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The  Times

HISTORY  
OF  
THE WAR

VOL. XV.



PRINTING HOUSE SQUARE.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY "THE TIMES,"  
PRINTING HOUSE SQUARE, LONDON.

1918.



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## CHAPTER CCXXII.

# SOUTH AMERICA, 1914-17.

TRADITIONAL RELATIONS WITH EUROPE—FIRST EFFECTS OF THE WAR—BALANCE OF SYMPATHIES—INFLUENCE OF THE UNITED STATES—THE MONROE DOCTRINE—PAN-AMERICANISM—ECONOMIC CONDITIONS: ARGENTINA, BRAZIL, CHILE—THE "BLACK LIST" AND GERMAN TRADE—GERMAN PROPAGANDA AND INTRIGUE—THE LUXBURG DISPATCHES—ARGENTINA AND GERMANY—CHILE AND GERMANY—OTHER STATES—THE BRAZILIAN DECLARATION OF WAR.

UPON the outbreak of war the attitude of educated public opinion throughout South America towards the belligerents was generally one of detachment and neutrality, tempered by great and widespread affection for France, as the spiritual home of Latin civilization. The Governments of the Republics, in declaring their neutrality in 1914, acted in accordance with public sentiment, which, as in the United States, had then no desire to take an active part in the struggle. The foreign policy of the leading Republics—Argentina, Chile, and Brazil—reflected the Monroe doctrine's theoretical aloofness from the destinies of monarchical and "capitalist" Europe; it reflected also an unmistakable though subdued undercurrent of popular opinion, that none of the belligerents had shown in the past sufficient appreciation of the moral and material progress of Southern (as distinguished from Central) America to justify any overt manifestation of sympathy or support. Material considerations, the financial and commercial interests involved, all tended at the outset to impose strict neutrality upon the Latin Republics of South America, and this policy was energetically reinforced in a vigorous Press propaganda by Germany's political and commercial agents all over the Continent.

During the first onrush of the Teutonic hordes in the invasion of France the attitude  
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of Germans from Patagonia to Pernambuco was so boastful and blustering as to lead many South American thinkers and writers to perceive something of the dangers to which the democracies of the new world must speedily be exposed in the event of victorious Germany becoming the paramount Power in Europe. In Chile, and more especially in South Brazil, the typically insolent bearing of the German colonists during the first few weeks of the war was of the kind that is not easily forgiven or forgotten; it led to the rapid growth of feelings hostile to Germany in many quarters where none had previously existed, and prepared the public mind for the gradual process of its identification with the cause of the Allies. After the battle of the Marne, and even more markedly after the destruction of the German squadron at the Falkland Islands, the sons of the Fatherland began to walk more delicately overseas; their dreams of creating a New Germany to extend from Southern Brazil to the River Plate were relegated to the background of prudent silence. But as the German Government's contempt for all the ideals and agreements of civilized humanity became more and more emphasized in its methods of warfare, public opinion throughout South America became more and more unmistakably convinced that the Central Powers were responsible for the outbreak of the war, and that German *Kultur*, as displayed by her military





SOUTH AND CENTRAL AMERICA: WAR MAP AT END OF 1917.

and political leaders, involved the negation of the elementary principles of humanity and decency. And side by side with this conviction the old love and reverence for France, as the fountain-head of the Latin ideal of democracy, acquired new inspiration and a new strength. The process was naturally more rapid and more emphatic in certain places than in others. In some it was restrained from above by the successful activities of German propaganda in high places; in others, the pro-German influence of many of the Roman Catholic clergy tended to check the growth of active sympathy for the cause of the Allies; in others again, a lavish expenditure of German money, and the ramifications of commercial interests thereby created, served to modify the expression of widespread popular indignation against everything German. But after the sinking of the Lusitania and other similar manifestations of Germany's methods of warfare, while prudent statecraft still continued to recognize the necessity for maintaining neutrality so long as the United States had not been drawn into the struggle, there was no longer any question as to the feelings of the people in Buenos Aires, Montevideo, Rio de Janeiro, or Santiago. They had come to realize that the war was in truth a stupendous clashing of two forms of civilization fundamentally and eternally antagonistic, a conflict between the German doctrine of might superior to right and the Latin ideal of the predominance of law over force. They had come to regard Germany's methods of enforcing her doctrine as something unspeakably sinister and inhuman—a new point of view, which, even before it was emphasized and confirmed by the truculent treachery of Count Luxburg, found expression in the breaking of many German official windows. During the celebration of the centenary of the Argentine Republic in July, 1916, despite the benevolent neutrality of the Government, the German flag was conspicuous by its absence from every street and public ceremony. In the same year the Uruguayan Government officially proclaimed the 14th of July as a national festival; the citizens of Montevideo celebrated the occasion by enthusiastic singing of the "Marseillais" and by a gala entertainment at the Urquiza Theatre in honour of M. Boudin's special mission, at which fervent sympathy was expressed for the Allies and particularly for the sufferings of Belgium. Even in Rio, where the influence of Germany's "peaceful pene-

tration" was most marked at the beginning of the war, a distinct revulsion of popular feeling had taken place before the end of 1915, and many neutral traders, hitherto conspicuous for their pro-German tendencies, had begun to realize the possible scope and effect of the British Black List and to make



DR. WENCESLÃO BRAZ,  
President of Brazil.

profession of their complete independence of all German connexions.

In Chile, as the result of the influence of the Roman Catholic clergy on the one hand and of German professors and military instructors on the other, the attitude of the Government was characterized from the outset by a neutrality which on more than one occasion appeared to be unduly strained in favour of the Teuton. This was particularly the case during the period in which the German cruisers, effectively aided by German residents in Chile, waged destructive warfare upon British and Allied merchant shipping on the Chilean coast. But the outrages committed by these German cruisers served to convince the Chilean people—they also produced a profound economic crisis throughout the country—that a nation which could act with such cynical indifference to international law, and to the sovereign rights of smaller nations, would eventually, if victorious, threaten their own liberties. Señor Carlos



Silva Vildósola, an eminent publicist of Santiago, writing at the beginning of 1916, declared that the great majority of his countrymen had come to desire the triumph of the Allies and the destruction of German militarism, "in defence of the constituent principles of all democracies and to save from destruction the Latin civilization to which we all belong." It is interesting to record the fact that, a year before President Wilson had definitely proclaimed his country's recognition of the necessity for crushing "this menace of combined intrigue and force which we now so clearly see as the German power, a thing without conscience or honour, or capacity for covenanted peace," Señor Vildósola had summed up the convictions of his countrymen on fundamental points in memorable words, which, like those uttered by Señor Ruy Barbosa at Rio, expressed the general (as distinct from the official) sentiments of South America. Amongst other things Señor Vildósola declared:

"That the triumph of a nation which proclaims military necessity as a sufficient reason for violating treaties, and in which nations are denied their essential liberties, would be the greatest peril that could be encountered by modern democracies and by all those principles upon which American independence was established; and

"That there exists at the heart of this struggle a conflict between the two philosophical and political tendencies that have disputed for the domination of peoples and the inspiration of their movements—one based upon right and the other upon force; one upon liberty and the other upon subjection; one upon fraternity and the other upon hatred, cultivated as a sacred and almost mystical principle."

Similarly, Señor Nicolas F. Lopez, a distinguished military officer and Government official of Ecuador, in a pamphlet published in 1917, expressed the increasing apprehension of public opinion in regard to the possible effect of the world struggle upon the future destinies and liberties of South America. Señor Lopez laid stress on the duty incumbent upon all the Latin Republics, as a matter of self-preservation and national dignity, to unite "in frank and decided support of the United States, which has presented itself as the paladin of the liberties of the world against the iniquities of the Great War." He contended that as Germany had lightly set at

naught the fundamental rights of neutrals, in regard to the inviolability of their territory and the free use of the sea as a commercial highway, the twenty-one American Republics could not do otherwise than suspend diplomatic relations with her, "particularly in view of the fact that Germany had not denied the reports concerning a suggestion which she made to the countries of the Entente with respect to a possible return of all the invaded territory of Belgium, Russia, and the Balkans, provided she be given a free hand in Latin-America."

Before the end of 1916 every instinct of humanity, apart from that of self-preservation, had led to a very general consensus of opinion throughout all classes in South America in favour of the cause of the Entente. At the same time it was clearly perceived, by all who looked ahead, that if the United States continued to adhere to a policy of neutrality, nothing in the Monroe doctrine could hereafter protect from German retaliation and invasion any Republic which might throw in its lot with the Allies. Realization of this fact undoubtedly carried much weight with South America's statesmen in determining their adherence to prudent courses of neutrality, even after their rights as neutrals had been violated by Germany's declaration of indiscriminate submarine warfare. But when it became apparent that the Colossus of the North was about to join in the struggle "to make the world safe for democracy," the whole situation in the Latin Republics was immediately altered. Slowly but surely, as the nature of Germany's preparations for war, her methods of waging it, and her ambitions towards world supremacy became more and more apparent, the truth was perceived that the fertile and thinly populated countries of South America had enjoyed immunity from attack and invasion mainly thanks to the armed forces of Great Britain and France, upholders of the sacredness of treaties and of the liberties of small nations.

Senator Root expressed the prevalent opinion on this subject on January 25, 1917, when, addressing the Congress of Constructive Patriotism at Washington, he said that the Monroe doctrine was not international law, and that it had been maintained by three things: first, that the men of Monroe's time had never thought of such a thing as not being ready to fight for their rights; secondly, that the balance of power in Europe had been so even, and every-

body had been so doubtful about what the other fellows were going to do, that nobody found it worth while to take on a row with the United States; and, thirdly, England's fleet.

In the race of the futility of the treaty which guaranteed the neutrality of Belgium and of the humane ordinances of the Hague Convention, it was manifest that the Monroe doctrine could afford no valid defence against German Imperialism triumphant so long as the United States remained in a condition of military unpre-

of the war must be reckoned the change which took place in the attitude of the South American Republics, not only in regard to the future of the Monroe doctrine but to that of the Pan-American ideal. In the early stages of the struggle it became apparent that, without resort to force, the United States could not aspire to maintain the doctrine in its original scope. In October, 1914, a statement by Count Bernstorff, the German Ambassador in Washington, was published through the Associated Press, that Germany might obtain



CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS AT BUENOS AIRES, JULY, 1916.

Troops parading before the President.

paredness: no panoply of sounding phrases could serve henceforward to guard the world's richest granaries against the danger of high-handed aggression. The entry of the United States into the war put an end to the long-cherished tradition of American self-sufficiency and to the splendid dream of continental isolation; but it gave the continent, north and south, new assurances for dignified security in the future, in co-operation with the foremost democracies of the Old World, which the political insight of the Latin Republics was not slow to perceive and to appreciate at their true significance.

Amongst the most conspicuous consequences

“at least a temporary” foothold in Canada if she could land troops there, and the statement was accompanied by the suggestion that, as Canada had sent troops to Europe, such retaliation ought not to be regarded as a violation of the Monroe doctrine. This foolish utterance, like many others from the same source, did more to enlighten public opinion in the United States and to stiffen it against Germany than any of the Allies' official propaganda. Herr Dernburg, then chief German propagandist in the United States, hastened to repudiate his Ambassador's indiscretion by declaring that Germany would not only regard South America as inviolable but that she would





BUENOS AIRES: PROCESSION ON THE OCCASION OF THE TAKING OF THE OATH BY THE PRESIDENT.

extend the benefits of the Monroe doctrine to Canada; but the cat was out of the bag. Its subsequent excursions into the field of American politics were assisted by a declaration made by Mr. Taft to the effect that nothing in the Monroe doctrine precluded a German invasion of Canada "provided it is not followed by an attempt to hold territory permanently." The doctrine was evidently *in extremis*. At the end of November, 1914, *The Times* Correspondent at Washington observed that Mr. Taft's view was universally accepted, "just as everybody accepted the administration's view that the Allies had the right to take temporary police measures in South America." (This referred to certain breaches of neutrality in favour of Germany by Ecuador and Colombia to which Great Britain had taken exception.) He noted at the same time "a growing tendency to make the primary object of the Monroe doctrine the prevention of the permanent acquisition by extra-American Powers of territory, especially near Panama; and to avoid its more vague and barren responsibilities." Confronted by a world in arms, the famous doctrine proved to be practically useless for the fulfilment of its original purposes, as Admiral Mahan had declared it to be. The United States, not to mention the leading Republics of the South, had grown too large, and the world too inter-

dependent, for it. President Wilson, it is true, reaffirmed his adherence to the doctrine in his annual message to Congress in December, 1915, emphasising "the rights of the American Republics to work out their destinies without interference," but his words carried no great conviction or comfort to those immediately concerned, and certain of the more turbulent Republics of Central America did not fail to point out that unwelcome interference in their destinies had hitherto come from the United States. A year later, after the failure of his final effort to make such honourable terms with Germany as would have justified him in remaining neutral, Mr. Wilson's message to Congress vaguely implied the forthcoming abandonment of the doctrine of continental aloofness from the "European system," and the substitution in its place of a world League of Nations, not to enforce but to ensure peace. The new shibboleth proposed, "as it were, that the nations should with one accord adopt the doctrine of President Monroe as the doctrine of the world; that no nation should seek to extend over any other nation or people, but that every people should be left free to determine its own polity, its own way of development, unhindered, unthreatened, unafraid, the little along with the great and powerful." The nations, moreover, were henceforth to avoid "entangling alliances which

would draw them into competitions of power." South America, to judge from Press utterances on the subject, found nothing very attractive in the idea of a League to Enforce Peace.

