shahidganj Mosque dispute and the Islam Bibi case, so that once more, under the direction of the Faquir of Ipi, the drums began to beat. In 1936, military columns, engaged in what was meant to be a peace-march through a somewhat inflamed area, were attacked and the repercussions have not yet died down.

With the outbreak of the present World War fresh currents swept through the tribal areas and enemy propaganda aided by money has made more difficult the question of control. Despite this the tribal areas have kept remarkably quiet. This quiet is due to the neutrality of Afghanistan, the attitude of Turkey, and a fairly shrewd judgment on world affairs aided partly, perhaps, by the fact that the dreary succession of lies turned out by Axis propagandists are losing their sting.

So much for the story. What are the results of this policy after 22 years? What are the good and bad points connected with it? Are any changes necessary in a changing world?

On the credit side it may be said that a considerable degree of control has been exercised and has prevented serious Mahsud and Wazir interference with Afghan affairs. The tribes have

also to a great extent been deprived of their inaccessibility. To a small degree ignorance and economic stringency may have been reduced, but I doubt if it can be truthfully said that civilization had made more than a very little progress.

On the debit side it seems that we have made no real or sufficient progress economically, socially or educationally, and "the big step forward in the long and laborious road towards the pacification through civilization of the most backward and inaccessible and, therefore, the most truculent and aggressive tribes on one border" has turned out to be a painful and scarcely visible movement. Tribal discipline has deteriorated, and although control has been kept to an appreciable degree it has been only at an enormous military expenditure, and with an increased bitterness, whilst the safety of the administered territory adjoining tribal territory has not been satisfactorily maintained.

To my mind the following are the reasons for these conditions:

Control has been kept in so far that it has curbed any attempt from Waziristan to invade Afghanistan. This has been done by ground and air threat to the base of such a movement, and by air action against actual hostile movement. Ground action cannot intercept such movement for geographical reasons, but even if troops were withdrawn, the threat of ground action remains as the inaccessibility of the tribes has been overcome, not only by roads but by the ever-increasing efficiency of mechanical vehicles, and of modern weapons compared to the tribesmen's arms, and lastly by the air, and the possible use of air-borne troops.

The reasons for the degree, or lack of degree to which social, educational and economic standards have been raised are in part psychological and in part due to a Finance which cannot support military expenditure and social expenditure at the same time.

The causes of an increase in bitterness are traceable to a large extent to military occupation and the intense dislike of the tribes to the breaking of their purdah by foreign forces. Tribal areas vary in this degree, and there are areas adjoining British territory, and those of strategic importance such as the Khyber, which have been used for centuries to the passage of armies and of merchandise and travellers, which are not sensitive.

On the other hand many areas deep in tribal territory are extremely sensitive. It only needs an officer of, say, a Garhwali

or other Hindu unit to consider the reaction of policing a territory such as Garhwal with Pathan tribesmen, to realize the psychological effect of the presence of foreign troops in sensitive areas of tribal territory.

The results of this occupation are that the tribesmen look upon the regular soldier as an enemy and the soldier very naturally reciprocates the feeling. The writer feels that the analogy of troops in aid of the civil power being kept in the background unless vitally required should hold good in sensitive tribal areas. The psychological effect is the same in both, and troops if used should be used "all out".

The reasons for the deterioration of tribal discipline is probably due to the impact of modern thought and ideas amongst the tribesmen, and is naturally aided by ignorance. Tribal areas differ greatly in this respect and in certain areas, such as Baluchistan, the power of the tribal leaders is still considerable, but even here this power has lessened under the reforms carried out by Sir Arthur Parsons. This weakening of feudal power will probably continue, as such a condition will become more of an anachronism with the years, but the trouble is that as yet there is very little to replace it, and power is apt to devolve to the fanatical or to those natural tribal leaders thrown up in times of unrest who are generally hostile to Government. Control by tribal Jirgah is therefore weak, and unless some force is placed at the disposal of such Jirgahs to maintain discipline and until such time as public opinion is strengthened by education and civilization, this ill-discipline is bound to continue.

The reasons for raidings are chiefly the results of tribal unrest. Raiding is obviously encouraged where control is weak. To the mind of the writer it would appear that from the point of view of control our defence against raiding is not efficient.

There are large gaps in the defence line. This defence in many areas has no depth and does not work in close co-operation. Defence against raiding should be under one control. Such defence should be in depth, and the civil armed forces employed in the close protection of the settled districts should be in very intimate touch with the Scouts posts behind them, in tribal territory.

Moreover, I feel that in the main we have been trying to deal with something intangible, an unrest in the shape of a spasmodic and fanatical revolt, with the too-solid weapon of military force, and that although the idea and ideals of our policy are right, the machinery for implementing them is psychologically wrong, and if possible a machinery more suited to combat

elusive guerillas and at the same time more in sympathy with the tribes is necessary.

There are those that quote the years before 1930 as an example of the success of the present policy. Are they right? I think that the peace of those years was due to the following facts. The Waziristan tribes had suffered from severe defeat and like any other people required time to recuperate. Money due to contracts on new roads and posts eased the economic situation. As far as the Frontier was concerned there was a comparative political lull, and there were no immediate crises of a religious nature sufficient to stir tribal feelings. After 1930 the pendulum began to swing back, and aided by ignorance and intolerance and sufficient religious stimulus, a fanatical minority won control.

A very experienced Frontier official once said that there are no short cuts to the Frontier problem, and that you must let the stone wear itself smooth. This is true. A long view is necessary in Frontier policy, and the making of a road from A to B will not solve the frontier problem, though it may assist control.

One important question has not been mentioned, and this is disarmament. Forcible disarmament might have been carried out after 1920-21 and 1922, if Finance had backed the necessary operations, but the chance was lost, and to forcibly disarm the tribes now would probably involve too great a military expenditure to make it feasible. It seems as if the problem will have to be solved through education and propaganda. We must take a long view in the matter, but it is obvious that until such time as there is eventual disarmament a policy of progress and civilization will be made more difficult.

There are finally certain new factors which did not exist when the present policy and the means for implementing it were formed, and which must be considered in making any suggestions as to the future. The first is that as a result of the Cripps Mission to India the tempo of political thought has been quickened, and the idea of Pakistan brought to the fore. The working of any policy must fit into this political future and in such a future will a "foreign" army fit into tribal control? Secondly, I would like to stress the very great difference there is between the factor of efficiency and dependability of the present Frontier Corps as compared to the old Frontier Militias. These latter failed, not only because of an unreliable composition, but because they were exposed to rumour and intrigue as well as to

hostile attack in small isolated posts, ill-adapted for defence and out of touch with the outer world. They were, according to modern standards, ill-trained and ill-equipped. These factors no longer hold good.

Lastly, if it were humanly possible to release any troops from the duty of tribal control at the present time, they could presumably be of great use elsewhere.

I suggest, therefore, that as far as possible tribal control should be made the duty of the Civil Armed Forces, and that military forces be withdrawn to the greatest possible extent from all duties on the Frontier other than strategical. In saying this I realize that a deterioration of tribal control would affect strategic problems, and that this must be guarded against, so that the rate of withdrawal of the military forces now engaged in the work of tribal control must be governed by this factor.

In broad outline I suggest a partial return to the machinery of control encouraged by Lord Curzon, that is as far as possible by policing tribal country through Tribal Militias backed by a Frontier Force developed from the present Frontier Corps and other Civil Armed Forces. I suggest this difference from Lord Curzon's system of control in so far that such a Frontier Corps must continue to occupy vital areas such as Waziristan to the depth necessary to exert political control and to prevent raiding into the settled districts, and also that the whole of the Civil Armed Forces, both Militias and Frontier Corps, must be united under a single control. The Civil Armed Forces, as at present constituted, have certain weaknesses which need to be eradicated and which vary with the different Corps concerned, but in one respect there is a common weakness in that they are divided into too many water-tight compartments of control with resulting lack of co-operation and economy of Force.

As the Bray Committee stated: "It is not merely inexpedient for all practical purposes: it is impossible to separate the District and the Tracts," and in the same way that the Districts and the Tribal Tracts are inter-related, so are adjoining Tribal Agencies and Provinces. Tribal immigrations, the movements of raiders and of outlaws, and the still more intangible movements of unrest, are no respecters of paper boundaries, and to control these efficiently the pooling and quick switching of forces may be necessary, and unity of control essential. This same weakness in a particular degree prevents an efficient defence against raiding into the settled districts.

The Frontier constabulary in the plains and the Frontier Corps in the Tribal Tracts are at present two separate compartments, so that even where there is depth there is no intimate co-operation. In certain areas there is no depth, as in the Lower Shaktu, in Bhittani country, in the Gomal and the Zilli Khel winter-grazing grounds near Kashmir Kar south of the Gomal, for in these areas there are no posts held by Frontier Corps, so that in the adjoining Districts the single line of far-spaced Frontier constabulary posts is little deterrent to determined raiders. The main difficulty in the close protection of the villages in the settled districts is a lack of information, or delayed information, combined with the distances involved.

The answer to this problem, apart from better intelligence and the means of conveying it, is an increased mobility of the anti-raiding units and closer co-operation between the forces concerned, especially between those that first gain contact and the posts situated at a sufficient depth to enable interception. The writer in dealing with a somewhat similar problem of time and space in the Zhob Valley is forming a *Chiga* or pursuit party carried in four-wheel drive Marmon Harrington trucks with an excellent cross-country performance. Their primary duty is to get contact with raiders, and they are to be supported where the country is suitable by infantry carried in $4\frac{1}{2}$-ton lorries to the nearest point of disembarkation. These lorries are armoured, and in place of 4 ponies and their riders, can carry a platoon of infantry.

Both armoured lorries and cross-country trucks are fitted to mount light automatics, the latter being fixed on gun-ring mountings as fitted to the old type of Army co-operation plane, and these automatics if necessary give sufficient protection for the vehicles to move independently once their personnel have disembarked. But, as the writer knows from bitter experience, the first essentials are good inter-communication and co-operation, and these must be combined with defence in plenty of depth to allow interception, and above all a single control.

Apart from the technique of dealing with raids, a further need is a very high standard of training, and in this the present Frontier Constabulary Units, with a very small cadre of police officers lacking military training, cannot be expected to attain to quite the same degree as Frontier Corps trained and led by a larger cadre of military officers. This is said with no thought of disparagement to the fine fighting spirit of the constabulary.

A further factor affecting efficiency is that, whilst certain areas such as those policed by Frontier Constabulary and Corps—such as the Zhob Militia—are on the whole quiet, other areas such as those policed by the South Waziristan Scouts and the Tochi Scouts are more or less continually involved in operations, which in the long run are a severe strain on the personnel of the Corps and make routine training difficult, whilst the Corps stationed in quiet areas suffer from the fact that the personnel lack operational experience and a spirit of keenness is hard to maintain.

Taking into consideration these various factors, the following is my suggestion for the formation of a Civil Armed Force to take over the duties of tribal control to the fullest possible extent:

All Civil Armed Forces, including the Frontier Constabulary, in the N.W.F.P. and in Baluchistan, should be amalgamated into a single Corps, for the sake of argument to be called the North-West Frontier Corps. This Corps would include all existing local Corps or Militias enlisted from local tribes for the policing of their own country and the formation of new ones, whenever such a course was possible (for instance I would advocate a Bhittani Militia for their own country, as also an Afridi Militia to police the Khajuri plain and Jamrud).

Such local Corps, if raised in time, would provide an incentive to fight against external aggression, and would form the nucleus of a guerilla movement, should their country be overrun. In addition, a Corps of Scouts would be formed from all the available stable elements of the Frontier Corps, whose duty would be to police the areas where political control was vital, to protect the settled districts from raiding where that duty could not be done reliably by local Militias, to form a strong support for such local Corps and assist in their training, and to form a central Reserve for operations anywhere along the Frontier strong enough to operate without Military support.

There are sufficient numbers in the Frontier Constabulary, Zhob Militia, and two Corps of Waziristan Scouts, to form the proposed Corps of Scouts. Additional recruitment would only be necessary in the case of some local Militias whose numbers could stand the strain of extra enlistment for Home Defence. The Corps of Scouts would be subdivided into independent and self-contained wings, under the command of a Wing Commander and necessary staff, and interchangeable along the Frontier.

The whole Corps would be under the Central control of an Inspecting Officer Frontier Corps; and decentralization would be provided by a subdivision into Areas. The Operational Command of Scout Wings and of any local Militias in the area would be centralized under the Commandant of the Area, who would have a permanent staff to control his Command. The areas would include those districts now policed by Frontier constabulary, and those areas at present unpoliced, such as the lower Shaktu, etc. Scouts Wings would be interchangeable from one area to another, their normal tour being, say, two years in any area. The number of Scouts Wings in an area would vary with the commitments of the area. Certain local Corps such as the Chitral Scouts and Gilgit Scouts who could not conveniently be included in an area would remain independently under the I.O.F.C.

To give the necessary punch to enable such a Force to take on heavy opposition, a support wing would be necessary with light armoured vehicles and a proportion of light artillery. I suggest that the Cavalry at D.I.K. could hand over their somewhat antiquated equipment thus freeing their personnel for other use.

The I.O.F.C. would presumably be graded as a Brigadier and given the necessary staff, as he is already more than overworked and understaffed.

Apart from the duty of enforcing control, these Corps should be made the spearhead of a vigorous attempt to spread education and improve social conditions.

The Officers for local Militias should be eventually found from their own tribes as opportunity occurs, and the idea should be that they should form a real "Home Guard" and also enforce the legitimate orders of Jirgahs subject to the approval of the local Government. This is an ideal and its attainment will vary with the tribe concerned, the progress of social ideas, and education. The Mahsuds say of themselves with sad irony, "We are an untrustworthy people". At present they are apt to be, and with such a tribe a very long view is necessary, but all tribes are not so unreliable.

An experiment on these lines is being made with a certain tribe in the Zhob Militia, with the idea that they should police their territory under the son of the tribal Nawab, who has been granted an emergency commission in the Militia. The latter is not educated to the standard required for the Army, and is indeed

only in the process of learning English, but it must be realized that the standards of some local Corps of this nature enlisted from rather wild material cannot be expected to attain "Foreign" standards, although this naturally does not refer to old Corps, such as the Kurram Militia, and that this standard must depend on their own tribal standards, assisted by education, and amalgamation to the more efficient and stable elements of Frontier Corps for example and training. There will almost certainly be setbacks before the stone wears smooth. The cost must be far cheaper than military control, and it would form a sympathetic channel for the educational and other civilizing agencies which so far have been neglected.

FLOATING DOWN THE INDUS

By Flying Officer C. D. Dunford Wood

"FLOATING DOWN the Indus—A suggestion for Ten Days' Leave," which appeared in the Journal some time ago appealed to me so strongly that I decided to make the trip. I recently did so, and the following notes will bring the previous contribution up to date, and, I hope, will be the means of inducing others to enjoy a happy ten days' leave.

I was fortunate in that the S. S. O., Mari Indus, kindly let me have his head mali, Anar Khan. He is the best shikari for this stretch of the river, knowing it like the back of his hand and having taken innumerable shooting parties down. The S. S. O. fixed the bandobast at five days' notice. Shikari and boatmen cost Rs. 140, and Anar Khan required Rs. 50 advance for initial expenses. Looking through his chits the average rate appeared to be Rs. 120 and Rs. 130, so perhaps the extra Rs. 10 was due to "war costs."

Trying to do the shoot as cheaply as possible, I borrowed *degchi,* frying-pan and kettle, cutlery, Hurricane *batties* and oil, and gun cleaning materials. I took a box of tinned stores, and another containing potatoes, *ghee, atta,* etc. A valise and weapons completed my kit.

On arrival at Mari Indus, after breakfast in the station, Anar Khan met me, and whilst my kit was going on board rowed me across to Kalabagh. This was an interesting excursion as, apart from buying eggs, milk, wood, a *chattie,* and a few seers of coarse salt for the mugger that Anar Khan insisted would be shot, he showed me round the bazaar and related tales of its murky past. Table lamps and small articles such as ink stands, made of the local pink salt, can be bought very cheaply. We then gave some Gurkhas a lift across the river with a load of cauliflowers, two of which I obtained as bakhshish, and cast off about 9-30 a.m., the first stop being a few miles down river for clay and stones to build a fire place.

The boat was one of the smaller salt boats, which carry their loads down stream sometimes as far as Sukkur, it being cheaper than by rail. Forty feet long, and about nine broad, it had a small fo'c's'le for'ard, where my bearer lived, and a small well where he did the cooking and entertained the crew to morning

tea. Amid-ships a room had been rigged up for the Sahib of *chattai* nailed to poles, the whole being lined inside with violet coloured cloth. It would take about two and a half charpoys comfortably, and two sportsmen could get their camp beds and kit in quite easily. On top of this room was a small platform where stood the helmsman, and half-way up a fifty foot oar (adaptable to take a sail). There I sat scanning the shore for mugger, or merely taking the evening air. Aft was a sort of miniature poop, in which lived four boatmen, Anar Khan, his two small boys, and a set of hookas. Sanitary arrangements were conducted ashore; washing was just a matter of leaping over the side with a bar of soap.

I opened the scoring after lunch with a direct hit on a large turtle, a long range shot with a .22, and, with thoughts of turtle soup, went ashore for it, going up to my thighs in quicksands in the process. But all my bearer could suggest was turtle hash, and the insides looking so repulsive I threw it away, retaining the case as a trophy. These turtles sit by the water's edge on mud flats, with their heads sticking up in the air like old fashioned monitors, and are very wary, launching themselves at the slightest provocation. Having seen no mugger, we tied up for the night at Ganda, where I shot black partridge and quail that evening and the next morning, with the aid of two local villagers and a very able pariah dog who proved to be no mean retriever.