Quite apart, however, from its apparent ineffectiveness as a weapon of defence against aggression from or by Europe, the Monroe doctrine had fallen into disrepute, even before the war, in several of the Southern Republics, where public opinion was frankly opposed to it on the ground that on more than one occasion the manner of its assertion by the Government at Washington involved claims to a moral trusteeship and general protectorate incompatible with their dignity as sovereign States. President Wilson's expansion of the doctrine in connexion with the troubles in Mexico was widely construed in South America as placing the United States in the position of *ensor morum* over the Central Republics; the Latin American Press, even in countries far removed from the seat of trouble, expressed lively apprehension and resentment at the idea. As Lord Bryce has observed in his work on South America, "South American statesmen appre-

ciate the value of Washington's diplomacy in trying to preserve peace between those Republics whose smouldering enmities often threaten to burst into flame. On the other hand, they are jealous of their own dignity, not at all disposed to be patronised, and quick to resent anything bordering on a threat even when addressed, not to themselves, but to some other Republic." In regard to the action of the United States in Mexico, the protestations of American disinterestedness were greeted with general scepticism, frankly expressed. Popular hostility to "Monroismo," as asserted by the United States, had become in 1913 a force that threatened to stultify Pan-American activities and ideals. In Argentina, Brazil and Chile, the idea of an alliance of the Latin Republics was widely mooted, for the purpose of preserving the balance of power. Mr. Roosevelt's lecture tour in South America, undertaken in that year, was intended to soothe the susceptibilities and assuage the fears of Latin America; the burden of his message was contained in a Pan-American extension of the Monroe doctrine, which was to become conti



THE AVENIDA DE MAYO. BUENOS AIRES.



mental and cease to be unilateral; the greater southern Republics were to share with the United States the duty of protecting and policing the Continent. The Confederation of the Americas, thus adumbrated, was to be a stage in the progress towards world-confederation, and the modernized Monroe doctrine would thus become a potent instrument of pacifism. Mr. Roosevelt's idea, in short, was to put the hegemony of the Americas into commission, in much the same way as that of dynastic Europe was vested in the Holy Alliance a century before. But his tour, despite the warmth of the personal welcome accorded to him, revealed a very general disposition to concur in the declaration made by Señor Marcial Martínez, in welcoming the ex-President to the University of Chile, namely, that the Monroe doctrine had become obsolete, in so far at least as it had been interpreted to imply any right of supervision by the United States over the independent Latin Republics. At Santiago de Chile the attitude of the crowd was unmistakably hostile to Mr. Roosevelt, and his appearance was greeted with shouts of "Viva Mexico!" and "Viva Colombia"! At Buenos Aires Señor Zeballos, ex-Foreign Minister of Argentina, while welcoming Mr. Roosevelt's declaration that such Republics as Argentina, Brazil and Chile had attained a position which entitled them to claim equality with the United States, took care to emphasize his opinions that the Monroe doctrine could not be applicable to the Argentine Republic. In a letter to the editor of *The Times* (January 27, 1914) he gave his reason for this opinion, in the following words, significant of rifts that were likely to be revealed subsequently in the Pan-American lute. "The Argentine civilization," he said, "is in origin and character purely European, it can therefore only follow a Pan-American policy on condition of respecting and maintaining its strong moral, intellectual and economic ties with Europe."

The views expressed by these speakers and many others at that time emphasized the determination of the leading South American Republics to reject any Pan-American project or policy which might fetter them in their free initiative and independent relations, as sovereign States, with European countries, not only in the realm of finance and economics but in political affairs. President Wilson's declaration that the United States would not tolerate any foreign financial or industrial control in

Latin America resulted in crystallizing public opinion in this direction. It was openly denounced in the Brazilian Chamber as meaning in effect "that, under pretence of emancipating these Republics and of guarding them from a highly fanciful peril of European Imperialism, the United States would submit them purely and simply to its own control."

It was inevitable that one of the first results of the war in Europe should be to increase the political, financial and commercial influence of the United States in South America; equally inevitable that, as the struggle proceeded and as admiration and sympathy for France increased, the Latin Republics should become more definitely opposed to the idea of excluding from their Continent the political influence of those European Powers which might serve as a counterpoise to the development of "Yankee Imperialism." A leading article in the *Santiago Mercurio* expressed the common sentiment in this matter in May, 1916, as follows:

The collective formula for the guarantee of territorial integrity and of the republican model is unnecessary, and tends to destroy the moral equilibrium of the true Continental policy, by giving a juridical foundation to possible tendencies towards the predominance of one part of the Continent over another. The Pan-American policy of concord—we have said it many times—is a spontaneous sentiment and expression of union; that of predominance, in one form or another, is a threat of discord, in respect either of the form or of the underlying principle.

From this significant modification of Pan-Americanism there followed gradually, in many influential circles of political thought, recognition of the fact that the emergence of the United States into the front rank of World Powers could not fail to render obsolete Washington's policy of avoiding "entangling alliances." The tradition of aloofness as a fundamental axiom of national policy might die hard amongst the older politicians, but public opinion had been rapidly educated by the war to substitute the planetary for the parochial conception of human affairs. President Wilson, in his speech to the Pan-American Congress in January, 1916, appeared to cling to his ideas of consolidating all the nations of the new world into a happy family, far removed from the troubles of the old, and preserved from possibilities of strife by arbitration agreements and mutual guarantees, ideas which he had previously failed to embody in formal Treaties owing to the lack of active sympathy



displayed towards them in the Southern Republics. The Congress at Washington supported the central idea of a Pan-American Alliance for the protection of democracy and the territorial integrity of all concerned, but the feeling was prevalent that the successful application of President Wilson's ideas must ultimately be dependent upon force, and, this being so, that an "American" Confederation pledged to ideals of civilization and humanity

doctrine in 1913 had gone beyond that of 1909. "Pan-Americanism," it declared, "is a tripod that cannot stand on two legs alone. Only a combination of the Latin countries, the United States and Great Britain, that is to say a combination of all the American Powers, can make it a safe and useful organization in the world to-day." Doubtless, as the attitude of the Senate indicated, these radical changes of opinion in the most vital region of American



[Harris &amp; Ewing.]

### THE COUNCIL OF THE PAN-AMERICAN UNION.

Photographed at the sitting of November 1, 1916.

Reading round the table from the left are:—Hon. R. Lansing, president (United States Secretary of State), Dr. R. S. Naón (Argentino Ambassador), Dr. C. M. de Pena (Minister of Uruguay), Dr. S. Ménnos (Haiti), Dr. S. A. Domínci (Venezuela), Don M. de Freyre y Santander (Peru), Don G. M. Varela (Chile), Mr. Barrett (Director-General, standing), and Don F. J. Yánes (Sub-Director). Right from the president in front:—Dr. D. da Gama (Brazilian Ambassador), Don I. Calderón (Bolivian Minister), Don J. Méndez (Minister of Guatemala), Dr. A. Membreño (Minister of Honduras), Dr. G. S. Córdova (Minister of Ecuador), Dr. C. M. de Céspedes (Cuban Minister), Dr. R. Zaldívar (Minister of S. Salvador), Dr. J. C. Zavala (Nicaragua), Don J. E. Lefevre (Panama). The Ministers of Colombia, Paraguay, Mexico, Costa Rica, and the Dominican Republic were not present at this sitting.

must sooner or later come to include the British Empire, as one of the greatest territorial and democratic Powers on the Continent. As the *Philadelphia Ledger* put it, "it seemed an absurdity to talk of 'Pan-Americanism' and in the same breath to ignore the fact that one of the greatest of the American Powers is not included in it." The *New Republic*, always in the van of intelligent anticipation in the field of world politics, went farther, giving to Pan-Americanism a new definition as far advanced beyond that of pre-war days as Mr. Roosevelt's re-definition of the Monroe

foreign policy were ahead of their time, but they were nevertheless straws that showed the force of the wind which the war had brought to bear upon the edifice of ancient tradition.

As regards the effect of the war on the economic conditions and trade of South America, three facts stood out conspicuously from the experiences of the leading Republics during 1914-1917; first, that the Continent as a whole was being, and would hereafter be, liberally compensated for the disabilities with which it had had to contend

in common with other neutral countries, by reason of the greatly increased demand and high prices paid by Europe for foodstuffs and raw materials; secondly, that, as a result of the inevitable curtailment of manufactured goods from Europe, an impetus had been given (most notably in Brazil) to the development of valuable national industries; thirdly,



LOADING CHILLED BEEF AT LA PLATA.

that the compulsory curtailment of many of the conveniences and luxuries of life had given the easy-going South American communities a badly needed lesson in self-denying economy, which but for the war they might only have acquired by direct and more painful experience.

This last fact stands out most prominently in the case of Argentina, a country whose economic position had probably benefited more from the war than any other, with the possible exception of Japan. She had not only gained by the enormously increased value of her staple exports—grain, meat, wool and hides—but in the development of local industries and by the fact that the war compelled the nation to take stock of its position and to modify its expenditure. A year before the outbreak of the struggle in Europe Argentina had been confronted with a severe crisis, due to over-importation and prodigality in public finance. The crops of wheat, linseed and oats in 1914 had been comparative failures, and the fact had been clearly reflected in the trade statistics of the first half of the year. The first effect of the war was a renewal of financial

depression and a restriction in consumption due to interference with supplies from the belligerent countries. The general tightness of money which resulted from the curtailment of credits in Europe was acutely felt in Buenos Aires in 1914, but it proved a blessing in disguise, in that it cured the light-hearted *estanciero's* "mañana" habit of mind, addicted to piling up commitments to be met, God willing, by the proceeds of future harvests. The first week of the war brought something like a panic: the banks, the Bolsa and the Caja Conversión remained closed till August 10; a 30 days' moratorium was declared for 80 per cent. of liabilities, credits were rigorously curtailed and many businesses closed down. It was not long, however, before the effect of remedial measures began to make itself felt; New York came forward to take the place of London in supplying the capital required to lubricate the wheels of Argentine finance. In 1915 the country's imports were greatly reduced, while exports advanced rapidly, as the following table shows:

	Imports.	Exports.
	£	£
1915 ... ..	45,000,000	110,550,000
1914 ... ..	53,825,327	69,159,000
1913 ... ..	83,436,000	95,744,000
1912 ... ..	76,208,600	95,127,000
1911 ... ..	72,635,800	64,296,000

During 1916 difficulties in the matter of tonnage began to be seriously felt, and the export of cereals was considerably reduced in consequence, but the shipments of meat to Great Britain and her Allies surpassed all records. The country's finances were sensibly improved, the Government's estimates for 1916 showing a small surplus, as compared with an actual deficit of nearly £15,000,000 in 1914. During 1915 the German import trade into Argentina officially came to an end, though until the entry of the United States into the war it continued to be carried on through subterranean channels. In 1913 this trade amounted to a value of £14,121,000 (as against Great Britain's £22,641,000); German money continued nevertheless to be freely spent throughout the country in wholesale purchases of wool and hides. Much of the remarkable rise in prices for these and other products of South America was directly due to German competition; at an early stage of the war far-seeing individuals in Hamburg and Berlin realized that non-perishable goods on the other side of the Atlantic



were likely to prove a better investment than the German mark. At the end of 1915 the Germans at Buenos Aires and Montevideo were credited with holding wool (much of it said to be purchased on Government account) to the value of over £6,000,000, and were loading it in their interned steamers to save storage expenses. The price of cereals was also rapidly advanced as the result of German competition; there was no possible reason for doubting that the enormously increased shipments of grain to Scandinavian ports were bought on German account by enterprising neutrals.

In Germany the actual and prospective value of South America as a source of supply for foodstuffs and raw materials and as a dumping ground for German manufactures was fully realized before the war. Apprehensions as

community continued long after the outbreak of war to reflect the country's cosmopolitan tendencies and its lack of homogeneous public opinion; and the organized State-directed activities of the Fatherland took full advantage of the situation. They were greatly encouraged and assisted, moreover, by the British Government's inexplicable reluctance to put an end to trading with the enemy during the first two years of the war and its failure to use the effective weapon of the Black List for the uprooting of German commerce. It sounds almost incredible, but it is, nevertheless, true, that owing to the graceful concessions made by Great Britain in 1915, German goods continued to arrive in Buenos Aires, often in British ships, both directly and from the United States. The particular concession (made in deference to protest by the American



TRANSPORTING WOOL IN ARGENTINA.

to the future protective policy of the Allies, as outlined at the Paris Conference, served to emphasize that value after the German flag was driven from the seas and German trade compelled to seek the kindly offices of neutrals to avoid complete destruction. In Argentina several causes contributed to assist the German in retaining, more or less successfully, his place in the sun. Although public sentiment, as distinguished from the official attitude, was overwhelmingly pro-Ally from the outset, the views and proceedings of the commercial

Government) by virtue of which German goods were released for export if ordered and paid for before March, 1915, was naturally abused and exploited to the utmost, German houses combining with native firms to secure the permits. Had no such facilities been given for enemy trading, it is safe to say that nine-tenths of the Germans in South America would have gone out of business before the end of 1915. What actually happened under the benevolent latitude allowed them was that they were frequently placed in a position of



MONTEVIDEO.

advantage as compared with British firms. The British command of the sea had made it practically impossible for the German in South America to return to the Fatherland; he, therefore, remained to serve his country by keeping his business going while thousands of his British competitors returned home to enlist. Those that remained had to contend with restricted credit facilities, whilst the German banks, backed by the German Government, gave extra assistance to their countrymen to enable them to keep up their business. Even so the bulk of their trade must speedily have been extinguished had it not been for the complaisance of the British Government and the support extended to German houses by British financiers and traders of the cosmopolitan, free-trading persuasion. As a *Times* correspondent pointed out, there existed no efficient censorship of overseas mails until late in 1915, and the censorship between the United Kingdom and South America did not commence until June, 1916. Hence it will hardly come as a surprise to anyone to know that a great deal of German South American business was actually financed from London, and that the Germans in Buenos Aires were thoroughly satisfied with the general progress of events. Writing in January 1916, *The Times* Correspondent at Buenos Aires welcomed Lord Robert Cecil's declaration that the prohibition of enemy trading was to be extended so

as to include enemy firms in neutral countries; he added the significant statement that "up to now German firms here have been as free to trade with British firms, and British firms at home with local German houses here, as if there had been no declaration of war and no Orders in Council." German goods disappeared in 1915 from the official Argentine returns, but German firms were still able to accept large orders with guarantees of normal delivery and to compete openly with their British rivals. They received their stocks through various channels; in some cases direct from British firms, in others through Sweden and Holland, where the shipments were duly certified by consular certificates to be of Swedish or Dutch origin. Small wonder if the Argentine official and citizen, observing these things, came to the conclusion that British trade was dependent at many points on German intelligence and energy; small wonder that British prestige suffered accordingly. Under the circumstances it was unreasonable for Englishmen on the spot to criticize the cautious prudence of Argentina's utilitarian neutrality.

The institution of the Black List came as a severe shock to German travelers in South America and to their friends in Europe, and the German-subsidized Press in Buenos Aires and elsewhere waxed violently abusive. Argentine politicians were invited, and some were induced, to challenge the legality of the measure on the



ground of neutrality. This proving to be impracticable, a German Chamber of Commerce was started, for the purpose of consolidating German trade interests in Argentina, especially for post-war activities, and to "black list" the majority of British firms as a retaliatory measure. Meanwhile, in order to evade the Statutory List, German business took to concealing its identity under various disguises, using faked names and addresses for the beguiling of European shippers, or trading as *bonâ fide* American or Argentine concerns, with managers Schultz and Schmidt in the position of industrious German employees. Simultaneously an enormous expansion took place in the parcel post traffic to South America from Lisbon and the United States. It was only after the latter country's entry into the war that the German trader in the Southern Continent was made to realize the seriousness of his position and to look to the future with gloomy forebodings.