My next shoot was alongside four grass huts called Kopri-walla, but though birds were plentiful the long thick grass made shooting well-nigh impossible. On sighting some mallard we set off in the small boat to try and get within range, the drill being that you lie flat on your face on the floor boards, with gun at hand, whilst Anar Khan, crouching behind the counter, pushes the boat closer and closer. However, we grounded on a shoal, and in the ensuing confusion the duck made off.

Below Kalakhel the first mugger was encountered. The look-out sighted something after breakfast, but a scout sent down the river bank came back and reported it was only a bundle of grass. Anar Khan then took me away after duck, and, on approaching the grass it suddenly came to life and slipped into the water, so we hastily made for the near shore and hid ourselves in the jungle. Some twenty minutes later, after a very careful reconnaissance, a large mugger crept out on to a sand bank just opposite us, about one hundred yards away. Using Anar Khan's posterior as a sand bag I drew a bead on where I

reckoned its neck ought to be, and to my surprise it took the count. After skinning it the boatmen hailed some low caste mugger-eating fishermen, met with further down, and when they heard the good news, they left their work and hurried up the bank to compete with the vultures.

You should not fail to visit Hiranwala for pigeon. About one and a half miles inland is a scattered wood, carpeted with dense "sar" grass, of the razor blade variety, through which you force your way from tree to tree. Then it is just a question of how many birds you want, as they have not been attacked for over two years, and the hundreds I saw became thousands in winter. I thought that I was doing fine, until I discovered that no one had brought a knife with which to "hallal" and that I would have to eat the lot myself, so I packed in then and there. Some five miles away is Kundian Junction where one of the boatmen can be sent to fetch any extra stores required from the refreshment room.

Stage by stage we drifted down, with sorties every morning in the ship's life-boat to search the shallows for duck and mugger, and to shoot various odd birds which the crew fancied for their dinners. Some of their requests were rather outrageous and had to be firmly refused. We never really got within range of the duck, the only ones I shot being with the .22.

The partridge shooting morning and evening never becomes monotonous, whether your eye is in or not. If you have been shooting badly the day before there is always the knowledge that you have nothing in the larder for lunch, which I always found increased my skill. At one nameless village a local guide led us through a thicket of tangled grass, that became taller and taller, then finally the ground gave way underfoot and he lost us in a smelly churned-up bog. After half an hour we eventually managed to fight our way out, our only clue the sound of cattle bells ahead.

The villagers were very keen to help the shoots, and though I always hired but two of them and impressed the boatmen as beaters, cattle and crops were abandoned, the line grew and grew, and at the finishing post it usually meant bakhshish for about ten. Add to this the price of cartridges nowadays and the birds were worth several rupees a head! But an average shot should easily be able to provide for the whole crew, whereas I only managed to feed the afterguard. An acceptable rate of bakhshish was three annas per man for a morning or an evening shoot, and two annas for small boys. Only once was there trouble, and that was one

young man who insisted he was worth three chokras. But after hearing some rather pointed suggestions on the part of the crew he expressed his complete satisfaction and departed.

Field glasses and mosquito net are essential, the former for the mugger watch and the net as protection against the hordes of famished mosquitoes that embark at every port. I found a small tool set handy for constructing a rifle rack, to put up odd nails on which to hang things, and also for re-bending the straightened hooks which the cabin boy baited with *atta* and trailed over the stern, though I never saw him catch anything but turtles.

Anar Khan was an entertaining companion. He talked a most intelligible Urdu, having learnt it at school out of a book like the rest of us, and was ready to discuss anything. He regaled me down the river with local history and water front gossip, and with anecdotes of previous clients. I, for my part, used to tell simple stories out of "Hagha Dagha" some of which brought the house down. He and the skipper, his brother-in-law Fateh Mohammed, managed all the shoots expertly, and when he saw my light go out at night he would order silence for all hands, and I used to fall asleep to the music of the river and the angry buzzing of frustrated anopheles.

On arrival at the bridge of boats, four miles from Dera Ismail Khan, I sent my bearer in for a tonga which cost Rs. 2/8/- for the fifteen miles to Darya Khan Station, plus eight annas toll. Here there is a refreshment room where you can get lunch out of tins, but a better plan is to shoot extra specially well the day before and then take a cold meal with you.

I brought all my tinned stores back again, save for one tin of bully used the first day, having gorged myself on game, fried potatoes, and chappaties, with an occasional egg in lieu of quail for breakfast. Milk and eggs seemed easy enough to get, and there was a drink of "lassi" waiting at most villages after the morning shoot.

The end of October, when I went, is not the best time of year. But if you go in December or January the mugger get so cold swimming that they spend most of the day basking in the sun, and you will also get quail, grey and black partridge, sisi and chikor at Kaffir Kot, pigeon, geese, duck, a few snipe, and if I had been a bit quicker on the draw at Kala Khel I might have had some pig. Actually, if you are keen on roast pork you can arrange to be woken up by a villager when the pig have set to

work in his fields, and then, if there is a moon and you care to secrete yourself nearby and hope that they will come near enough for a night shot, you may be lucky. I tried a few times but they never came within effective range.

My total expenditure, with 200 cartridges and "home comforts" (but excluding rail fares) was Rs. 225/-. Deduct from this, say Rs. 50/-, as an average ten days messing, drinks and visits to the local cinema, and you have only spent Rs. 175/- extra. Rs. 140 of that is for hire of boat, so it is a very cheap holiday really.

A first-aid kit would have been useful, especially if there is to be work for a tin opener, and I could have done with some beer after the evening shoots, instead of whisky and boiled Indus which was all I had. The water tastes all right but you have to get used to the smell, a nasty one, reminiscent of sewers, (unless it was my thermos or the chattie).

This is all the advice I have to offer to anyone thinking of going down the river, beyond to say that it is an ideal trip for two. Larger parties would require tents and have to camp ashore, but then I feel that furniture, hot baths and four-course dinners would creep in, and the whole charm of the simple life be destroyed.

THE INTELLIGENCE SCHOOL, INDIA

BY AN EX-STUDENT

"EYES AND ye see not, ears and ye hear not," said my Brigadier patiently, after reading the Intelligence Report I had prepared for him. A half forgotten saying, "Brigadiers get the Intelligence Officers they deserve", flashed through my mind, but there are times when silence is golden. "So", continued the Brigadier, "we have at last got a vacancy at the Intelligence School for you. Now don't forget, I want you to come back here, unless G. S. I. claim you on account of your languages for some special job. We must not be too parochial."

Sand, dust, flies, sweat and more sand is my memory of the Sind desert and the journey to Karachi. Why locate the School in Karachi? I wondered. Before long I understood why.

"Welcome gentlemen", boomed the Commandant in his opening address to me and forty odd other students in the rather imposing lecture hall. "I hope you will enjoy your six weeks' course here."

The School, I soon found consisted of: (*a*) the Officers' Wing in an impressive old building; (*b*) the V.C.O. and N.C.O. Wing for 80 students in the ultra modern buildings across the road; (*c*) Field Security Wing, which trains classes of British and Indian students, forms them into sections and sends them to their formations; (*d*) interrogation classes for a few selected officers with a high standard in specially useful languages or long residence in now enemy countries; (*e*) special language refresher courses; and (*f*) Air Photo Interpretation Wing of 20 officer-students, some very senior. This course is run by newly-arrived R. A. F. and Army officers from England.

Primarily the object of the School is to train and select officers for Intelligence appointments in Brigades, Divisions, Corps, Armies and G.H.Q. and for Intelligence units and a host of odd Intelligence appointments in India and overseas. We are reminded that we are here not only to absorb knowledge, but to learn how to impart that knowledge. When we return to our formations or areas we have to be prepared to run short courses for unit and other Intelligence officers and other ranks.

Responsibilities of the unit "I" officer, we find, have increased considerably, and he should have a full-time job attending to

the "I" training in his unit. In addition, he has to be in charge of training the snipers in their Intelligence duties, teaching Navigation or guiding, Security, Censorship, Publicity and Propaganda. Oh! for a chat now with the senior officer who once told me there was nothing for "I" personnel to do till we meet a real enemy; and that then we would find the Intelligence section would train itself!

Meeting a few old friends on the course, I soon found we were placed in syndicates by Formation Intelligence teams, two of them from divisions and one is for a Corps. I envied the fellows in these syndicates, as they all knew each other, and felt very much at home from the first day of the course. They also had the V.C.O.'s from their formations on the course in the V.C.O. Wing, and often worked with them in various exercises. A team which has lived together, worked and played as a team for six weeks has a certain spirit of mutual co-operation which no amount of liaison can normally achieve.

My syndicate, not a team to begin with, very soon became one, although it was composed largely of officers, from Majors to 2nd Lieutenants, who had resided in various enemy countries and knew different languages. A tough young Regular, a R.A.F. pilot, an Indian Police Officer, a Punjabi barrister, an ex-Customs Officer, a young diplomat, a Calcutta box walla, as he called himself, and a tea planter (recently qualified at the Staff College), an advertising expert, and a language teacher each had some special knowledge of use to Intelligence in one or other of its forms. In discussions and schemes we found that each could teach the others a great deal.

In the last war, we were warned, Intelligence officers were regarded as strange-looking specialists, often highly qualified, and wearing green tabs; IN the Army but not quite OF it. "I" officers must now be very much part of the army. They must be good mixers and avoid water-tight compartments. When need arises, they must be able to fit in with the Navy, the Air Force, Police and Civil Administrations and our allies.

To ensure co-operation we must understand enough about Intelligence in all its branches to be able to fit into the vast "I" organization, to know what others expect of us and what we can expect from them. Never again should we hear of Strat. R. being carried out to obtain information already adequately reported through other channels. Nor should we hear of raids to secure identifications already obtained by another formation.

Secrecy and the need for it is stressed at an early stage, and we soon get into the habit of guarding against indiscreet talk and tactfully "riding off" those in our company bordering on the indiscreet. Servants can understand a great deal more than they appear to, and in clubs and other places lip-readers do exist. We soon cultivate the habit of recognizing the oblique or covert interrogation of those we meet in clubs and elsewhere who wish to know more than concerns them.

Our syllabus is laid out under the headings: Staff duties, information, organization, security, censorship, publicity and propaganda, air subjects, navigation, foreign Armies, interrogation, and exercises embodying some or all of the above.

The last item is the largest and most practical of all. Full use is made of all available resources to provide sound and other effects to produce the atmosphere of work in the field. Some of these exercises continue day and night and under conditions which soon bring home to one the necessity for keeping fit. Imagination has not to be called upon unduly to produce the atmosphere of battle, as real aircraft do dive on our H.Q., and very real and unpleasantly near explosions do cover us with sand in the desolate waste of coastal sand-dunes where this exercise is held. All night the wind blows sand and heavy dew into our "I" offices, representing an "I" lay-out, from a unit to a Corps H.Q., with A.L.O., Security units, Press and Civil authorities represented.

Combined operations from the "I" point of view in the form of a beach landing and recce impressed on me how fit one has to be. I confess I was sea-sick in the patrol vessel which carried us out to sea very early in the morning, and I fear I took only a mild interest in the firing at hostile aircraft or dropping of depth charges *en route*. Over the side down a rope and into a small boat we go, and pull for the desolate hostile shore. There, just short of the breakers, the sailors indicate that from there on through the surf we have to swim, and if we cannot swim, never mind, the breakers will wash us ashore. On completion of our recce we return again to the Patrol vessel. The Directing Staff assure us that despite the alarming looking rollers and breakers they have not yet lost a student.

Few of us could "take it" on the more strenuous exercises, were it not for the conditioning we undergo in the form of daily P. T., swimming, rowing, and running parades; while at night, if you have not studied the stars and compass well enough, you

may flounder through a mangrove swamp all night or lose your party and walk for miles in the sand-dunes.

Perhaps the most popular item of the syllabus is Air Intelligence Liaison, the work of the A.L.O. Although some of us had never flown, before, we soon became "bitten" by the desire to become an A.L.O. We cannot all become A.L.O.s, however, and only those who show a special aptitude are given the additional training in their special duties. Our Instructor-Pilot for this subject is a Cavalry Major wearing the Wings of the I.A.F.* I had not realized that the competition at this School to be an A.L.O. would be so keen. When one considers how much depends on this liaison with the Air Force one realizes that the standard of selection and training must be high.

Security enters into every exercise, and very soon one automatically considers this aspect of every situation. Armies do not always fight in deserts. Sometimes they fight in densely-populated areas where the security problem is perhaps the greatest of all. What can the enemy do? What may the population do? The population is composed of individuals. Consider each one (defeatists say it can't be done). Who is he? Who was he? Every man has a past. Who are his friends? Where is he going? What for? One has to be restlessly inquisitive, it appears, to understand individuals of all types, for then only can one visualize how the population as a whole may react to the enemy agency in our midst when the time is ripe.

During the last week of our course a party of G.S.O.I.s arrive on a visit. Some are from those Divisions which have students on the course, while others are about to take up "I" appointments. Most of them appear to have held interesting "I" appointments at some time or other, and many of us were surprised to find how keenly they entered into discussions with even the very junior among us.

With more than a little regret one comes to the end of six weeks' intensive Intelligence training with a desire to take up an Intelligence appointment where one can pass it on, so that each one down to the Sepoy will realize that he is an indispensable link in the service of Intelligence.

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* The school has its own aircraft out at the flying school.

BACKGROUND NEWS AND VIEWS

This feature includes extracts from Press and platform on a wide variety of topical subjects.

Post-War Germany

"The damage being done by the Second World War in almost every sphere of human activity will be so enormous that generations will be needed to remedy it even in part. The most terrible result of all cannot be remedied by anybody. In all the countries over-run so far by German barbarism it is the best, the finest, the most courageous people who have been executed. Europe under the German yoke is suffering decapitation . . . . Post-war Germany should become a decentralized confederation. A return to the former confederation of the Reich, in a modernized form, is absolutely essential. Prussia's domination over the other elements in the German nation should be broken. Prussia herself should be divided into three or four separate state units. Further, Germany must return to her pre-1938 frontiers, though possibly with rectifications in favour of her neighbours if such are demanded by considerations of European security."—*President Eduard Benes, President, Provisional Czechoslovak Government, writing in "Foreign Affairs."*

Britain's Colonial Policy

"It has suddenly become the fashion after our recent defeats to decry the British Colonial system, more particularly in the Far East. Let me remind you of what, after all, it has achieved and what it stood for. Let me take Hong Kong and Singapore. There, a century ago, Britain acquired a barren rock inhabited by a handful of fishermen, and a derelict village in a mangrove swamp. British administration, British justice and fairplay, drew to those two spots the enterprise and capital of all the world, as well as of this country, and an eager concourse of willing workers from neighbouring countries. They made of them two of the world's most prosperous and happy communities. In Malaya British protection put an end to piracy and the internecine quarrels of minor States. Without interfering with the traditions, the loyalties and the way of life of the Malay population, it found opportunities for the creative enterprise of

Europeans and the free and effective co-operation of other immigrant communities, Chinese and Indian. All of these lived happily together in a little cosmopolitan world free from both racial oppression and racial bitterness. The one thing we did not do was to prepare them for war. We neither enforced military training on them nor taxed them (beyond a trifling local contribution in the case of Singapore, and generous voluntary contributions from the Malay rulers) for their own defence or the common defence of the Empire. We were proud of that policy. To-day we may realize its inadequacy. But it ill becomes those who, in the past, were most vocal in denouncing the British Empire as an empire of militarism and oppression, now to turn round and complain because the peoples of Malaya were unarmed, untrained, and, above all, unused to the thought of war".—*The Rt. Hon. L. S. Amery, M.P., in an address to the Oxford Union.*

Rommel

"Rommel is an altogether exceptional soldier. The son of a Bavarian land-worker, he succeeded in reaching commissioned rank in 1918, when, as a young subaltern, he won the remarkable distinction of the *Pour le Merite* (familiarly known as the P.L.M.). After 1919 he turned strongly Nazi, and, finally, had to leave the Army for his participation in Storm Troop politics and actions. Since then his name has been closely connected with the growth and tactics of the Storm Troop organization. He knows as much about the gangster activities of the S. S. as any other hard-boiled Nazi. Specially selected by Hitler for reinstatement in the Army, he is now the only Nazi general who has not been through an orthodox curriculum."—*Lieutenant-Colonel H. de Watteville, C.B.E., late R.A., in "The Army Quarterly."*

The Basis of Peace

"Until the very last years of the nineteenth century the idea that we might be involved in a world war scarcely entered our heads. For us the epoch of world wars had been ended once for all in 1815 with the Battle of Waterloo. There were wars in Europe and Asia, but we lived in no fear of world wars such as 1914 and 1939. This sense of security was nowhere more strong than in the U. S. A. and in the younger democracies of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. The reason was that Britain controlled the seas with a fleet so strong that until the close of the nineteenth century no one thought of challenging

its supremacy. This the people in Great Britain were able to do so long as they retained the flying start which the invention of the steam engine and the industrial revolution had given them. At the close of the century the Germans were overtaking that start. They began to think, and not without reason, that a time was in sight when they could afford to build a navy strong enough to wrest from the British control of the sea, and so enable them to transport their armies from Europe to any part of the world. From the moment that the future power of Britain to control the seas was challenged, the era of world wars was reopened, and the system of freedom for which we stand not only in Britain but elsewhere in the world was in jeopardy . . . . In 1919 the world was seized with the notion that a general disarmament of nations (which never took place) was the necessary road to peace. The Atlantic Charter, on the other hand, is inspired by the opposite notion based on a terrible experience that the peace of the world will only be maintained so long as the free nations of the world are so strongly armed that aggressors will not think of attacking them."—*Mr. Lionel Curtis, addressing the Royal Empire Society in London.*

Hitlerisms

"Here are a number of recorded utterances by Hitler:

" 'I am willing to sign anything. I will do anything to facilitate the success of my policy. I am prepared to guarantee all frontiers and to make non-aggression pacts and friendly alliances with anybody. It would be sheer stupidity to refuse to make use of such measures merely because one might possibly have to break a solemn promise.'