The effect of the war on the finances and trade of Brazil is fairly reflected in the following trade returns :

	Imports. £	Exports. £	Trade Balance. £
1916	40,537,948	55,375,377	+ 14,837,429
1915	30,088,000	52,970,000	+ 22,882,000
1914	35,439,000	46,511,000	+ 11,072,000
1913	67,166,366	64,948,000	- 2,217,605

In 1913 the country was suffering from acute economic depression. The outlook was anything but promising, there being no immediate prospect of relieving the national finances from the vicissitudes which had resulted from their dependence upon the two staple products, rubber and coffee, exposed to severe competition from Ceylon, the Dutch Colonies and Malaya. At the close of 1914 the foreign debt amounted to £104,481,728 and the Federal Government was compelled to promulgate a scheme in October whereby the greater part of this amount was included in a funding arrangement, interest being paid for three years in new 5 per cent. bonds and sinking funds suspended. In 1915, thanks to a drastic reduction of expenditure and a steady increase in trade, the credit of the Republic began to improve. To meet the situation created by the inevitable curtailment of imports from Europe new industries were successfully established; to this industrial development must be ascribed the rapid recovery which took place in the finances of the State of Rio. In an address delivered before the Manufacturers' Association at Rio de Janeiro on September 29, 1917, the Brazilian Minister of Finance (Dr. Antonio Carlos) observed that the war had naturally brought about a great reduction of imports into Brazil, which meant a serious loss of



DRYING HIDES, MONTEVIDEO.

revenue from Customs duties: since 1913 the Treasury had subsisted on revenue derived from the taxation of products for national consumption. Owing to the lack of many necessities formerly imported, several branches of national industry had increased their capacity and range of production. Their large output had greatly contributed to reducing the cost of living in Brazil; at the same time economic reforms had been introduced with excellent results. In spite of the reduced immigration caused by the war, Brazilian agriculture had succeeded in extending the area under cultivation throughout the country and introducing new products, so that a certain amount of cereals had become available for export. The situation created in Europe by the depletion of stocks of raw materials and foodstuffs had constituted an opportunity for countries like Brazil to develop their resources to meet the new demand. The development of the Brazilian trade in frozen meat had afforded striking proof of the possibilities of the pastoral industry of the country in the future. The Minister of Finance estimated that the consumption tax on national produce would bring in about £6,000,000 in 1917, a sum nearly sufficient to balance the loss of import duties.

In view of the abundant stocks of coffee held in England at the beginning of the war and the

necessity for conserving tonnage, Great Britain's embargo upon further importation was fully justified; it was none the less a source of serious embarrassment, economic and political, to the Brazilian Government, and was exploited to the utmost for the purposes of German propaganda in the Republic. Until the entry of Portugal into the war, Brazil's neutrality was marked by a very deferential attitude towards Germany and the Germans; nor is this surprising in view of the large German colonies established in the southern maritime provinces of the Republic and the widespread influence of German trade and finance throughout the country. Portugal's enlistment on the side of the Allies naturally produced a marked effect on public opinion; nevertheless, so long as the United States remained neutral, it was safe to predict that Brazil would do the same. Even after the rupture of diplomatic relations, when a declaration of war by Brazil against Germany had become practically inevitable, the opinion continued to be widely held in commercial circles that the door should be kept open for trading with Germany in the future, as she was likely to be a better customer than Great Britain. The coffee embargo remained a sore point and accounted in no small measure for the President's non-committal attitude. The *Rio Imparcial* gave expression



LOADING COFFEE AT SANTOS, BRAZIL.





TRAMP STEAMERS OF THE ALLIES LOADING AT BAHIA BLANCA.

to the Germanophile view in commenting editorially on the Finance Minister's address in October 1917. It observed that Great Britain's future policy would be to favour the produce of her own Colonies and Dominions by a protective tariff, whereas Germany would continue to purchase raw materials from Brazil, sending in return manufactured produce upon advantageous conditions. The German banks and big traders certainly did their best to prove themselves good customers. Their large purchases of coffee and other produce at Santos, Bahia and Pernambuco constituted a powerful argument in their favour especially when contrasted with Great Britain's embargo on the country's chief staple export. These questions are referred to farther on in dealing with the course of events that led to Brazil's declaration of war on October 26, 1917.

The first results of the war in Chile were clearly reflected in the sharp contrast between the trade returns for 1914 and 1915; they pointed to a severe dislocation of the nation's vital industry—the production and sale of nitrate—so severe as to make the fiscal position of the country a source of serious anxiety. The figures are as follows:

	Imports. £	Exports. £
First half of 1914 ...	10,986,482	13,917,303
„ „ „ 1915 ...	4,781,607	9,803,070

The balance of trade remained largely in Chile's favour, so that Chilean exchange stood high; but as the Chilean Treasury derives nearly half its revenues from the export duty on nitrate, and as the shipments during the first year of the war amounted to only about half of the total for the preceding twelve months, the position remained somewhat critical for a time. By March, 1915, out of

134 nitrate companies in working when the war broke out, 98 had suspended operations, and the price of the commodity had fallen to something near the cost of production. Thereafter, as the demand increased for refined nitrate for the making of explosives, the tide turned swiftly in Chile's favour, with the result that the country's trade and finances for 1916 touched high-water mark. In 1914 the Treasury had had to face a deficit of £2,700,000; the estimates for 1916 showed a surplus of a million. As in other parts of South America, one of the first effects of the war was to make necessary the mother of many salutary inventions. Willy-nilly, the country learned how to do without things from abroad; imports in 1915 decreased by over 50 per cent. At the same time the production of iron and copper was stimulated and increased attention was directed to agriculture, with excellent results. The position attained in 1916 was succinctly stated in *The Times'* financial review for the year:

Never before has the year's export of nitrate of soda, the prime factor in the national economy, approached within measurable distance of the quantity shipped in the last 12 months, or enjoyed so strong a market; and not for many years has the Chilean peso touched, as in November last, the shilling mark.

Copper and wool, two export products which are now of real importance, were shipped in record quantities and fetched unprecedented prices; national industry, favoured by the state of war in Europe, made in 1916 an indubitable start; capital, chiefly North American, evinced a very practical interest in Chile's potentialities, mainly in the direction of mining; agriculture in the centre of the country has benefited by the state of affairs in the nitrate pampas of the north. Evidence of this general prosperity is naturally visible in the savings banks returns. It has been a boom year for Chile, and to crown all Congress announced towards the end of October that the British Government had presented the Chilean Navy with five American-built submarines as compensation for the disorganization of Chile's naval construction programme caused by the requisitioning of certain important Chilean units building in British shipyards at the outbreak of the war.



A certain number of the nitrate-producing companies are in German hands, and a considerable proportion of the total output before the war was absorbed by Germany for agricultural purposes. The stock (about 200,000 tons) held by these companies was necessarily immobilized by British trade restrictions, until, through the medium of the Chilean



DR. HIPÓLITO IRIGOYEN,  
President of the Argentine Republic.

Government, they were sold (in September 1917) to the American Dupont Powder Company acting under instructions of the United States Government, an arrangement which enabled the German concerns to renew their producing activities and to lay up fresh stocks for use after the war. In other directions German traders were compelled to mark time. Their movements, here as elsewhere, were drastically curtailed by the operation of the Black List; so much so that all their powers of intrigue and propaganda were directed to induce the Chilean Government to adopt retaliatory measures. Resulting therefrom a discussion on the subject took place in the Senate, and a declaration was obtained from the Minister for Foreign Affairs that he was discussing the possibility of joint action with Argentina and Brazil. But the entry of the United States into the war made such discussions unprofitable. Before the end of 1917 American cooperation in measures de-

signed to prevent shipments from reaching German firms through intermediaries had produced most satisfactory results, and the German Government's efforts to maintain the back door open in Argentina and elsewhere had begun to assume an aspect of futility that impressed even its sympathisers.

In Venezuela, where Germany's share of the foreign trade (20 per cent.) was almost equal to that of Great Britain, the outbreak of war was severely felt. The cessation of German activities led to demoralization in the market for hides and other produce. The principal business houses at Ciudad Bolívar, for example, being German, found it impossible to import or export anything through Trinidad, and were compelled to suspend their operations until regular communication had been established with La Guaira, the port of transshipment for cargo consigned to the United States. The result was a glut on the New York markets for Venezuelan produce and a temporary cessation of demand.

Condemned perforce by England's command of the seas to a period of watchful waiting, the Germans in South America were not content to be idle in the service of *Deutschum* and the protection of their own trade interests. On the contrary, throughout all the Latin Republics German agents and propagandists worked unceasingly to educate public opinion to the idea that the economic position of Germany after the war would be such as to make her the best possible customer and general purveyor for South America, and that to alienate her goodwill would be a suicidal policy. In many places, notably in Buenos Aires and Santiago de Chile, much of the German seed thus sown fell upon ground well prepared to receive it. On the one hand, the heavy artillery of German finance was brought to bear in buying up vast quantities of Argentine and Uruguayan wool, Brazilian coffee, and other staples; on the other, the light infantry of their commerce, in skirmishing order, ranged all over the continent, showing ranges of samples, canvassing for orders, and offering guarantees of delivery after the war at pre-war prices. So long as their interned ships remained laden with German cargo, under the German flag, conspicuous in all the chief harbours of the South American seaboard, they served to reinforce the arguments and assurances with which politicians, pressmen, and mer-

chants were industriously assailed. These vessels were an earnest of future German activities, which, as the propagandists explained, were bound to be concentrated on South American markets because of the restrictions that Great Britain and her Allies would place on them elsewhere. Possibly the guarantees for the delivery of cheap German manufactures after the war might be of no more value than any other scrap of paper, but there was every reason for Argentine and Chilean importers to believe that Germany would re-enter the field with large surplus stocks, to be dumped in generous mood upon South America in return for wool, hides, tallow, and foodstuffs. Would England be in a position to offer them similar advantages? If not, was it wise to deprive themselves of the opportunities thus presented by boycotting German commerce as a penalty for the crimes of German militarism? This, roughly speaking, was undoubtedly the attitude of a considerable section of political and commercial opinion in most of the Latin Republics. Strictly un sentimental and utilitarian, it was opposed to the chivalrous instincts of the great bulk of the people, but it was none the less influential

in high places. It was supported with characteristic thoroughness by societies officially inspired and organized in Germany, and by the publication of illustrated monthly papers in Spanish and Portuguese (*El Mensajero de Ultramar* and *O Transatlantico*) nicely adapted to gild the pill of peaceful penetration with the sugar of lofty sentiments and idealistic motives.

The "German Economic Association for South and Central America" was established at Berlin in 1915, and, notwithstanding the difficulty of interrupted communications, it was able to boast before the end of 1916 that it had successfully established branches, in touch with it, in all the 21 Republics. Some time later a Germanic League for South America was organized, ostensibly for the purpose of bringing together into closer union "all persons of German extraction whose speech, sympathies and habits of thought are German" (or, in other words, the quest of the wandering sheep); but the League announced its readiness to welcome to its ranks "all representatives of such nations as think it of vital importance to the world that Germanic morality and Germanic civilization should be preserved to



DRYING AND PACKING NITRATE, CHILE.



it in all their purity." One of the principal objects enumerated in the League's programme is "the cultivation of the German language and Germanic customs and assiduous cooperation in the preservation and foundation of German schools and other Germanic educational institutions." In South Brazil and in Chile, where the insidious influences of the independent German school had long been denounced by patriotic citizens as a danger to the State, subversive alike of national unity and dignity, the assertion of the League's founders that its purposes were in no sense political was not likely to mislead any but those who wished to be deceived.

But German propagandist activities were by no means confined to the legitimate object of maintaining and extending German trade and influence in South America after the war. Throughout the Latin Republics, as in the United States and in the Far East, Germany's agents, spies and hirelings worked unceasingly and unscrupulously, under the direction of their Legations, to create internal and international dissensions favourable to the German cause. Much energy and money were spent in subsidizing and acquiring control of sections of the Press. From the outset German telegrams emanating from the New York branch of the German Press Bureau were supplied gratuitously

to every newspaper that would print them; these war bulletins were of the usual mendacious type, systematically directed towards discrediting the Allies and throwing upon them all responsibility for the war. Towards the end of 1914 a German organ printed in Spanish, *La Unión*, made its appearance in Buenos Aires, and Argentina was flooded with a number of profusely illustrated periodicals, whereby German *Kultur* was skilfully displayed for the edification of the masses. For the benefit of the large Italian colony in Argentina the Central Labour Exchange at Berlin organized the publication of a paper, *Il Lavoro*, which was widely circulated. Directed from Buenos Aires, the influence of German propaganda radiated throughout the continent. Its influence was particularly noticeable in Chile; the Press of Santiago refrained with practical unanimity from editorial comments on the sinking of the *Lusitania*. A "Society for German *Kultur*" was founded in that city by Germans and German-Chileans; for a long time German influence continued to be paramount in the clerical, military and financial circles of the Chilean capital. In Buenos Aires also was located, under the competent direction of the notorious Luxburg, the headquarters of a system of espionage and intrigue whose



THE CUBAN INSURRECTION: UNITED STATES BLUE-JACKETS LANDED IN SANTIAGO TO RESTORE ORDER.

activities extended northward to the Caribbean Sea. *The Times* Correspondent at Washington in September 1917, quoting a Buenos Aires dispatch to the *New York World*, reported that, as the result of official enquiries, the headquarters of this spy system had been located in a German Bureau financed by the German Government, and that the Argentine authorities were in possession of proof that German agents had been regularly collecting information concerning the departures and cargoes of ships and the movements of neutral vessels.

All the evidence available on the spot concerning the causes conducing to the serious railway strike, which cut off Buenos Aires from communication with the interior in October, 1917, tended to confirm the opinion of those who looked beyond the superficial aspects of the movement that German machinations and German money were behind it. As *The Times* Correspondent observed at the time :

There has existed, and still exists, in the minds of 99 out of every 100 men outside the ranks of the strikers themselves, the conviction that German intrigue, German money and German designs were at the root of the strike. The coincidence between the declaration by both Houses of the Argentine Congress in favour of a rupture of relations with Germany and the outbreak of a general strike was too marked, especially when the analogy of similar strikes at critical moments in Spain, in the United States and in Russia, is taken into account.

There was ample evidence among the strikers of money in profusion, far beyond anything that could have come from their own resources ; another significant feature of the movement was the notable recrudescence of anti-British and pro-neutrality propaganda.