" 'Generals want to behave like chivalrous knights. I have no use for knights.'

" 'I have the right to remove millions of an inferior race that breeds like vermin. I shall simply take systematic measures to dam their great natural fertility.'

" 'Conscience is a Jewish invention. It is a blemish, like circumcision.'

" 'Unless you are prepared to be pitiless you will get nowhere. Our opponents are not prepared for it, not because they are human, but because they are too weak.'

"From a Proclamation, Sept. 1, 1933: 'The National Socialist Revolution has rid the State of treachery, and perjury, and in its place has set up an empire of honour, fidelity, and decency.'

"August 26, 1938: 'We do not want any Czechs. When the Czechs have come to an understanding with their other minorities I shall not be interested in the Czech State any more, and as far as I am concerned, I can guarantee it.'

"October 9, 1938: 'Now, as a strong State, we can be ready to pursue a policy of understanding with other States. We want nothing from them. We have no wishes, no claims.'

"January 30, 1939: 'Between Poland and us peace and understanding shall reign.'

"November 10, 1934: 'WHEN HAVE THE GERMAN PEOPLE EVER BROKEN THEIR WORD?' "—"*Gleaner*", *in the "Fighting Forces."*

CAVALRY AND AIR CO-OPERATION

By Lt.-Colonel H. S. Stewart

THEORIES that the attack is obsolete and that the defence can always defeat it have been blown "sky-high". Aircraft and fighting vehicles acting in co-operation have proved themselves invincible under favourable circumstances, but the Germans do not owe their victories entirely to them.

Does the experience of these Blitzkriegs establish that the utility of horsed cavalry has passed away in all places and under all conditions? Should any remaining horsed cavalry be given vehicles instead of horses, or can men on horses continue to play some useful part in War? Is horsed cavalry even as obsolete as marching infantry in mobile warfare?

What happened in Poland is still difficult to analyse; but it would seem that, apart from anything else, the Poles did allow themselves to be carried away by their cavalry successes against the Bolsheviks in 1920.

It is doubtful whether in 1939 the Polish cavalry ever completed its mobilisation, and it is not known how far this may have handicapped its action; but it is certain that the Polish cavalry did not prove a serious menace to the Germans, and that it never even became engaged in a serious action. On at least two occasions it attempted to concentrate for the purpose of attacking, but each time it was decimated by low-flying aircraft, not by fighting vehicles.

Instead of undue reliance on cavalry, the following seems to have been fundamental causes for the Polish defeat:

(*a*) The German invasion was made at least by seventy divisions; these included at least six armoured divisions and four motorised divisions. This was certainly many more than the Poles had available.

(*b*) Not more than two and a half divisions of the Polish Army had completed mobilization at the outbreak of hostilities.

(*c*) The Polish frontiers did not lend themselves to defence.

(*d*) Surprise attacks largely annihilated the Polish Air Force on their aerodromes before fighting actually commenced; and what remained was wiped out within the next few days.

(*e*) The Polish Army was not in possession of sufficient modern equipment.

Co-operation between German ground and air forces was greatly facilitated by the initial destruction of the Polish Air Force; but the extent to which aircraft proved able to undertake the services of information and protection, and the way that the German armoured divisions pushed forward without infantry support, constituted a surprise.

The Poles could scarcely have hoped to have prevented the German mechanized mobile columns from breaking through the gaps between the various armies defending their frontiers; these gaps were only masked by brigades of cavalry, which were weak in numbers and not well provided with anti-tank weapons. The Poles must have known that unless such penetrating columns could be isolated and overcome in detail before they had a chance to unite, the Polish communications, headquarters, and services of the rear would be destroyed, even should the armies continue to resist.

Actually, with aircraft co-operation the German mechanized formations were able in seven days to penetrate to a depth of some ninety miles along a forty-to-fifty-mile front. The German armoured divisions proved capable of making "bounds" of up to seven miles. This rate of progress was possible because the mechanized armoured formations pushed on with little regard to support from the marching columns; these followed as fast as they could, and are reported to have averaged eighteen miles a day.

The Germans were able to take risks because of their understanding with Russia, and paid little attention to the progress of their supply columns; but had it not been for the advance of the Soviet troops against the Polish Eastern frontier, the mechanized columns might ultimately have been less successful than they were. Various scattered columns, which had penetrated deeply into Poland, in the end had to face great difficulties over the supply of petrol and oil; in spite even of the transportation of considerable consignments by air, supply arrangements did break down.

One factor of the German success was that the air formations accompanying the armoured divisions were under the orders of the ground commanders, and not an independent force merely co-operating. Primarily the aircraft were used for meticulous reconnaissance. After this had revealed exactly where the Polish positions were, bombers, tanks and motorised formations co-operated to prevent the Polish armies from carrying out any adequate anti-tank defence. They immobilized all counter-attacks, and

destroyed communications by which Polish reinforcements could reach the combat area.

Strong columns of horsed cavalry were employed in support of the German mechanized formations, in case these should be held up by obstacles, etc.; but, on account of the weather being so favourable, the mechanized units were never seriously checked. At Mlawa on September 1, a horsed cavalry formation (taking advantage of a fog) reconnoitred for some armoured divisions that were checked by an anti-tank obstacle; it succeeded in finding a route which enabled the vehicles to attack a position in flank with complete success. On another occasion (where a cavalry brigade acted as the independent flank guard of an armoured division) the German High Command expressed regret that more horsed cavalry was not available.

The Blitzkriegs of the West did not differ materially from that of Poland. The disaster that materialized was certainly not in any way attributable to undue reliance on mounted troops. Far from it; the French were firm believers in a policy of static defence. They lost, first their morale and then the war, primarily because of their "Maginot mentality". This marvellously constructed frontier defence (although it was probably far from complete) had been allowed to become, like the Great Wall of China, synonymous with the national idea of security. Therefore when the Germans began to advance past the flank of the Maginot Line, all hope was lost both by the nation and the army.

A compulsory service army does not have a military morale of its own like a regular or mercenary army; it merely reflects the spirit of the nation. The French political scandals and corruption had so spread defeatism through all grades of French society, that the national morale had been ruined before the war. The country panicked at the first serious defeat, and terror was broadcast by enemy parachutists, native defeatists and by the refugees, who all spread stories that the invading fighting vehicles and aircraft were invincible. The exaggerations of the refugees and the pacifist fifth columnists were in fact far more deadly than the actual achievements of the German mechanization, aircraft, or parachutists. Vehicles and aircraft cannot force river crossings or establish bridge-heads. Nor can they continue their advance unless bridge-heads are captured; fighting men have to do that sort of fighting, even if dive bombers prepare the way.

Primarily the French army training was at fault. Tactics were based on deductions from the fighting of 1918, and gave

little weight to developments subsequent to that period. Doctrine deprecated the exercise of initiative by subordinates, discouraged mobile penetrations, restricted fighting vehicles to close co-operation with infantry, and prescribed that all attacks were to be preceded by heavy artillery bombardments. In other words it classed as heresies the principles which give victory to mobile forces.

While the Germans do not owe their victories to cavalry, they do owe these to the observance of the cavalry principles of mass employment, mobility, morale and surprise. They did have soldiers who possessed "a firm resolve to perish with glory" (Napoleon to Lauriston); and such men cleared the way to victory by capturing bridge-heads.

Surprise was not so much brought by the particular type of weapon used, as by the great numbers of these that were available and by the new and ingenious methods with which these were employed. The Germans breached the French battle line, by surprising the sector where its defences were weakest and its troops of indifferent quality. The way that the German armoured formations rushed through the Ardennes and across the Meuse was a surprise to many besides the French, and revolutionized views which many previously had held about the limitations of fighting vehicles. But this does not necessarily prove that "Panzer" divisions are irresistible. The "Panzer" divisions (partly owing to the breakdown of the French morale) were able to bring about surrenders of the retreating French, without being obliged to call for extensive assistance from the slower moving non-motorized elements supporting them.

Their mobile columns crossed rivers, established bridge-heads and brushed aside French resistance. They cleared the roads of refugees by machine-gunning them and bombing them; brutal undoubtedly, but the alternative would have been a failure to continue the advance. The blocking of roads by the refugees and their vehicles contributed to the French debacle. French army vehicles were frequently unable to get forward even when their drivers were anxious to do so; and to many who did not wish to advance the excuse was excellent. Men on horses are able to move across country, and are less handicapped by blocked roads.

As in Poland, the close co-operation of aircraft with fighting vehicles, disregard by fighting vehicles of reliance on the support of non-mechanized arms, and the substitution of air-bombardment for artillery preparation, were key-notes of the German

tactics. Infiltration (popularly nick-named "soft spot tactics") developed to harmonize with mechanized warfare, was the basis of their attack methods. Great attention was paid to mobility and to the technical efficiency of the wireless communications service. The artillery, when supporting attacks, was made to come into action at ranges as short as three thousand yards, and the rapid opening of fire was considered more important than accuracy. Consequently direct observation was preferred to indirect methods of ranging.

There is reason to believe that the detachments landed from parachutes or troop-carrying aircraft (except in so far as these encouraged or gave rise to fifth column activities), contributed only very little to the victory. The Germans were certainly aided by dive bombers; but dive bombers, even if they can play a great part in overcoming the defence, are not invincible, especially if they are attacked in the air. While the French did lack aircraft, fighting vehicles and other equipment, their breakdown of morale resulted in even those that were available not being used to the best advantage; and the French fighting vehicles were not all directed or even manned by men who had "a firm resolve to perish with glory."

The French in fact had enough tanks to have formed four armoured divisions; but owing to the fatal doctrine that fighting vehicles should primarily be used as an adjunct to the infantry the available vehicles were not organized in self-contained mobile formations, with the exception of the one armoured division which was originally commanded by General de Gaulle.

Very strong horse cavalry formations, well supported by aircraft, could have exploited success once the great gap was created in the French Line; and if they had not been resisted by armoured divisions, could have spread havoc in the French rear areas much as the armoured formations did, only more slowly. But no cavalry on horses could have created a moral effect on the French army and people compatible with that which was produced by the German fighting vehicles and their attendant aircraft. This would not necessarily be the case in all countries and under all conditions.

Strong mounted forces of high morale, with sufficient attached mobile anti-tank weapons and aircraft, might have attempted an effective active defence of the river crossings of Northern France, the prevention of the establishment of bridge-heads, and the surrounding and cutting of communications of the scattered German columns. But it would be unreasonable to imagine that

any cavalry however powerful could have succeeded in saving a degenerate France, where a revolution in every sense was overdue. A nation under popular Government without the will to save itself, cannot be saved by an army.

Though it is difficult to obtain authentic up-to-date information undoubtedly a considerable number of horsed cavalry is still being maintained by most of the various belligerents.

Norway is not a cavalry country, but it is possible that mounted men might have been more useful than vehicles there. However, the experiment was not made. The Northern African desert has proved ideal for fighting vehicles; mounted units would seem to be quite useless there.

In Soviet Russia, on the other hand, reports indicate that mounted men are taking a very important part in the fighting. Some reports credit the Soviet with maintaining as many as forty or more mounted divisions. There is no doubt that Soviet cavalry did do excellent work connected with the repulse of the Germans from the Donets Basin and in the pursuit that followed. The Red Army is credited with teaching the theory that mounted men who act in a proper manner have little to fear from fighting vehicles!

The Japanese are not in any way a horse-loving people, but it is believed that they have actually doubled their horsed cavalry establishment as the result of the campaign in China.

The United States of America, always extremely keen on every new scientific mechanical invention, has not in any way accepted the theory that the horse soldier is obsolete. Their Army still contains a large establishment of horsed cavalry. They are now experimenting with "Portee Cavalry". These units have mechanized conveyances for the horses as well as for the personnel. The value of Portee Cavalry can only be verified by experience under active service conditions.

Mass, Mobility, and Morale are the real causes of the Blitzkrieg victories.

Mass does not imply the crowding of large forces into limited areas; it means having a sufficient force available to achieve success, and to exploit it. The initial dispositions of armies in depth must be those which will facilitate elasticity in the ultimate deployment, and so permit of the employment of sufficient strength at decisive points.

Forces that place their trust in static defence are doomed to defeat. When not counter-balanced by other disadvantages victory inclines to the army possessing the greater mobility. The

Germans realized before war broke out that the tactical development of the age was the increase of mobility made possible by the internal combustion engine. They achieved a mobility greater than any army has possessed since the age of Chenghis Khan and Timur. Mobility more concerns ability to move long distances from point to point, irrespective of roads, rather than on ability to move rapidly along roads.

Cavalry, by reason of its inherent mobility, is therefore really less obsolescent than marching infantry. Army mobility is less benefited by dismounting cavalry than by providing conveyances for arms which still have to march. Units which depend on their legs for locomotion will only be able to play a minor part in modern war, and their up-keep is largely a waste of the national effort. Any increase of fighting vehicle strength should be at the expense of the marching infantry.

It is not enough, however, to give armies means of locomotion, and it is wrong to imagine that many thousands of aeroplanes and tanks, manned and directed by hordes of freedom-loving "citizen" air and ground mechanics, will prove invincible or even mobile in war. It is still the "man behind the gun" who counts. Untrained and undisciplined fighters, even when provided with all appliances of modern science, are a greater danger to their own side than to the enemy. Strict discipline, officers capable of leading, soldiers ready to die and the combination of all arms is still required.

In countries with net-works of roads like those of France and Belgium, fighting vehicles supported by aircraft (especially those which attack without any regard to the destruction of non-combatants) can be best resisted by the co-operation of mobile anti-tank and anti-aircraft guns (manned by determined men ready to die at their posts), with aircraft and fighting vehicles.

Town dwellers, who now predominate in all civilized countries, think of countries as road systems because roads and streets radiate in all directions through the areas in which they live and die. They do not fully appreciate that hill-ranges, forests, swamps, in fact even four feet of water, limit the movement of motor-propelled vehicles wherever the road systems of Western civilization are non-existent. The urban-minded "man in the street" uses motor vehicles in his daily life and has come to regard horses and cavalry as a luxury of the privileged classes, out of place in a democratic army. Fighting vehicles, their armour, guns and appearance harmonise with his prejudices, and he places their armour and consequent ability to smash through

things, far above their mobility, to which he gives little consideration.

The Germans have not motorized their whole army. They have created as many "Panzer" divisions as possible, but have allowed the bulk of their ground army to even remain dependent largely on animal transport. They do not consider horsed cavalry obsolete, and strong columns of horsed cavalry normally co-operate with their armoured divisions. While in all the areas fighting vehicles and aircraft have been in the forefront of the battle, the German horsed cavalry in Europe has not been far behind.

Cavalry supported by aircraft can penetrate through gaps between armies much as the mechanized columns can, although it has to move more slowly, and to make shorter bounds, which gives a better chance of resisting it; against this it is less dependent on the maintenance of supply lines or on the continuance of good weather than mechanized forces. Horses at a pinch can continue to work for considerable periods without grain and fodder. During the operations in Palestine, the horses of certain Australian units went three days and four nights without even water. Moreover, cavalry is not stopped by bad weather. Horsed cavalry is best suited to undeveloped countries. The conditions of Eastern Europe suit it far better than those of Western Europe, where the countless roads and commercial stores of petrol and oil greatly assist its mechanized enemies.

Horsed cavalry and mechanized cavalry are not irreconcilable rivals; they can and should co-operate. To ensure that all mobile forces work in harmony, a synchronisation of tactics is essential. This does not necessarily even entail partial mechanization of all cavalry. Under certain circumstances, mechanized cavalry working in close conjunction with air forces can achieve decisive results; under other conditions horsed forces working in close conjunction with air forces may also bring about equally decisive results, although at a much slower tempo. This lack of speed may however destroy the essence of action rapidity.

The remaining horsed cavalry of armies should not have its horses replaced by vehicles, for if horsed formations are not as efficient as mechanized forces under all conditions, neither are mechanized forces always as useful as horsed formations. The activities of horsed units are now far more limited than they were formerly, when horsed units were the only mobile forces and

when there was no danger of air attack. Horsemen are no longer even the most mobile portion of the ground forces.

If horsed cavalry is to be used it must be prepared in emergencies to protect itself against any arm it encounters. Its ability to do this will largely depend on the presence of natural obstacles to free vehicle movement, and on the quantity, quality and mobility of the anti-aircraft and anti-tank weapons which accompany it. Mechanized cavalry to an extent is bullet-proof, horsemen are not. On open ground mounted men cannot themselves deal with fighting vehicles which are able to move freely.

Fighting vehicles supported by dive bombers are most dangerous enemies. The attachment of anti-aircraft and anti-tank impedimentia decreases the mobility of mobile troops and so limits their power; but the lack of such arms puts them at the mercy of aircraft and fighting vehicles and will cause them to cease to exist.

Dive bombers are best combated by other aircraft. Although anti-aircraft guns (when the area is limited and the guns plentiful) can to some extent put a "safety umbrella" over stationary objects, it is difficult for them to do this over moving ones. An effective "safety umbrella" requires a large concentration of guns in a small area. In fact the effective defence against all air attacks (more especially in the case of forces that have to move) is protecting aeroplanes rather than anti-aircraft guns. Mobile Columns without escorting aircraft must largely rely on concealment; and a policy of concealment more detracts from mobility than the attachment of impedimentia. Fighting vehicles are more vulnerable to air attack than horsemen.