In the chronically turbulent tropics and in the lesser Republics bordering on the Caribbean Germany found material for cruder and more overt treasons and stratagems than she could safely foment in the south. The Cuban insurrection of February, 1917, was attributed by the State Department at Washington to the instigation of German agents ; later in the year they fomented a strike of the sugar-mill operatives at Santa Clara ; there was evidence, moreover, to prove that the Cuban Consul-General at Rotterdam had been induced to act as the forwarding agent for German correspondence. (In the same way Chilean official channels were used to evade the censorship of the Allies. The *Banco Alemán Transatlántico* was thus enabled to remit funds to Germany ; the Chilean Government denied direct responsibility and attributed the breach of neutrality to the slackness of subordinates.) At Panama

the activities of German plotters compelled the Government in May, 1917, to arrest and deport to Colón the most prominent offenders. In Nicaragua a violent demonstration against the United States occurred in March 1917, Congress demanding the withdrawal of the United States marines ; German instigation was undoubtedly a factor in this outbreak. In Colombia the services of one Haines, an Irish rebel, were enlisted to take command of



SEÑOR J. LUIS SANFUENTES,  
President of Chile.

a buccaneering expedition, which equipped two coastguard vessels with German crews, at Puerto Colombia. At Bahia bombs were placed on board of British and Allied ships, timed to explode three days after the vessels had put to sea. The Republic of San Salvador received through Mexico in February, 1917, a "present" of a complete Telefunken wireless installation, with German mechanics to erect it. In Costa Rica and Haiti German intrigue was a powerful factor in local politics ; in the former Republic German priests displayed the greatest activity in propagandist work directed against the United States. Throughout the Central Republics the aggressive Germanophile proclivities of the Mexican Government under Señor Carranza were fully exploited to create dissensions and unrest, especially in Guatemala and Honduras. But in spite of all these pernicious activities, the weight of public





GERMAN SHIPS AT BUENOS AIRES.

opinion in most of these minor Republics became more and more pronouncedly hostile to Germany as the truth concerning her methods of warfare emerged from the smoke-clouds of her propaganda. It is safe to say that by the end of 1917 the name of Germany stank in the nostrils of the general public, of every self-respecting gaucho and peón from Panama to Patagonia, and it was clear that, whatever the prudent path of politicians might be, it would be long before the German in South America could live down the infamies which had disgraced his nation in this war.

The infamous telegrams transmitted to Berlin by the German representative at Buenos Aires (Count Luxburg) through the Swedish Legation, which were made public by the State Department at Washington on September 8, 1917, and subsequent dates, left no further ground for any disinterested neutral to doubt the nature and extent of German official intrigues. As in the United States (to quote President Wilson's words) it was clear that from the outset of the war Germany had filled the unsuspecting communities of the South American Republics "and even the offices of Government with spies, and set criminal intrigues everywhere afoot; moreover, that these intrigues were carried on with the support and even under the personal direction of official agents of the German Government accredited to the Governments of the Republics." Count Luxburg's par-

ticularly cynical machinations had involved not only the Swedish Government but that of Argentina in gross breaches of the elementary obligations of neutrality; they served to throw final enlightenment on the criminal practices of German diplomacy, as earlier revealed in the von Papen papers, and to evoke violent manifestations of indignation throughout the Latin Republics.

The announcement in which the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs at Washington published the first three of the long series of dispatches which had been secured by the United States—there were over 400 of them—was as follows:

The Department of State has secured certain telegrams from Count Luxburg, German Chargé d'Affaires at Buenos Aires, to the Foreign Office, Berlin, which I regret to say were dispatched from Buenos Aires by the Swedish Legation as their own official messages addressed to the Stockholm Foreign Office. The following are English translations of the German text:—

"May 19, 1917, No. 32.—This Government has now released the German and Austrian ships in which hitherto a guard has been placed. In consequence of the settlement of the Monte (Protegido) case there has been a great change in public feeling. The Government will in future only clear Argentine ships as far as Las Palmas. [Las Palmas is one of the Canary Islands, and is the last neutral touching place on the ordinary ocean route between South America and North-western Europe: It belongs to Spain.] I beg that the small steamers Oran and Guazo, January 31 (meaning which sailed on January 31), 300 tons, which are now nearing Bordeaux, with a view to changing flags, may be spared if possible, or else sunk without a trace being left (*spurlas versenkt*).—LUXBURG."

The second message reads:—

"July 3, 1917, No. 59.—I learn from a reliable source

that the Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, who is a notorious ass and Anglophile, declared in secret session of the Senate that Argentina would demand from Berlin a promise not to sink more Argentine ships. If not agreed to relations would be broken off. I recommend refusal, or, if necessary, calling in the mediation of Spain.—Signed LUXBURG."

The third message reads:—

"July 9, 1917, No. 64.—Without showing any tendency to make concessions postpone reply to Argentine Note until receipt of further reports. Change of Ministry probable. As regards Argentine steamers, I recommend either compelling them to turn back, sinking them without leaving any trace, or letting them through. They are all quite small.—LUXBURG."

Thus, as *The Times* put it,

The accredited representative of the German Empire at Buenos Aires, while actually enjoying the hospitality of the Argentine Republic, was seen advocating the deliberate murder of Argentine subjects on the high seas, in order that the sinking of Argentine ships by German submarines should leave no trace which would make their crime known in the Argentine, and so make an enemy of that country.

Public opinion in Argentina and elsewhere was not slow to express its indignation at the damnable treachery which had solemnly promised "to respect the Argentine flag," even while it was plotting to sink it "without a trace being left"; it was equally incensed at the manner in which the Argentine Government had welcomed Germany's "settlement" of the *Mente Protegido* case and proclaimed it as a diplomatic victory and justification for benevolent neutrality. Count Luxburg had

placed his friend President Irigoyen in the awkward predicament of confessing himself either the associate or the dupe of the apostles of criminal *Kultur*. That the German Government promptly disavowed its representative's actions in reply to Argentina's request for "explanations" had little or no effect in quelling popular resentment. On September 12 Count Luxburg received his passports with an intimation to the effect that he had ceased to be *persona grata*, but throughout South America the Press generally remained unsatisfied and urged the inauguration of a Pan-American movement in support of the United States and Brazil. On the same night there were serious anti-German riots in Buenos Aires; the German Club was set on fire and several business houses, including the office of the German newspaper, destroyed. On September 15 a large public meeting was held at Buenos Aires, demanding a rupture with Germany and the extirpation of espionage; meanwhile the friends of Count Luxburg, with cynical effrontery, had circulated a report to the effect that Señor Pueyrredon, the Argentine Minister for Foreign Affairs, had himself suggested to Count Luxburg the sinking of Argentine ships without leaving a trace! It was subsequently proved by further publication of the German representative's dispatches and of his Government's



A HERD OF LLAMAS.

The Llama is bred in the higher parts of Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia, and its wool, like that of the Alpaca, constitutes a staple export of those countries.



replies that the German Government was fully informed and approved of his "diplomaey."

Undeterred by the dismissal of Count Luxburg, public opinion at Buenos Aires continued to display intense indignation, in remarkable contrast to the non-committal complacency of Señor Irigoyen's Cabinet. On September 20, by 23 votes to 1, the Senate approved a minute in favour of a rupture with Germany.



COUNT LUXBURG,  
German Minister at Buenos Aires until  
September, 1917.

On the night of the 22nd the Minister for Foreign Affairs announced in the Chamber that he had asked Germany for satisfactory explanations, failing which the Argentine Government would adopt extreme measures. Just as the Chamber of Deputies was about to vote for the severance of diplomatic relations it was informed that the following dispatch had been received from Berlin :

The Imperial Government keenly regrets what has happened, and absolutely disapproves of the ideas expressed by Count Luxburg on the method of carrying out submarine warfare. These ideas are personal to him. They have not had, and will not have, any influence on the decision and promises of the Empire. (Signed) Kühlmann.

In view of this official sacrifice of the diplomatic scapegoat, the Chamber's action was adjourned to the 25th, when the vote in favour of an immediate rupture was adopted by 53 to 18. The Cabinet was expected to take

action accordingly, but nothing happened, all the Government's attention being apparently concentrated on an opportunely instigated railway strike. But the end of the Luxburg revelations was not yet. On October 28 messages from Rio de Janeiro were published in the Press of Buenos Aires, announcing that the Brazilian Minister for Foreign Affairs had confirmed the statement that the further deciphering of the ex-Minister's telegrams had revealed a plot for a German invasion of South Brazil. The Argentine Press thereupon demanded that the reticence of the Government in regard to the Luxburg dispatches should cease and that it should either publish the documents in full or authorize foreign Governments to publish them. On November 11 these Brazilian intrigues were cheerfully disavowed by the Berlin Foreign Office. Herr von Kühlmann's alacrity to disassociate the ex-Minister from all connexion with his Government betrayed Germany's desperate anxiety to avoid a rupture with Argentina, and President Irigoyen was pleased to be able to place all responsibility upon Count Luxburg personally. However, more was yet to come. On December 20 the State Department at Washington published a further batch of telegrams, one of which revealed the fact, of international importance to South America, that Count Luxburg had induced the President of the Argentine Republic to endeavour to form a secret agreement with Chile and Bolivia, with a view to "a mutual *rapprochement* for their protection against North America." Indicative of the means which the German representative had employed for communicating with the Berlin Foreign Office, one of these dispatches refers to his fear that his "secret wire" might have been discovered. The secret agreement dispatch was as follows :

August 1.—The President has at last made up his mind to conclude secret agreement with Chile and Bolivia regarding a mutual *rapprochement* for protection *vis-à-vis* N. America before the Conference idea is taken up again. Saguier, with friendly Under-Secretary of State and full power, is *en route* to . . . and Santiago.

Statements by the Argentine Minister for Foreign Affairs and by the President of Chile denied the truth of Count Luxburg's statements in regard to the alleged negotiations, but public opinion remained uneasy and unconvinced. Meanwhile Count Luxburg's own position had become one of extreme discomfort. Unable to obtain a safe conduct for Europe, he first asked permission to reside at an



*estancia* in the interior as a private citizen; this was refused. He then endeavoured to make arrangements to go to Chile, but neither that country nor Uruguay nor Paraguay would receive the unwelcome guest. Finally, on October 7, he disappeared, and it was rumoured that he had left in a tug to join the steamer *Reina Victoria Eugenia* at the mouth of the River Plate for Spain. It subsequently transpired that he had attempted to escape into the interior; he was arrested, brought back to Buenos Aires and interned (October 12) on the island of Martin Garcia, a result which *The Times* Correspondent at Buenos Aires attributed to "the pressure of popular indignation at his remaining in the country." Next, an Argentine citizen applied for a writ of *habeas corpus* for the ex-Minister, claiming his right to reside as a private individual in Argentina. Eventually, the British Government magnanimously granted him a safe conduct on condition that he should sail by the Dutch s.s. *Hollandia* in November for some country bordering on Germany. He was thereupon released from internment and restored to the German Legation pending his

departure: but the strain had been too great, even for a German diplomatist, and he was shortly afterwards admitted to a German hospital suffering from mental and nervous breakdown. Exit Luxburg, sunk, not without traces, by his own craft. The fashionable world and the clubs of Buenos Aires regretted the disappearance of one whose petulant outbursts of almost Kaiserlike tantrums had long been a source of innocent merriment to the community. A very different individual from the suave and studious Luxburg known to Peking diplomacy in former days was the mailed-fist-and-shining-sword individual developed in Buenos Aires by the bitter uses of adversity and the sense of increasing isolation. He endeavoured to console himself and his compatriots for the undignified helplessness of their position by continual and childish protests on every conceivable ground, asserting his dignity at the Plaza Hotel (from which he refused to remove his unwelcome presence) by declining to use the lift in company with any fellow guest of enemy nationality, and by many other similar displays of Teutonic temper.



ANTI-GERMAN RIOTS IN BUENOS AIRES: THE GERMAN CLUB, WHICH WAS BURNT BY THE POPULACE.

At the close of the year 1917 the majority of the South American Republics had followed the example of the United States and officially declared their sympathy with the Allies. The two most notable exceptions were Argentina and Chile. In the latter country German influence had too long been firmly established in military, educational and clerical circles; nevertheless, as has already been shown, this influence steadily declined, while that of the Entente increased, as the war revealed German *Kultur* in all its frightfulness. Popular sentiment, here as in Argentina, had been converted to the cause of the Allies long before the third year of the war; but the Government, powerfully swayed by Roman Catholic influence and by fear of German reprisals, adhered persistently to its policy of cautious neutrality. North America's entry into the war was not calculated to modify its attitude, for the reason that the United States have never been popular in Chile. To put the matter briefly, the Government at Santiago feared the United States more than Germany; furthermore it showed itself to be extremely jealous of anything savouring of infringement on its independent initiative. In April 1917, the Chilean Government intimated through its Minister in London that it did not feel called upon to follow the example of the United States and Brazil for the reason that Chile's sovereign rights had not been attacked by Germany. If they were, Chile would be prompt to take suitable action. The tendencies of the official class were indicated,

even at this period, by the fact that the Chilean Government appointed a German as its Consular representative at Tampico, a danger point of friction, and that its Consul-General in Mexico City was also a German. In June it declined to place armed guards on board the interned German ships, citing in support the example of Argentina. But even the Chilean administration was shaken by the depths of depravity and duplicity revealed in the Luxburg dispatches, and towards the close of the year there was evidence in the Press of a growing sense of the disadvantages of national isolation. The action taken by the Peruvian Government, in severing relations with Germany (October 5), was not without weight at Santiago de Chile, for until the sinking of the barque Lorton, the attitude of Peru had been in all important respects similar to that of her neighbour. Nevertheless, at the end of 1917 the attitude of the Chilean Government remained to all appearances as it was when officially defined at the time of the United States entering the war, namely, that Chile would maintain her impartial neutrality so long as she was not the object of direct attack.

At the beginning of the war the flagrant violations of Chilean neutrality committed by German warships in Chilean waters and the assistance rendered to these warships by vessels clearing from Chilean ports led to a situation which, had it developed, might easily have embroiled Chile with the Allies. But the action taken by the Chilean authorities in



LOADING ORANGES ON THE PARANÁ RIVER.



suppressing the activities of German wireless stations and supply ships of the Kosmos line relieved the strain produced by earlier incidents; moreover, the spontaneous attacks by the crowd at Valparaiso on the German Consulate and Bank were a compensating feature. Even-



URUGUAYAN GAUCHOS.

tually the undeniable violation of Chilean territorial waters by the British squadron which sank the Dresden (March 14, 1915), close in shore off Juan Fernandez, was tacitly accepted on both sides as a squaring of accounts, fittingly terminated by Sir Edward Grey's ample apology. The Chilean Press expressed complete satisfaction with "the happy conclusion of the incident" and contrasted the British Government's prompt *amende* with Germany's failure to reply to five protests lodged by the Chilean Government between December 1914 and May 1915.

Similarly, the Chilean Press strongly supported the action of the United States in February 1917. According to *The Times* Correspondent at Valparaiso, the effect of the German declaration of unrestricted submarine warfare was "to undo the work of 2½ years of laboured propaganda." The Chilean Government defined its position in reply to Mr. Wilson's Note by declaring that "Germany's declaration implied a restriction of the rights of neutrals which could not be accepted." After the United States declaration of war the position of Chile became one of considerable difficulty, especially in view of the future of the nitrate trade with North America. Following upon several meetings of the Cabinet it was decided that Chile had no valid reasons to take separate action in support of the United States,

while Argentina was obviously holding back. The attitude of the Chilean Government was likewise influenced by the fact that Germany held £2,500,000 of conversion funds and that she had confiscated Chilean iodine (just as she confiscated Brazilian coffee) in German hands, for which Chile could not hope to receive payment except in the shape of German ships.

In Argentina at the beginning of the war there were several reasons to make prudent neutrality a popular policy. In the first place, the Argentine army had been trained by German officers and wore German uniforms, like the armies of Chile and Paraguay. Belief in German military power was therefore almost universal; just as, thanks to the German



A ROUGH ROAD IN ASUNCION, PARAGUAY.

banks, was the belief in German trade organization. The stout defence put up by invaded Belgium and the barbarities inflicted upon her brave people were the first factors in creating a definite anti-German feeling throughout Argentina. The shooting of Mr. Hummer, the Argentine Vice-Consul at Dinan, by the Germans increased this feeling. *The Times* Correspondent at Buenos Aires reported (October 9) that

there was much public irritation at the Government's failure to obtain satisfaction for this outrage, and "it was feared that the inactivity of the Government might give rise to a wrong impression abroad." Unfortunately, many subsequent events tended to create the impression, especially after the election of Señor Hipólito

advico of Congress. At certain moments in 1917 the attitude of his Government seemed to be wavering, in the face of some particularly strong demonstration of public irritation (as after the sinking of the *Monte Protegido*), but on each occasion Germany was prompt to save the face of the Government and to enable it to



DR. FELICIANO VIERA,  
President of Uruguay.

Irigoyen to the Presidency (June 12, 1916), that public opinion in Argentina does not exercise the driving power or the influence in public affairs which in theory it possesses, and this because of its cosmopolitan and conglomerate nature. Moreover, as the attitude of Señor Irigoyen proved, the policy of Argentina is constitutionally inclined rather to base itself on the exigencies of the situation in South America than to take a wide view of world politics and international agreements. Rivalry with Brazil for the predominant position in the Southern Continent has been, and remains, a determinant factor of Argentine policy, and the fact that Brazil is more Americanized than Argentina affords in itself a partial explanation of the latter's refusal to follow the lead of the United States against Germany. Finally, there can be no doubt that to the Clerical influences brought to bear upon President Irigoyen and some of his advisers must be ascribed in great measure his disregard of the sentiments unmistakably expressed by the majority of his countrymen and of the



DR. MANUEL FRANCO,  
President of Paraguay.

justify its passivity by apparently graceful concessions. The Argentine reply to Germany's declaration of indiscriminate submarine warfare expressed regret that the Emperor should have deemed it necessary to adopt such extreme measures, but added that "the Republic's conduct would continue to be based on the fundamental principles of international law." In subsequent conversation with the German representative, the Minister for Foreign Affairs explained that the Republic could not agree to the German blockade, and that it desired to reserve its freedom of action with a view to initiating peace negotiations, should occasion arise—to avail itself, in fact, of the opportunity to secure the disputed leadership of South America. Public opinion was frankly disappointed and convinced that the original terms of the Note had been reduced to non-committal mildness by the President; furthermore, that a splendid opportunity of establishing the solidarity of the leading South American Republics had been sacrificed to the desire to administer a rebuff to the United States. It



is of interest that at this juncture much German gold was being remitted to Buenos Aires from North America.

On February 26 the Buenos Aires Press reported that the Argentine Government had taken the lead in a movement for joint action by the South American Republics to offer mediation to the belligerents and to discuss measures for the protection of their own mutual interests. This idea of a Latin-American Conference, subsequently mooted on several occasions, was doomed to futility by reason of the conflicting interests and opinions of those concerned. At the end of 1917 even President Irigoyen appears to have recognized its hopelessness (at that date only Mexico had definitely promised to attend), but during the critical period after the United States' severance

of relations with Germany it frequently served, as Count Luxburg's dispatches show, to complicate the issues and to divert public attention.

Brazil's rupture with Germany on April 11 created no little sensation in Buenos Aires. An official statement issued by the Argentine Government on the night of the 10th announced that the Government supported the position taken up by the United States in reference to Germany; this was followed by enthusiastic pro-Ally demonstrations in the capital. But those who thought that Argentina was now definitely committed to an attitude of active sympathy for the cause of the Allies were speedily undeceived; on the 16th the German representative lodged a protest against the demonstrations which had taken place (in which the German Legation and Consulate had been attacked) after



SOUTH AMERICAN AGRICULTURE: PLOUGHING UP ESPARTILLO GRASS FOR WHEAT-SOWING.

the Monte Protegido incident'. The Argentine Government replied by demanding an explanation through its Minister in Berlin; Germany thereupon agreed to make reparation and to salute the Argentine flag. Honour was thus satisfied, and, in the words of *The Times* Correspondent at Buenos Aires, "discussion of the project for a South American Conference temporarily overshadowed the Monte Protegido incident."

During May and June the Argentine Government's attitude continued to give evidence of decidedly benevolent tendencies towards Germany. Its action in placing an embargo on wheat exports was so obviously directed against Great Britain and her Allies that it evoked a threat from the United States to prohibit shipments of coal to Argentina, and the British Minister at Buenos Aires advised the diversion of British shipping from Argentine ports. Early in June permission was granted for the establishment of a wireless telegraph station to provide direct communication between Argentina and Germany. The first week of July, however, brought the sinking of two more Argentine vessels by German submarines, the *Oriana* and the *Toro*, followed by a fresh outburst of public indignation. Negotiations with Germany ensued; in a Note dispatched on

July 4 the Republic demanded guarantees that the Argentine flag would henceforth be respected wherever found, and, as Germany evaded the issue, a categorical Note was sent to Berlin early in August. On August 26 Germany's friends at Buenos Aires, led by Señor Demaria, President of the Chamber, and a group of Catholic deputies, came forward and submitted a manifesto to the President, urging maintenance of Argentina's neutrality and supporting the Pope's peace movement. Two days later Germany's reply to the Argentine Note promised compensation in the *Toro* case, and the Government hastened to proclaim the result as a triumph of diplomacy for the Republic. Then came the Luxburg dispatches, revealing the manner in which Señor Irigoyen and his advisers had been cajoled and the Argentine people duped, with the results already recorded. On September 25 *The Times* Correspondent at Buenos Aires (assuming a breach with Germany to be inevitable) telegraphed a report that the Government's naval and military mobilizations were probably being made with a view to sending a contingent to Europe; on the other hand, they might only be intended to deal with the railway strike. On the 27th he described the anti-German demonstration of the previous day



RIO DE JANEIRO: A PRO-WAR PROCESSION IN THE AVENIDA CENTRAL IN 1917





THE CAPITOL, BUENOS AIRES: THE SEAT OF THE ARGENTINE LEGISLATURE.

as overwhelming proof of the strength of public opinion; it was emphasized by similar demonstrations in Uruguay and Paraguay, both these States evidently expecting Argentina to take the lead at last. But President Irigoyen was not to be shaken from his policy of inaction either by votes of the Chamber or by other manifestations of the will of the people. On the contrary, he proceeded to convert the international situation into a question of party politics and to make support of his neutrality a test of loyalty for the Radical Party which had elected him to office. Even Uruguay's severance of relations with Germany (October 7) failed to move him, though its effect upon the *amour propre* of his countrymen was unmistakably reflected in the Buenos Aires Press. As one Republic after another took independent action in support of the fundamental ideals of civilization, Señor Irigoyen's hope of forming a South American League of Neutrals was reduced to undignified futility. Early in October there were rumours of grave dissensions and resignations in his Cabinet. Nevertheless, the President remained firm in his policy of neutrality. Thus matters stood at the close of the year, Argentina, the "leading" Republic,

lagging behind the flowing tide of South American sentiment in a backwater of opportunism.

The Republic of Venezuela declined to take any action in regard to Germany's submarine campaign in February 1917, although strongly urged to do so by the United States Government on the curious ground that the Venezuelan Government had received no direct communication from Germany in the matter. The Presidential message on the subject contained nothing more than platitudinous expressions of goodwill towards men. But the internal condition of Venezuelan politics in 1916-17 was of a nature to preclude any reasonable hope of the country's achieving an enlightened foreign policy. Indeed, towards the end of 1917 it seemed more than probable that President Gomez's cup of wickedness must overflow and necessitate forcible intervention by the United States for the protection of life and property and the maintenance of international amenities. His *régime* of summary arrests, plunder and speculation became a matter of concern to the Allies in August 1917, when, by his orders, two newspapers favourable to the Entente and opposed to Venezuela's





SANTIAGO DE CHILE: THE CHILEAN NATIONAL CONGRESS BUILDING.

maintenance of neutrality were arbitrarily suppressed. In June the ever-active Telefunken Company were negotiating for the erection of a wireless station on an island off the Venezuelan coast. In fact, throughout all the politically distressful and morally backward region that lies to the north of the Amazon and on the shores of the Caribbean Sea Germany's agents were persistently active.

The attitude of Ecuador, like that of Venezuela, was to a great extent determined at the outset by jealous susceptibilities and fears of interference in her internal affairs by the United States, especially as regards the vexed question of her financial obligations. The country suffered severely, after the second year of the war, from lack of coal, as the result of which railway communications were frequently suspended. Public opinion, whenever it found expression after Brazil's declaration of war against Germany, was opposed to President Moreno's policy of lukewarm neutrality, but its inclination towards the cause of the Allies was based more often on commercial and financial grounds than on intelligent appreciation of the moral issues of the European conflict. In 1917 a marked change took place, however, and in August the Government intimated its readiness to follow the example of the United States and Brazil if assured of facilities for the importation of jute, coal and money; Great Britain was also asked to allow a certain amount of cocoa to be imported from Ecuador into England. The Republic's rela-

tions with Germany were finally severed on December 7.

Throughout the rest of Central and South America the tide of public opinion turned decidedly against the Central Powers after February, 1917. Bolivia severed her relations with Germany on April 13, formally intimating her intention to support unreservedly the American policy of Brazil, where the German Minister had received his passports two days earlier. Bolivia had her own grounds of complaint against Germany by reason of the sinking of the *Tubantia*, attacked by a submarine in neutral waters. In February the Government announced its intention of supporting the policy of the United States, and organized a special mission to Peru, Colombia, Venezuela and Ecuador to urge upon these Republics the advisability of joint action.

After a long period of anxious hesitation, induced partly by fears of an armed German colonists' invasion from Southern Brazil, and partly by the example of Argentina's persistence in neutrality, the Republic of Uruguay severed its diplomatic and commercial relations with Germany on October 7, 1917. There was never, at any time, any real doubt as to the sympathies of this small but highly cultured and progressive State; the cautious prudence of its Government during the earlier stages of the conflict was induced by traditional recognition of the country's highly vulnerable position. Because of its situation as a buffer State between Argentina and Brazil, the foreign

policy of Uruguay has always been dominated by South American rather than international considerations, and by a very natural desire to avoid doing anything at the instance of either of these rival States which might give umbrage and a cause of offence to the other. In the present instance, so long as Brazil's attitude remained undefined, it would have been folly for the Uruguayan

the Government revoked its Decrees of neutrality in favour of the Entente, to the manifest satisfaction of the nation. No specific reason was given to the German Minister for handing him his passports; it was generally stated by the Press to be due to the Government's desire to emphasize Pan-American solidarity and to emphasize the country's condemnation of Germany's methods of waging war. The joint



SENOR JOSÉ PARDO,  
President of Peru.

Government to declare for the Allies, and thus risk the possibility of an armed incursion of predatory Germans from over the Brazilian frontier. Moreover, apart from the local aspects of the problem, the Uruguayan Government hoped to obtain from England, France and Italy certain political advantages in return for following the example of the United States and Brazil, namely, the signature of a Treaty of Arbitration, originally proposed in 1914, whereby all disputes would be settled by arbitration and without diplomatic intervention. Until the visit of the United States squadron to Montevideo, at the end of July 1917, the Minister for Foreign Affairs was not disposed to revoke the Republic's neutrality Decrees in favour of the Allies, pending a satisfactory conclusion of this Treaty question. After the overwhelming demonstration of welcome given by the citizens of Montevideo to the American squadron it became evident that Uruguay would not wait much longer for the expected lead from Argentina. On October 15, a week after the severance of relations with Germany,



GENERAL GOMEZ,  
President of Venezuela in 1917.

resolution of both Houses of Congress in favour of the rupture of relations was adopted by 105 votes to 6.

It is an interesting fact that the South American Republic which had attracted by far the largest number of German colonists, Brazil, should have been the first to declare war on Germany—a fact which goes to show that the Teuton does not identify or ingratiate himself with the Latin country of his adoption. The large German settlements in the Southern States of Brazil—Paraná, Santa Catharina and Rio Grande do Sul—had long been a source of anxiety to the Brazilian Government. Many thoughtful writers had drawn attention to the dangers arising from the *imperium in imperio* which they had gradually been allowed to create in these fertile provinces. Señor García Calderón in his work on "Latin America" pointed out that the 350,000 Germans established there "enjoy rights of self-government, despise the half-castes and negroes and live in aristocratic isolation." The German colonies were exponents of *Deutschtum*; they had re





MULE TEAM CARRYING WINE FROM SAN RAFAEL, ARGENTINA.

tained the language, traditions, and prejudices of their native country.

They proudly contrast the magnificent destinies of the Vaterland with the turbulent federalism of the Brazilian States. The colonization companies affiliated to the powerful and active banks (especially the "Deutsche-Uberseeische") are extending the prosaic Teutonic hegemony through Brazil and the whole of Latin America.

Senhor Sylvio Romero, discussing the perils of the German expansion in *A America Latina* in 1907, advised that the teaching of Portuguese be made compulsory in the German settlements' schools, that the creation of large land trusts be prohibited, that military colonies should be established in the threatened regions and indigenous centres created among the German settlers. German writers had justified these fears. One of them, Milkau, declared "we are effecting a new conquest, slow, persistent and pacific in the means employed, but terrible in its ambitious intention." Another (Hentz) prophesied that the Germans would eventually "kill off the sensual and foolish natives who have built up their societies upon the splendid soil and have degraded it by their turpitude." Small wonder that the "foolish native" compared these truculent self-invited guests with the loyal citizenship and assimilative quality of the Italian settlers in their midst. Even at Petropolis, the headquarters of diplomacy near Rio, the German community was a law unto itself, its religion, education and political aspirations supplied and controlled from Berlin. A writer in *The Times* pointed out at the beginning of the war (September 22, 1914) the tendency of their organized system of peaceful penetration.