The most effective defence against fighting vehicles, however, is not other fighting vehicles, but mobile anti-tank guns. An anti-tank gun on a self-propelled mounting without armour, powerful enough to out-range fighting vehicle guns, and mobile enough to move faster than fighting vehicles, can remain at a distance from which its fire will be effective and the fighting vehicle gunfire ineffective. But such anti-tank guns, being primarily defensive weapons, require the co-operation of other arms to exploit success.

In the days gone by, a coherent and harmonious attack of mail-clad Crusading knights could break any Saracen battle-line, and was, comparatively speaking as irresistible as the attack of fighting vehicles. Yet frequently the Knights were defeated, often disastrously. The Saracen light-horse, which gave way to all direct attacks could (by encircling the knights) cut off all supplies

and could harass them by missile fire, so as not to allow them either rest or peace.

The armoured knight was powerless against a horse-archer who could move faster than he could, and who consequently was a far more dangerous enemy than another knight. Now that the fighting vehicle has replaced the knight, the anti-tank gun has replaced the horse-archer. The ancient Crusaders and modern mechanization have a common weakness; inability to move (owing to the cutting-off of regular supplies) renders them comparatively harmless.

Cavalry has nearly always been incorrectly handled; sometimes by its own leaders, more often by the higher commands. Whenever it has been correctly employed in the past it has materially contributed to victory.

It has four spheres of action:

(*a*) Along the front of armies prior to their contact.

(*b*) On flanks of, or in rear of, armies ready to co-operate in actions subsequent to contact.

(*c*) The exploitation of success of the main army, by rapid advances and pursuits.

(*d*) Along the rear of armies, covering withdrawals.

It has the greatest scope in (*a*) and (*c*). In all cases its main opponent will be enemy mobile forces, but horsed cavalry should be employed in areas where it is unlikely to be exposed to the attack of mechanized cavalry.

In spite of all changes in conditions, cavalry action must remain offensive; numbers are necessary, but surprise can sometimes compensate for lack of strength. In the leading of cavalry no other factor can compensate for lack of daring and enterprise, and there is universal agreement that cavalry action must be audacious, unexpected, etc. But the mere advocacy of such sentiments will not bring them into being. In war, enterprise and audacity will only materialize when those who lead are accustomed to risking life, limb, health and fortune in their peace recreations, and who live under regimes that allow subordinates independent authority.

The power of horsed cavalry apart from mobility has ever lain in intangible forces, and it has always relied more on its effects on human minds than on its injuries to human bodies. Scientific progress, which continually improves devices for attack and defence, cannot change human hearts and instincts. The crews of the fighting vehicles of to-day do not possess hearts and instincts fundamentally different to those of the men who fought

on foot or horseback in the wars of the past. "Machine-minded men", in fact, should have more imagination than the old type had, and should be more susceptible to intangible influences. The crews of fighting vehicles surrounded and cut off from supplies would soon lose morale.

"The charge" was formerly the most romantic of cavalry roles; it has only been during particular periods and for special reasons that mounted attacks have been considered to be the primary work of cavalry. Certainly to-day horsed cavalry has not the power to decide battles by great mounted mass attacks at close interval after the style of Frederic or Napoleon. But against an enemy of shaken morale, especially one lacking mobile armoured support, mounted action can at times be decisive. Mounted attacks at extended interval (by brigades or smaller tactical units) may still often be the easiest and most practical way of capturing positions lightly held and unprotected by physical obstacles which prevent the advance of mounted men.

Morale, Mass Employment, Mobility and Mobile Fire Power, applied by Leadership, Training, Discipline and correct tactics, have been the principles that gave victory to the mobile forces of the past. Now co-operation with aircraft supplements these; and the greater the strength of the enemy in air, the more urgent will be the need of aircraft co-operation.

A LETTER FROM CHITRAL*

Dear . . .

...And now, about Chitral. You know where it is—you said you found it as a small mark on a map thick with chocolate-brown and white, denoting hills of some nature. You were right. There are hills here. In fact it's all hills—and what hills! One gets used to most of them after a bit, but never to that lovely mountain Tirich Mir, which dominates the main Chitral Valley, and a number of the side valleys, too. It is over 25,000 feet high and there are about forty more of over 20,000 feet scattered round the country. Hills indeed! Unless you've got a trained and properly equipped party, the bigger peaks are virtually unclimbable, while the smaller ones are just bare rocks, and nearly vertical at that, offering few attractions except a swift end. These, of course, are in Northern Chitral.

Down in the South there are hills covered with forests of *deodhar,* going up to 10,000 or 11,000 feet, and very beautiful they are. In the North, however, which I know best, I have so far only managed to visit a few of the more commonplace passes, which the locals with ill-disguised contempt call "Lasht Anen", meaning "flat passes". One of these passes took me up to 16,660 feet, so you will realize that they are not quite so soft as they seem. Nevertheless, much as my standard of flatness may differ from that of the locals, I must confess that I find it great fun, and when once one does get up high, the views are well worth the effort. I got quite a kick out of a view—into Russian Turkestan.

The main language of the country, Khowar, is a sort of shot-rubbish dump of various languages, such as Persian, Turki and Pushtu. It's easy enough to learn and well worth the trouble, as one's Urdu does not go very far with the ordinary local. There are all sorts of other languages used in the country, dialects of Pushtu and Punjabi, separate languages such as Turki and Persian and local languages, confined to a few hamlets, such as Palola. I'm trying to pick up a bit of Turki at the moment, as the people who speak it are some of the very nicest in the whole of Chitral.

* The above letter, written by an officer stationed in Chitral, gives such a vivid picture of the country, its customs, and its inhabitants, that we feel many readers will find it of absorbing interest.—*Editor, Journal of the U. S. I.*

They are pastoralists living away up in the North in little settlements of those fascinating black bee-hive tents of which one used to see pictures in books on travel in the Russian steppes. However, learning this language is not all plain sailing, as there seem to be no books on the subject, and one's teachers are all illiterate, which is sometimes a bit confusing, and more often amusing.

About the other inhabitants of Chitral, I quite like them, though lots of people who know more about it than I do say in no measured terms that they don't. However, this is all a matter of taste and all I will say is that they haven't got that attractive "you-be-damned" outlook of the Pathan; but this may be due to the system of government under which they live rather than to any fundamental inferiority. They are tough, cheerful, fond of a joke, sporting and self-reliant. They are desperately poor, which accounts for a lot of the avariciousness of which they are often accused. The vast majority are illiterate, and therefore think on slightly different lines to the person with whom one comes into contact in India, but, taken all in all, they might be a lot worse. And in about twenty years' time, if schemes now operating bear their designed fruit they will be very much more educated than they are now, and then there will be big changes, for the Chitrali is a very quick learner.

How do these people live? The vast majority live on the "fans" of debris brought down by each side-stream to the main river valleys, and there too, they make their fields. How they get even a bare living out of the rocky soil is a mystery, but they seem to manage somehow. They have the right idea about houses. Each little house is separate, and most of them have small lawns in front, beautifully green in the spring and summer, enclosed by drystone walls and shaded by fruit trees. You can imagine how very attractive the villages look in the early spring when the fruit blossom is out and the nearer peaks are still holding traces of snow.

The Chitrali is a sportsman of no mean order. You may have read about the local game of polo. It's great fun, and the best description of it that I can give is to ask you to visualize one of those old polo pictures which one sees sometimes in curio shops in Kashmir. It looks exactly like that. There are no rules to speak of, and each chukker lasts for 20 minutes. There are none of the social trimmings associated with polo elsewhere, and it's just hard galloping, and a "free for all." Anyone plays, you wear what you like, ride what you can get, and say what you

think of the chap who hooks your stick or grips it into his saddle with his knees!

Shikar used to be good in Chitral and even now one gets markhor, whose horns run up to as much as 50 inches, but they are getting rare. The game in the country is being gradually "shot out", because the Chitrali slays everything he can, regardless of age, sex or size, for meat. This seems criminal to us, but I feel that shibboleths about "shootable heads" don't mean much when a man is really hungry—and the Chitrali is often that. Added to this, Chitral is their country, so why shouldn't they use what is in it? Rank heresy this, and of course it doesn't stop me from cursing when I hear that someone has shot four females and three young ones at a sitting. Other game includes oorial, ibex, red bear, and more occasionally, a snow-leopard or a wolf. I saw an otter the other day with a first-class skin, but they are rare.

Chukor are plentiful. And of all the really infuriating birds, commend me to the chukor. That "cheap" and derisive flick of the wings as they sail past, the heap of empty cases getting bigger and bigger, and the pitying look on the face of one's orderly! They get a sort of "Super Chukor" here which they call the ram chukor, and in the south they also get the minaul. Duck one occasionally sees as they pass through on their way north or south, and so far this year I have bagged one mallard, and seen some pochard. I also shot a woodcock the other day. Of rarer birds I have seen a golden eagle, and a few snow-pigeon, and of other forms of life, a few snakes (one brilliant green, which no one will believe!) and butterflies without number.