Little secret is made in Germany [he said] of the political aspirations towards the eventual possession of,

at all events, the vast and fertile regions in the south of Brazil; a map of "Antarctic Germany," comprising at least those territories, has already been published, if not at the instigation or with the approval, at least with the tacit sanction, of the German Government.

All these dreams were based on the assumption that the United States would not take part in the war and that America would be unable to maintain the Monroe doctrine once Germany had reduced Europe to submission. The actual result of the war was to arouse the rulers and people of Brazil to their danger. They had learned the real significance of these German colonies in their midst and would no longer tolerate them on the old footing. German towns like Porto Alegre (the capital of Rio Grande do Sul) would either have to change their methods and manners to conform to Brazilian ideas of good citizenship or they would become centres of Teutonic emigration on a large scale.

Owing to the insidious influences of German finance and the widespread ramifications of the German credit system in commerce, and also because of the general detachment of public opinion in Brazil from European affairs, which at the outset obscured the real causes and meaning of the war, the attitude of the average Brazilian during the first two years of the war was characterized by aloofness. But after the sinking of the *Lusitania*, all Germans were expelled from the Club Central at Rio; thereafter Portugal took her place with the Allies, and the main issues became clear to the Brazilian people, the artful piping of the German propagandist fell upon deaf ears, and the work of the patriotic *Liga pelos Aliados* became more and more popular. As Germany's methods of

barbarism in warfare developed, sympathy with the Allies became more generally manifest. The German band, which continued to earn its livelihood by making music in the streets of Rio, had become tactfully cosmopolitan by the summer of 1916; its repertoire included the "Marseillaise" and even "Tipperary." That the Germans were wise in walking delicately



DON JOSÉ N. GUTIÉRREZ GUERRA,  
President of Bolivia.

was shown by the outbursts of popular feeling which took place after the United States' declaration of war—serious anti-German riots occurred at Porto Alegre and São Paulo in April—and by the increasing evidence of public dissatisfaction with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Lauro Müller, whose German extraction and proclivities were continually attacked until his resignation (May 2, 1917). After the sinking of the *Paraná*, the *Liga pelos Aliados* urged the confiscation of all arms held by the Confederation of German Rifle Clubs in South Brazil and the establishment of permanent supervision over all German residents.

The position of the Brazilian Government in regard to the war and the expression of its active sympathy for the cause of the Allies were affected by several considerations upon which little stress was laid by the Brazilian Press. There was not only the traditional rivalry between Argentina and Brazil to be taken into account; inter-State rivalries and

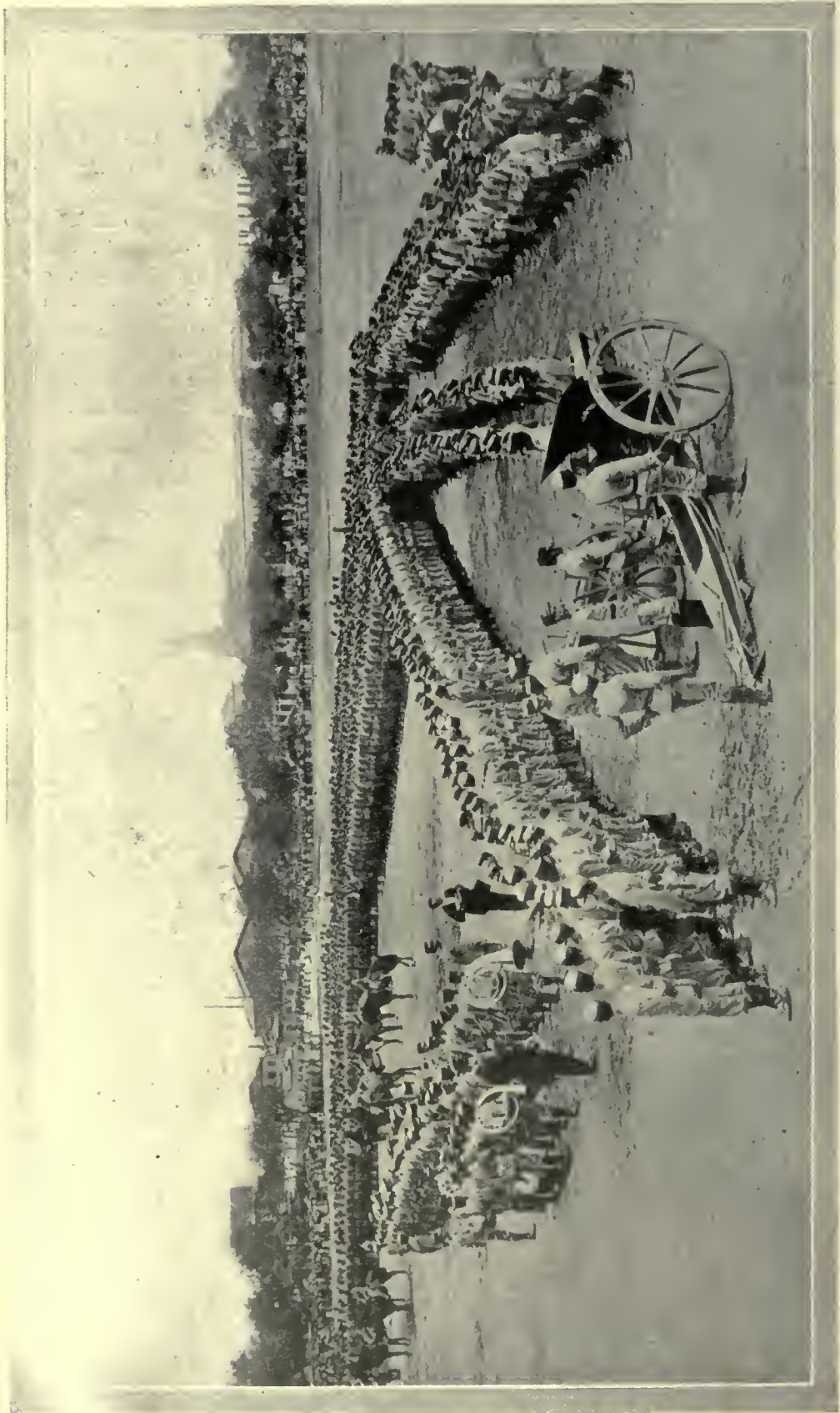
jealousies within the Republic frequently proved detrimental to the expression of a united national policy. Thus, for example, when the proposal to sever relations with Germany came to the front in April 1917, the State of São Paulo was not at first prepared to support it unless Great Britain and her Allies would undertake to guarantee payment of the sum of £6,000,000 due to the São Paulo Treasury by Germany for coffee seized at Hamburg and Antwerp. Moreover, certain political representatives of this rich and powerful State were opposed to supporting Great Britain, on the ground that the British embargo on coffee had been imposed with the object of coercing Brazil, and that to submit



DR. JOSÉ VICENTE CONCHA,  
President of Colombia.

to this embargo was therefore inconsistent with the nation's dignity; in the same way they were opposed to the seizure of the German ships interned in Brazilian harbours, on the ground that it would afford Germany a pretext for refusing to pay for the requisitioned coffee. Dr. Lauro Müller, to give him his due, was by no means the principal creator of the difficulties with which the pro-Ally element in the Government had to contend; in fact, his German supporters in his native State of Santa Catharina attacked him just as fiercely for his lack of proper German feelings as his enemies did for





BRAZIL ENTERS THE WAR: VOLUNTEERS AT RIO DE JANEIRO TAKING THE OATH.

his pro-German tendencies—fair evidence that as Foreign Minister he did his best to play an impossible part. The President of the Republic, Dr. Wenceslão Braz, was for a long time opposed to severing relations with Germany—in fact, until public opinion became too strong for him. His attitude was influenced, no doubt, by tactful regard for the critical financial condition of the Republic (currency depreciation had reached 55 per cent. in February 1917) and by his anxiety to avoid all appearance of allowing Brazilian policy to be dictated, or even suggested, from the outside.

After the sinking of the Brazilian steamer, *Paraná* (April 4), State and party opinions alike gave way to a sense of the nation's dignity and responsibilities. In answering the German submarine Note on February 9, Brazil had announced her intention to hold Germany responsible for whatever consequences might ensue from these threats against neutral shipping. Discussing the sinking of the *Paraná*, with the loss of several of her crew, the Minister for Foreign Affairs at Rio said: "The whole world has seen how prudent Brazil's attitude has been in the past; it shall now see how firm her attitude will be in the future." After a Cabinet meeting held on April 9, the President declared himself "determined to act with the spirit demanded by the national dignity." The German Minister received his passports on the 11th. His proposal to discuss compensation for the loss of the *Paraná* was ignored.

The Brazilian Press was by no means satisfied with the severance of diplomatic relations; even the semi-official *O Paz* was in favour of war with Germany. But six months were to elapse before the Government was prepared to take this step. In the opinion of the executive at the end of April the situation was considered equivalent to a state of war, but it was left to Congress to decree this state and to put it into execution. On May 22 the Chamber of Deputies revoked the Decree of April 23 whereby Brazil had proclaimed her neutrality as between the United States and the Central Powers. On June 2 the Government took possession of 45 German vessels (235,191 tons) interned in Brazilian ports. At this time Senhor Nilo Peçanha, a former President of the Republic, had succeeded Dr. Lauro Müller as Minister for Foreign Affairs. His policy was frankly pro-Ally, but he found himself confronted, as his predecessor had been, by a strong agitation against Great Britain's

embargo on coffee, Brazil's chief export staple. There is no doubt that had it not been for this agitation, and for the financial difficulties created by the drastic limitation of coffee shipments, Brazil would have joined the Allies much sooner than she did. At the end of July the coffee question was still a very vexed one, but the situation was relieved at the beginning of August when France removed her restrictions on the trade and arranged to purchase a year's supply. Great Britain was



SENHOR NILO PEÇANHA,  
Brazilian Minister of Foreign Affairs.

also prepared to allow shipments to be resumed on the understanding that the German vessels should be used for the purpose, but the Brazilian Government was not disposed to accept this condition. Meanwhile preliminary negotiations had taken place with the United States, of a nature calculated to improve Brazil's financial position and prospects, their main object being to provide arrangements whereby the United States would assist Brazil with funds and expert advice in the reorganization and equipment of her dockyards, iron works and arsenals.

On June 28 the Brazilian Government revoked the Decrees which had proclaimed its neutrality in the war between the Allies and Germany; in official circles at Washington this step was regarded as implying Brazil's active participation in the war, especially as it was followed by an intimation that the Brazilian Navy (16 units) would cooperate with United States warships in patrol work on the South American coast. Without a formal declaration of war, the situation thus created was undeniably irregular. Senhor Peçanha explained it in May by saying that



"Brazil was not declaring war on anybody, but merely defending herself." But it was evident that this state of affairs could not be protracted indefinitely, even though Brazil might have no intention of sending any armed forces to Europe. The torpedoing of the Brazilian (ex-German) ship *Macão* off the Spanish coast on October 22 afforded good and final grounds for a formal declaration of war, which was accordingly proclaimed on the 26th. The vote in the Chamber was carried by 149 to 1. On November 3 a Presidential message to Congress advised, *inter alia*, the cancellation of all contracts with Germans, the control of all German banks and commercial firms and the internment of German suspects. Thus, as the result of her submarine campaign, Germany had destroyed all her long labour of years, all her far-reaching plans in Brazil, one of the most important of the countries overseas upon whose goodwill must depend her supplies of many raw materials in the lean years to come.

Peru's attitude towards the belligerents on both sides during the first three years of the war was one of dignified and impartial neutrality, in many respects similar to that adopted by her neighbour, Chile. The Peruvian Government's reply to the United States Note on the subject of Germany's submarine campaign in February 1917 was friendly but non-committal, and a similar attitude was adopted in reply to Brazil at the end of April, when that Republic communicated its severance of relations with Germany. In both cases the Government's action was endorsed by public opinion. In June a proposal to place armed guards aboard the interned German ships (10 vessels, aggregating 42,000 tons) was negated

by the Government, following the example of Argentina. In September, however, the torpedoing of the Peruvian vessel *Lorton* and Germany's subsequent disregard of the Peruvian Government's ultimatum on the subject resulted in the severance of diplomatic relations (October 5) by a resolution in Congress, voted by 105 to 6. Peru's final opinion in regard to the war was shown by her agreement with Brazil in November to accept the Argentine Government's invitation to a South American Conference only on condition that Argentina should bind herself also to sever relations with Germany. In October she offered the hospitality of her harbours to His Majesty's ships.

Of the Central American States, Panama severed her relations with Germany in April, 1917, President Valdez signing a proclamation on April 7 committing Panama unreservedly to the assistance of the United States in the defence of the Canal. Cuba declared war against Germany on the same day. Guatemala broke off relations on April 27, Honduras and Nicaragua in May, and Haiti and San Domingo in June.

In less than a year, by the display of her insolent indifference to international law and civilized usage in warfare, Germany solidified public opinion against her throughout the length and breadth of the South American continent, amongst nations which were destined by their peculiar economic advantages and resources to play no small part in the future history of the world. The wisdom of the Junker would have it so; but the German nation was likely to repent at long leisure the Berseker folly which had made the name of Germany a byword from Panama to Patagonia.



## CHAPTER CCXXIII.

# THE WESTERN OFFENSIVES OF 1917 : BULLECOURT.

SITUATION ON APRIL 17—THE GERMAN DEVASTATION—APRIL 23 : BATTLE OF GAVRELLE—FONTAINE—ANALYSIS OF THREE DAYS' OPERATIONS—RESULTS ACHIEVED—APRIL 28 : ARLEUX—COOPERATION WITH THE FRENCH—MAY 3 : FRESNOY—THE CAPTURE OF BULLECOURT—THE AUSTRALIANS—PREPARATIONS FOR THE BATTLE OF MESSINES—SIR DOUGLAS HAIG'S STRATEGY.

THE gains made by the British up to April 16 have been described in Chapter CCXX.

On April 16 the sun at first shone brightly, but was soon obscured. Torrential rain descended, accompanied by a south-west gale. Notwithstanding the weather, fighting proceeded on the north and south of Lens, from which thick volumes of smoke were seen rising. A fierce struggle raged round Hill 70, near Loos, and Horne's men pushed their way through the mining suburb of St. Edouard, captured some machine guns and drew closer to the city along the Béthune road. South of Lens the enemy resisted stubbornly on the Arras road in the vicinity of the Culotte redoubt. Though Prince Rupprecht may not have fathomed Haig's intentions, it was no part of the British plan to squander the lives of his men in the centre of the mass of battered houses. Lens was not such a dangerous salient in the German as Ypres was in the British lines. The proper tactics were clearly to surround, not storm, the city, and meanwhile to deluge it with high explosives and gas shells.