That about covers the sporting side of Chitral, except that in winter there is ski-ing, better, they say, than in Gulmarg, and, just over the border into Gilgit, streams which are alive with trout.

Altogether, there is not much wrong with Chitral as a station, as you may have gathered from the general tone of this letter, but I have only skated over the top of the subject.

Yours etc.,
BASHGALI.

RECENT ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY

"Remember Greece", by Dilys Powell.— The story of Italy's unprovoked attack on Greece.

"A Prophet at Home", by Douglas Reed.— The author writes of an England to which he returned after forty-five years' wandering.

"Mr. Churchill: A Portrait", by Philip Guedalla.—A well-documented survey of the life of the Prime Minister and of contemporary history.

"Army District Court-Martial Procedure", by Major H. M. Shurlock.— The author has assembled a mass of information on the subject, making the volume of real value to those seeking knowledge on Court-Martial procedure.

"The British Army at War", by Brigadier E. D. H. Tollemache, D.S.O., M.C., A.D.C.— The object of this work is to show how the new British Army is manning itself, especially on the mechanised side. The work of all arms is described and illustrated.

"The R.A.F. at War" (illustrated), by the Hon. William Buchan. —This authentic record of how the R.A.F. goes into action, from the construction of the machine to the time it takes its place in the squadron engaged in bombing German supply centres, is of particular interest at the present time.

"So Few" (illustrated), by David Masters.—Nothing that has been written in the field of fiction can excel in thrills this book on "The Immortal Record of the R.A.F." It contains full details of some of the most heroic actions and outstanding feats of individual officers and airmen of the R.A.F.

"The Current of War", by Captain Liddell Hart.— The author, who has for years preached the story of the technique of mechanised warfare, sets out to show how the Nazis have developed and improved upon this skeleton key to the military situation in Europe and North Africa.

"Atlantic Front", by Basil Woon.— This account of the life and death battle on which the future of England and the Empire depends, gives much information on the operation of

convoys and the lives of the gallant seamen who risk everything in the great task of keeping the Home Country well supplied with munitions and food.

"The Nature of Modern Warfare", by Captain Cyril Falls.— This book contains four Lees Knowles Lectures delivered by the author. The subjects dealt with are: "The Doctrine of Total War"; "The Mechanised Attack"; "Tactics of Defence"; "Notes on Mountain War" and "Immutable Realities" (Strategy).

"Modern Iran" (Illustrated), by L. P. Elwell-Sutton.— An able study of Iran, a country about which little is generally known. The author includes in the work an examination of the economic foundations of modern Iran, its social and cultural progress, and the probable part Iran will play in the present world situation.

"What to do with Germany", by Colonel T. H. Minshall.—The author sets out to analyse the German character, examines the causes which have led to the domination of Germany by Prussia, and takes the view that until Germany is freed from this domination neither defeat nor concessions, nor even disarmament, will produce a lasting peace.

"Belgium".— The invasion of Belgium and the Netherlands in May, 1940, will remain one of the outstanding events of the War. This volume, issued by the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, sets forth the official records of these events and includes all the important documents relating to them, some of which have not been previously published.

"The Life of Francis Drake", by A. E. W. Mason.— The usual picture of Drake in men's minds is a brave, bluff man of infinite audacity, a great patriot, a great sailor, a man to whom success came of its own accord. But, as this book shows, that is only half the truth. He was always studying and learning, in many respects he was in advance of his time. He confronted and shattered a vast world-power determined to enslave Britain by changing the naval strategy of England from defence to attack.

"Mediterranean Front", by Alan Moorehead.—One of the best-known American war correspondents, Mr. Moorehead writes with intimate knowledge of the Middle East Front. He was stationed in Rome for the first six months of the war. A week before Italy came in, he flew to Cairo and was attached

to the then Army of the Nile. In the year following he covered the Libyan campaigns; later went to Abyssinia and entered Addis Ababa with the victorious Allied troops; and then went on to Greece and came back to Crete. His story gives a vivid picture of the various campaigns with which he deals.

"The American Speeches of Lord Lothian".—The Embassy at Washington has always been one of the most important posts in the British Diplomatic Service, and never has there been a more successful British Ambassador to the United States than Lord Lothian. Though he died before the full results of his mission could materialise, his handling of affairs in the United States through a period of high anxiety and complex difficulty was one of the outstanding achievements of the early war period. His speeches, both by reason of their content, and by their fine oratorical construction, will be read long after the present troubles are ended, and will take their place in the literary records of our history.

"Bomber Command" (Illustrated).—A fine descriptive record of Bomber Command's offensive against the Axis during the first 22 months of the War. Profusely illustrated, it tells in graphic style some of the amazing exploits of pilots and crews in their hazardous flights over enemy territory. The concluding words of the book are worth quoting: "The Germans are waging war as they have always waged it: without mercy, respite or limit, with no regard to place or person. Perhaps they may regret the consequences. Perhaps they are already doing so. One thing is certain. Bomber Command will allow no pause, no breathing space. Our attack will go on, fierce because it is relentless, deadly because it is sure."

"Wavell in the Middle East" (illustrated), by Major-General H. Rowan-Robinson, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.—An able analysis of the Middle East theatre of war, which, though necessarily somewhat out of date, is most useful to those anxious to be fully informed of the campaigns conducted under the leadership of General Sir Archibald Wavell in an area which ranged for 2,000 miles from the Sea of Galilee to Lake Victoria, and for 1,500 miles across the Sudan to the borders of British Somaliland. Paying tribute to the then Commander-in-Chief of the Middle East, the author has recalled

that shortly before the outbreak of war General Keitel, Chief of the German General Staff, wrote in the *Deutsche Wehr,* the military organ of the Nazi party:

"In the British army to-day there is only one good General, but he is incomparably good. Others have no proper conception of the direction of mechanized warfare, but this officer from 1928 onwards has studied the subject, and he may well prove the dominant personality in any war within the next five years." The distinguished officer he refers to is General Sir Archibald Wavell.

REVIEW

"THE TIGER STRIKES"

AT A TIME when things military are perhaps not going too well for us it is refreshing to read "The Tiger Strikes". Newspaper commentaries on the gallant exploits of Indian troops are satisfying but ephemeral, and it is well to put on permanent record some of the deeds which have shown the world that the valour of Hindustan's army is second to none.

This volume, with its odd flashes of humour and cynicisms, tells plainly and in simple language the story of the fine achievements of the 4th and 5th Indian Divisions in the Middle East, from the almost unbelievable success at Sidi Barrani to the victories in Eritrea and back to the occupation of Syria. In this immense area the British and Indian Armies won for themselves a reputation for gallantry and resource which for many years will remain one of the most inspiring chapters in their history.

The silent approach of the 4th Indian Division over bare desert towards Sidi Barrani is told in detail. As the writer says: "Various reasons have been put forward to explain how this huge body of troops was able to move nearly a hundred miles across completely open desert without being seen by the enemy. In olden days it would have been said simply that God blinded the eyes of the enemy. It is difficult to think of any other adequate explanation."

Towards the end of the battle, orders were received for the 4th Indian Division to proceed to the Sudan. In three days, says the author, the Division had taken over 20,000 prisoners, with many guns, tanks and stores. Three enemy divisions and

the Maletti Mobile Group had been utterly routed, while the Division had suffered less than 700 casualties. Many found it difficult to realize that they had been through their first battle and won such an amazing victory. It had gone so smoothly, without a single hitch, that it seemed very like the usual manœuvres. One sepoy, when asked how he had enjoyed the battle, replied: *Bahut achchha* scheme!

The chapter on the work of the R. I. N. in the Red Sea is unfortunately very brief, but, as the author says, "The Royal Indian Navy has followed the traditions of her big sister, the Royal Navy; it is a silent service." Possibly for that reason he may have wished to spare the blushes of that modest young lady, but sufficient has been included in the volume to show that Indian sailors are in no way behind the Indian soldier in endurance and courage.

Accounts of individual bravery are well and simply told, and the compiler may well be excused for not including more when one reads the lengthy list of awards given in the appendix. Though that list is long, a perusal of the book reveals that many more deeds of sheer heroism must have passed unrecognized. This is borne out by the fact that in all actions, except at Damascus, the opposing forces, not including reserves, were superior in numbers varying from 1.25 to 3 to 1 against us. In many cases, also, their long preparation for operations gave them superior arms and equipment.

The text matter is accompanied by many pictures, and several maps enable the reader to follow the battles more clearly. If one may voice a small criticism, it is that reference to some of the latter would have been easier if they had been placed nearer the matter to which they referred.

An army which has a leavening of men who have passed through the battles described in this book to lead and inspire the younger generation of soldiers and sailors must be assured of eventual victory. We hope that the author is not resting on his laurels, and that, as the war surges on, we may look forward to another volume. It may not be a story of continuous successes, but will surely show that our men are equally stout-hearted in adversity as in success.

R. M. D.