The weather continued bad through the night, and on the 17th there were short bursts of watery sunshine alternating with squalls of rain and snow, driven before a howling wind. Throughout the day encounters took place

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west and north-west of Lens, and along the region between Lens and Bullecourt our artillery kept up a tremendous bombardment which might or might not be the prelude to another pitched battle. This day a sergeant-major of the German 141st Regiment, lying in a hole before Vis-en-Artois, a village on the road from Arras to Cambrai below the Scarpe Heights in the valley of the Cojeul, made an entry in his diary which is a striking comment on the discomfort which his countrymen had to suffer when driven out from the comfortable lines they had held, and forced to remain in a new position composed mainly of holes made by the British shells. The diary complains :

It is misery to be here ; the dogs at home are better off than we are. The 61st Regiment is said to have had heavy losses yesterday. Not half the men are left in some companies. It is a scandal that the troops who were here before gave up to the enemy such comfortable, such beautifully built positions, while we have to lie out here in the open. The English are again bombarding the whole country with their artillery as if they were mad.

South of the Bapaume-Cambrai road the British approached close on both sides of the Péronne-Cambrai railway at two points. During the previous night they had captured Tembois Farm, two miles east by south of Epéhy, and they had gained ground along the spur north-east of Epéhy station on the railroad. Nearer



Cambrai on the 17th they progressed west of the railroad in the neighbourhood of Havrincourt Wood

North of Lens our line started at the Béthune-Lens road, 600 yards north of the latter city, ran east of the suburbs of St. Pierre and Jeanne d'Arc through Riaumont Wood to the Souchez river. Thence it went east of Cité Méricourt through the Petit Bois, over the Arras-Lens road, about a quarter of a mile south of La Coulotte. It then proceeded a mile south of Méricourt in the direction of the Scarpe, passing west of Arleux-en-Gohelle, Oppy and Gavrelle. The Scarpe was touched between Fampoux and Rœux. South of the river it twisted just east of Monchy-le-Preux and west of Guémappe, descending into the valley of the Cojeul east of Wancourt and Héninel. From Héninel, over the low ground, it ran south-eastwards round the ends of the two German lines at Bullecourt and Quéant, crossed the Bapaume-Cambrai road east of Boursies, and turned south, traversing the western and southern faces of Havrincourt Wood, and east of Gouzeaucourt, crossed the Péronne-Cambrai chaussée. Next to the east of the Péronne-Cambrai railway it passed west of Gouche Wood to Tombois Farm, and between Hargi-

court and Villoret. struck southwards to Le Verguier. From the latter village it turned eastwards, approaching the Cambrai-St. Quentin high road at Fricourt and Fayet, and finally went back by Francilly and Savy Wood, round the western environs of St. Quentin.

Such was the situation on April 17. On the morning of the 18th, Horne's troops captured some of the enemy's trenches south-east of Loos, and during the night of the 17th-18th Allenby's men gained ground north of the Scarpe in the direction of Rœux. South-west of Quéant, near Lagnicourt, we also progressed, and in the morning of the 18th the village of Villers-Guislain, south-east of Gouzeaucourt, between the Péronne-Cambrai rail road and the Scheldt-Somme canal, was captured. On the 19th, by which date the number of German guns captured since the 9th amounted to 228, we advanced slightly south-east of Loos, east of Fampoux, and south of Monchy-le-Preux, but the heavy and continuous rain delayed our movements. Before assaulting the Oppy-Quéant, Drocourt-Quéant and Quéant-St. Quentin lines, it was necessary to bring forward the heavy guns which had been so successful at the Battle of Vimy-Arras, but the effect of the rain on the roads and on the ground devastated by the Germans retreating



[Canadian War Records.

A CONCRETE FORT NEAR LENS DESTROYED BY CANADIAN ARTILLERY.



[Official photograph.]

## PIONEER RELIEF PARTY PASSING PIONEERS RETURNING FROM THE TRENCHES.

between Arras and St. Quentin rendered this a difficult and laborious operation.

Friday, April 20, when the weather improved, was an uneventful day but for the fact that after dark the British dislodged the enemy from Gonnelleu, east of Gouzeaucourt and north of Villers-Guislain. The village was on high ground; on the south-east there was a drop of 75 ft. in 500 yards. Sunken roads, well fortified, protected the approaches, but nothing could withstand the impetuous charge of our soldiers. A number of prisoners were captured, and when the next day, Saturday, April 21, the enemy attempted to recapture this important post, he was caught by shell fire and retired precipitately, leaving behind him a trail of dead and wounded. The same day on the north bank of the Scarpe we edged towards Rœux, while our line was slightly advanced south-west of Lens, two German counter-attacks being beaten off. During Sunday, April 22, the fighting continued west and north-west of Lens, the enemy violently but fruitlessly counter-attacking. South of the Bapaume-Cambrai road we carried the southern portion of Trescault, a ruined village just east of Havrincourt Wood, which was by now almost isolated. The condition of Trescault may be gathered from a German soldier's letter, found on a prisoner, written while the "Hindenburg devastation" was being carried out.\*

To give you a picture of our situation I will go back in my mind a few days to Trescault. It is 8 p.m. Our company has just returned from trench-digging. A beautiful scene is presented to our eyes. A little later there suddenly arise flames, and Trescault is

doomed to destruction. Everywhere explosions are heard. A terrific heat reaches us. Then we, too, are seized with the madness of destruction and set fire to everything. All Trescault is in flames, and a marvellous spectacle—one which I shall never forget—meets the eye. On a little hill stands the wonderful castle, spared by us till the last moment because we were quartered there. But the castle must go too, and quickly flames envelop it. Where before were a peaceful people and a flourishing village is now a heap of ruins.

Far, indeed, did the destructive fury of the 230th extend, and we can scarcely be looked upon as soldiers. When we are up at the front it is as if we were the greatest criminals. Thus it is we do our work of destruction in France.

Picture to yourself how we live now—not like men, but like beasts. Far and wide there are no trenches, only bare fields and stumps of trees growing where once man chosen of God ploughed his field and worked for wife and child. That is our retirement and our part in it. My mind cannot dispel the dark thought that I shall not return.

The obstacles encountered by Allenby's, Gough's and Rawlinson's forces moving across the region devastated by Hindenburg's orders rendered such incidents as the capture of Gonnelleu and Trescault very meritorious. A *Times* correspondent, on April 22, described what he saw when he paid a visit to the outskirts of St. Quentin.

I have spent the last two days at the south end of the battle front, working over new parts of the area recently evacuated by the enemy, and once more getting so close to St. Quentin that, though the air was thick, the details, not only of the Cathedral but of the other main buildings, were clearly visible.

All the country through which I have passed is one indescribable scene of desolation, rapine, and wanton brutality, but I think that what fills one most with rage, amid all the havoc, are the ruins of the village and château of Caulaincourt. It was a princely estate, Caulaincourt, and lying in a hollow on the little stream of Omignon, it had, and could have, no strategic value. Before reaching the village, by the roadside, is a fine mortuary chapel, wherein, on tablets closing the entrances to the tombs, one reads the honours of the family, the head of which is the Marquis of Caulaincourt and Duke of Vicenza. The ladies of the house,

\* *Manchester Guardian*, April 18.



as one reads, were daughters of "very high and very puissant seigneurs," and dames in waiting to Josephine and Marie-Louise. They read very stately, these tablets of black marble, with gold lettering, and half of them have been wrenched out of place by the Hun and lie on the floor, exposing the tombs within, and you can see where coffins have been opened and imperfectly screwed up again.

Beyond in the village was a church, but nothing remains of it now. Out of the wreckage where it stood British hands have rescued and set up conspicuously



[Official photograph.]

**TOMB OF THE MILHEM-DEVAUX FAMILY IN VENDELLES CEMETERY, SACKED BY THE GERMANS.**

by the roadside one pathetic tablet which says: "Here lies the heart" (so it is worded) "of Anne Josephine Barandier, Marquise of Caulaincourt, Duchess of Vioenza, etc."

I say again that the destruction of this church, where the heart of the poor Duchess hoped to find peace, could have no possible military value. Nothing but pure ferocity dictated its destruction, and that of village and château.

So noble a seat was the château that its ruins make almost a new Coliseum. It is destroyed to every wall of stable, outhouse, cottage, and helvedere as utterly a rage, armed with all modern explosives, could destroy. Among the acres of tumbled brick, showing the massiveness of every building, whence one looks on the sweeping park and lovely artificial lake, one finds fragments of statues, carved lions' heads, and great vases broken and overturned. It fills one with bitter anger and contempt.

And from refugees one hears how each successive batch of German officers who occupied the château took off what plunder from the priceless furnishings, tapestries, pictures, and *bric-à-brac* pleased their fancy. Layer by layer, the old château was denuded of everything of value, till at last the day came when lyddite and torch did their last ignoble work. Of course, it is only the same as a hundred other things all over this country, but I think none of us who has seen them will fail to remember as the most brutal outrage of all the violation of the tombs and the wreckage of the château of the family of Caulaincourt.

Beside it pales even the pathos of the Church of Mons-en-Chaussée, and the graves evidently recently opened in the churchyard and filled again hastily with tumbled cloths, and whence again, from among the wreckage, British soldiers have gathered what they could—such as an iron crucifix, set leaning against a fragment of wall, an eagle lantern, blown by the explo-

sion out into the churchyard. Missals and other Holy books scorched by fire and warped by exposure in the rain.

Of the other villages in this area there is little individually to be said. In Vraignes, although the church, if cracked and tottering, still stands, each building, even the poorest cottage, has been separately burned. Of Pœuilly, nothing remains but a litter of bricks and the tall crucifix at the cross-roads outside the village. The ancient earth ramparts of Vermand enclose only acres of ruin. Atilly is non-existent, as is Bric, which once must have been a very pleasant place on the high banks above the river, with an open tree-studded slope, between which once, doubtless, was the village park and the lovers' meeting place.

I have threaded, also, the paths through Bois d'Holnon, paths made by the feet of German soldiers, which ran from one camping ground to another within the wood, and outside the wood on the St. Quentin side the cart tracks and hoof marks are deep in the softer ground of the little valley through which the German transport came up to the troops. The best thing about the wood is the large quantity of cut firewood nicely stacked in cords, which the enemy had provided for his own use and left behind.

It is from beyond there that nowadays one gets the best view of St. Quentin, crowned by the great mass of



[Official photograph.]

**A VAULT RIFLED BY THE GERMANS.**

the church, with its curious bell-shaped tower over the lantern, and with all the lesser spires and factory chimneys and blocks of buildings. From where we were they say that on a clear day you can see individual Germans and machine-guns in the windows. Perhaps. We were content to have a day when, if we could not see the enemy, he could not see us.

Externally, St. Quentin looks reasonably intact as yet, but that is no indication of what it will be when it again becomes French. Reports through civilians, refugees from the neighbourhood, say that most things of value have long ago been removed from private houses and public buildings alike. The famous pastels of Quentin de la Tour are specifically mentioned as gone, as doubtless they would be. After seeing Caulaincourt one realizes more than ever how nearly synonymous the words German officer and thief have come to be, and one wonders if, in the final settlement, each individual thief is to be punished and made to disgorge his swag. There can be no possible question that such outrages as these must find their place in the ultimate account, and in some measure the disgrace ought to be made personal to those responsible.

On April 16, as we have seen in Chapter CCIX, the French on their part had commenced their main offensive on the Aisne, and shortly after that date the weather on the Arras front



Official photograph.

## GENERAL VIEW OF THE RUINS OF THE CHÂTEAU OF CAULAINCOURT.

began to improve. Our preparations made more rapid progress, and we were ready to deliver our next attack on April 21. High winds and indifferent visibility persisted, however, and so interfered with the work of our artillery and aeroplanes that it was found necessary to postpone operations for a further two days. Meanwhile there were frequent local fights, and our line was improved slightly at a number of points.

On April 22 the German sergeant-major stationed at Vis-en-Artois, part of whose diary has already been quoted, made his last entry. "The English commenced," he said, "an absolutely

dreadful artillery and machine-gun fire. Our men never got forward. It appears that our troops could not get back to our line and had to lie in the open till the evening. No one has any protection. Arras will certainly be an eternal memory to all. Everyone only asks to get out of it alive." The next day, Monday, April 23, the British attacked.

The battle of Gavrelle-Fontaine-lez-Croisilles, which lasted three days, was not, as the German Staff mendaciously alleged in its *communiqué* of April 24, "a great thrust in order to break through the German lines." Nor was it delivered "on a front of 30 kilomètres (20 miles)."



Official photograph.

## RUINS OF THE CHÂTEAU OF CAULAINCOURT: BRITISH SOLDIERS CLEARING A PASSAGE FOR THE WATER.





CLEARING THE SCARPE OF FALLEN TREES.

*[Official photograph.]*

It was equally untrue to state that fighting took place in "the western suburbs of Lens, Avion, and Oppy." Allenby's aim was more modest. Some nine miles of the line from Gavrelle on the Arras-Douai road across the Scarpe near Rœux to Fontaine-lez-Croisilles was subjected to intensive treatment with high explosive shells of all calibres. Gavrelle and Rœux, the latter situated between the Arras-Douai railroad and the marshy Scarpe, Pelves across the river at the foot of the Scarpe Heights, the Sart and Vert Woods just below Monchy-le-Preux on those heights, Guémappe south of Monchy and the Arras-Cambrai chaussée on the eastern edge of the ridge were to be attacked from the west, while from the south we were to push down the undulating valley of the Sensée and its western tributary the Cojeul. The course of the Cojeul had already been secured as far as Wancourt, which lies just south-west of Guémappe, but on the right bank of the Sensée the enemy was strongly entrenched in Fontaine-lez-Croisilles three miles or so south-east of Wancourt, and, north of Fontaine, in Chérisy. Where the Arras-Cambrai road crossed the Sensée he held Vis-en-Artois on the left bank of the river and the high wooded ground north of the road and

east of the stream. From Vis-en-Artois reinforcements could be brought over the Cojeul into Guémappe and the Sart and Vert woods. As the Drocourt-Quéant line was not quite completed, Prince Rupprecht was not prepared to abandon these positions. He was fighting for time, and to gain it division after division was thrown into the battle. For example, between the Scarpe and Fontaine-lez-Croisilles, the fortified zone on his extreme left was held by the 35th Division (61st, 141st Pomeranian and 171st Regiments) which had just replaced the 18th Reserve Division. In the course of the fighting the division had to be withdrawn and the 13th Division substituted for it. This in turn was so mauled that the 199th Division was sent to relieve it. Similarly the 3rd Bavarian Division round Guémappe was, during the struggle, reinforced by the 4th Bavarian Division and the 3rd Guard Reserve Division, while in front of Monchy the 26th Württemberg Division had on the 25th to be deployed in Sart and Vert Woods. North of the Scarpe similar scenes were enacted. Before the battle ended the 4th Division of Prussian Guards and the 26th and 220th Divisions made their appearance, so important did it seem to the German Higher

Command that Allenby should not get within striking distance of the Drocourt-Quéant line. Moreover, though inferior to our own, the German artillery was considerably stronger than it had been at the opening of the fighting. Having but half-finished entrenchments to defend, the enemy was obliged to do his utmost to keep down the fire of our guns by counter-battery work.

The atmosphere on April 22 had been peculiarly clear, and the British artillerymen, assisted by our intrepid airmen, had surpassed even the bombardment which had preceded the battle of Vimy-Arras. Throughout the bitterly cold night the guns thundered continuously from the region of Loos to the west of St. Quentin. "This is no longer war," said an old Bavarian sergeant who lived through the battle only to be taken prisoner, "this is no longer war, it is wholesale murder, for men cannot stand against guns." A similar lament burst from the lips of a Prussian lieutenant, who in excellent English apostrophized his captors. "Why don't you fight fairly?" he demanded, to which they naturally replied: "Why don't you?" Under the pitiless hail of shells villages and farms crumbled away, "pill-boxes" vanished, the deepest dug-outs became death traps, and barbed wire entanglements were rent into shreds.

At dawn on Monday, April 23, in bright spring sunshine, Allenby's men poured forward, Englishmen, Scotsmen and Newfoundlanders. It was St. George's day, the day of the year when Shakespeare, Froude and Allenby himself had been born. Many of the soldiers wore red and white rosettes to commemorate the day. The poet and the imperialist historian, whose "Oceana" had made us realize the nature of the British Empire, would have seen in soldiers and leader worthy descendants of the Elizabethans who had defeated Spain and settled in Newfoundland. Tanks accompanied the advance, breaking through obstacles and wiping out the fire from redoubts and trenches.

To avoid confusion it will be well to treat the three-days battle in three parts, and to follow the fortunes of the British first on the left, next in the centre, and then on the right. It will not be forgotten that Allenby's turning movement was directed, on the right, up the valley down which flows the Cojeul and the Sausée. So long as the part of the German line from Lens through Méricourt, Acheville, Fresnoy, Oppy to Gavrelle held, it was impossible to attack the enemy between Gavrelle and Guémappe from the north.

On all three days activity in the air was most marked, and Sir Douglas Haig observed



[From a German photograph.]

GERMAN SOLDIERS CHANGING GUARD IN THE PLACE DE L'HÔTEL DE VILLE, ST. QUENTIN.



that on the 23rd "there was a greater amount of fighting in the air than has before taken place in a single day." Fifteen German machines were destroyed, 24 driven down out of control and a twin-engine three-seater aeroplane captured. These aerial contests, in which the new German fighting machines with red wings took part, were well described by the Associated Press Correspondent at the British Headquarters.

The intensely bitter ground fighting of the past two days has been reflected in the air, and the British Royal Flying Corps yesterday established a new record by bringing down 40 German machines. The remarkable part of yesterday's performance is that only two British machines are missing. It was the finest day's war flying that the young pilots in khaki ever had.

One intrepid young flying man, failing to find a single German observation balloon aloft, sought out one in its hangar on the ground, dived at it, and set the big gas-bag ablaze from stem to stern. A British pilot, after felling two German machines and all his ammunition being gone, descended, reloaded, filled up his petrol tanks and took the air again, and within half an hour had bagged his third machine for that day. Another pilot felled two others, 35 German machines being divided among a similar number of British pilots.

The greatest fight yesterday, oddly enough, was a drawn battle. One of the British pilots met a brilliant German flier, and for a full hour they manoeuvred in the most marvellous manner without either being able to bring his gun to bear on the other. They rolled, looped, twisted, and deliberately stalled their engines, and, standing their machines on the tail end, slid

backwards through the air, but all to no avail. It was probably the most wonderful air duel the war has yet seen. The British pilot reported to-day that several times he felt sure he would get his adversary between his sights, but the latter invariably wriggled out of the line of fire. The British airman was himself kept busy avoiding the German, and once he had to dive almost perpendicularly. The combat did not break off until both pilots had fairly exhausted both themselves and their petrol. Strangely enough, later in the day another British pilot encountered the same German machine. He was winging his way home after a hard day's work, but jockeyed with the German for nearly a quarter of an hour before flying on.

In strange contrast to this was the experience of the British pilot who somewhat peevishly complained last night, "I only got a rabbit." He explained this by saying that, while his opponent had a good machine, he was a clumsy fellow who could not fight at all, and was sent spinning with the first burst of gunfire. Still another pilot, mounted on a fast new machine, deliberately allowed a German machine to get on his tail. Then suddenly he looped behind his adversary, caught him just within the sights, and fired, killing him instantly. The machine swerved, and the dead man was pitched out 10,000 ft. from the ground.

An enemy machine was also shot down by anti-aircraft gunners, and the day before seven kite balloons had been sent to the ground in flames. Railways, ammunition dumps, and aerodromes behind the German lines were treated with bombs, one on the 24th blowing an engine off the line and wrecking its train. On the same day seven enemy aeroplanes were destroyed, eight others driven down out of



[Official photograph.]

A SIGNAL-BOX DESTROYED BY SHELL FIRE, THE LEVERS REMAINING INTACT.

control, and two observation balloons were exploded. Our total losses in the two days fighting were eight machines, but on the 26th the balance was against us and we lost three machines to two of the enemy's destroyed and a third forced to descend.

These exploits, it need hardly be observed, were not the only deeds of prowess performed by the modern Knight Errants. Our airmen discharged jets of bullets at the heads of the enemy moving across country, or along the

north of Gavrelle reinforcing the garrison there. The attack on Rœux was a matter of greater difficulty because of the marshy ground in its vicinity and because the enemy on the south bank of the Scarpe and in Pelves could rake the approaches to the village on the Famponx or British side. It was shielded also from the north by the embankment of the Arras-Douai railroad. Just outside Rœux on the Gavrelle road were strongly fortified chemical works in which were numerous mine throwers. These



A TANK BESTRIDING A TRENCH.

roads. Our aeroplanes had become flying machine-guns.

The sector to be assaulted north of the Scarpe extended from Gavrelle over the Arras-Douai railroad to Rœux on the edge of the Scarpe. A cross-road connected the two villages. Gavrelle lay in the plain a couple of miles or so south-east of the southern end of the Vimy Ridge. Beyond it—nearer to Douai—was Fresnes, which, like Gavrelle, was on the chaussée from Arras to that city. From Rœux through Plouvain a cross-road ran to Fresnes, beyond which there was a wood. Between Fresnes and Plouvain were a group of copses affording cover for counter-attacks, and a low ridge—Greenland Hill—ran from Plouvain north-westwards to the east of Gavrelle.

Holding as we did the high Vimy ridge, we could prevent by gun fire the enemy from Oppy

works, the railway station and château, formed one fortress closely attached to the loopholed cemetery and ruined cottages of the village.

On the main front of attack good progress was made at first at almost all points. By 10 a.m. the remainder of the high ground west of Chérisy had been captured by the attacking English brigades, and Scottish troops had pushed through Guémappe. East of Monchy-Preux British battalions seized the western slopes of the rising ground known as Infantry Hill. On their left English county troops had reached the buildings west of Rœux Station and gained the line of their objectives on the western slopes of Greenland Hill, north of the railway.

Gavrelle was a typical example of a German fortified post—one of the dug-outs there alone sheltered 60 men and four machine-guns—but



before 10 a.m. on Monday, April 23, it was taken by the Royal Naval Division.

Our men were not left in undisturbed possession. No less than five times on Monday, three times on Tuesday, and more than once during the night of Tuesday-Wednesday the enemy charged up the Arras-Donai road from Fresnes and its wood. As many as 6,000 men were employed in one counter-attack. All these attacks were completely crushed by our artillery barrage and machine-gun fire. In one instance only did a wave of Germans momentarily eject the British from the ruins. It was but a temporary success. A bayonet charge swiftly sent the enemy flying back towards Fresnes. When the battle died down swathes of German corpses lay between Gavrelle and Fresnes, while 500 prisoners, including 17 officers, had been sent to the British rear.

Simultaneously with the advance of the English on Gavrelle, Highland Territorials of the 51st Division, with more Highland troops (the staunch 9th Division) on their left, attacked the western outskirts of Rœux wood. They stormed the railway station, chemical works, and château, and even penetrated into the cemetery and the village, between which

and Gavrelle the German line ran. But the failure of our troops to storm Pelves across the river rendered the position of the Scotsmen in the village and cemetery untenable. Disputing every inch of the ruins and tombs they fell back and maintained themselves in the chemical works, which were successfully defended up to the end of the battle.

Between Gavrelle and Rœux desperate German counter-attacks in combination with the assaults on Gavrelle were beaten off. Wave after wave of infantry came over the low ridge and through the copses. Raked by our machine guns in Gavrelle and scattered by shrapnel, Brandenburgers and Hamburgers retired in confusion. Two battalions of the 161st Regiment of Rhinelanders massing for a counter-attack near the Arras-Donai railway were caught by our artillery fire; one battalion was wiped out and the other so depleted that for practical purposes it may be said to have ceased to exist. During the afternoon counter-attacks in great force developed all along the line, and were repeated by the enemy with the utmost determination, regardless of the heavy losses inflicted by our fire. Many of these counter-attacks were repulsed after severe



AWAITING THE ORDER TO ADVANCE.

*Official photograph.*



[Drawn by Joseph Gray.]

A BRITISH BOMBING PARTY CLEARING A TRENCH NEAR RÆUX.

fighting, but on our right our troops were ultimately compelled by weight of numbers to withdraw from the ridge west of Chérisy and from Guémappe. As soon as it was clear that the whole of our objectives for the 23rd April had not been gained, orders were issued to renew the advance at 6 p.m. In this attack Guémappe was retaken by men of the 15th Scottish Division, but farther south our troops were at once met by a counter-attack in force, and made no progress. Fighting of a more or less intermittent character continued in this area all through the night.

It has been mentioned that Rœux could not be completely captured on the 23rd because the English county troops had been unable to oust the Germans from Pelves on the south bank of the Scarpe. It had been attacked at dawn by the 17th Division, which fought heroically with all advantage of the ground in the enemy's favour, but snipers and machine-guns from hidden trenches thinned their ranks, and the repulse of the simultaneously delivered attack on the Vert and Sart Woods in front of Monchy rendered it advisable to suspend the advance, as the enemy might have thrown himself on the flank of the British and driven them into the river.

In the early morning of April 24 the enemy's resistance weakened all along the front attacked

south of the Arras-Cambrai Road. Our troops were thus able to reach most of their objectives of the previous day without serious opposition.

After 24 hours of very fierce fighting, therefore, in which the severity of the enemy's casualties were in proportion to the strength and determination of his numerous counter-attacks, we remained in possession of the villages of Guémappe and Gavrelle, as well as of the whole of the high ground overlooking Fontaine-lez-Croisilles and Chérisy. Very appreciable progress had also been made east of Monchy-le-Prœux, on the left bank of the Scarpe, and on Greenland Hill. In the course of these operations of April 23 and 24 we captured a further 3,029 prisoners, including 56 officers, and a few guns. On the battle field, which remained in our possession, great numbers of German dead testified to the costliness of the enemy's obstinate defence.

To the Vert and Sart Woods the Germans naturally attached great importance, as they prevented our men in and around Monchy from moving down the Scarpe Heights and turning Pelves. Redoubts on the Arras-Cambrai road enfiladed the Middlesex and Argyll and Sutherland companies endeavouring to eject the Germans from the woods; nevertheless, our men entered them, although the





*Official photograph.*

#### CHARGE OF HIGHLANDERS IN THE EARLY MORNING.

greater part were obliged to fall back. But a considerable detachment of these men remained behind and were able to maintain their position. At 10 a.m. strong bodies of Rhinelanders emerged from the Vert Wood and counter-attacked. The grey lines with bayonets glittering in the sunshine moved forward as if on parade. "It was so much like the pictures of war I saw as a child," said one young officer, "that we simply admired, and for a moment forgot our real purpose. . . . The only comment I heard from one of my men was, 'I wish they had brought their hands with them!'" They checked our advance, but were themselves almost wiped out by the rifle fire of the Newfoundlanders and Worcesters of the 29th Division. Some 4,000 Germans who had been moved unperceived into the Sart Wood were detected by our airmen, and the British artillery with gas and other shells killed and wounded most of them. In the afternoon the German guns began to bombard Monchy, which had hitherto been spared, doubtless in the hope that it might be retaken. First the roofs of the village disappeared, and then cottage after cottage vanished in great pink clouds. Before sunset there was not a single wall standing. Fortunately the British were not within but on the outskirts of the village. At dawn on Tuesday they resumed the advance, and succeeded in rescuing the party of Middlesex

and Argyll and Sutherlands who, with their 14 prisoners, had held out. Throughout the day the struggle before Monchy went on, each side being strongly reinforced. On Wednesday the 26th Würtemberger Division relieved the hard-pressed enemy in the Vert and Sart Woods. These were still in German hands when the battle closed.

Between the Scarpe and the Arras-Cambrai chaussée there had been a standstill. It was south of the highway that Allenby scored most heavily. In the dim light which preceded sunrise on the 23rd, long loose lines of the Highlanders of the 15th Division followed the barrage down the Scarpe Heights and made for the ruins of Guémappe and the northern banks of the Cojeul. For nearly three hours they were engaged in extinguishing the fire from the numerous strong points in front of the village. Troops of the 3rd Bavarian Division offered a stubborn resistance, but, one by one, the nests of machine-guns were bombed and 200 prisoners taken. Then with loud shouts and cheers the impetuous Celts went through and beyond Guémappe. A blast of bullets from Cavalry Farm and some "pill-boxes" momentarily checked them, but the charge was driven home and the enemy flung back across the stream. Towards noon huge masses of Bavarians issuing from Vis-en-Artois massed in the valley between the Sensée and the Cojeul. An avalanche of shells descended on Cavalry Farm and Guémappe as the Bavarians forded the Cojeul to close with the Highlanders. Lewis guns, rifle and rifle

grenade fire tore rents in the waves of Germans ascending the ridge. Over the dead and wounded the survivors pressed on. Evacuating Cavalry Farm the Highlanders, with their faces to the foe, slowly retired on Guémappe. In small groups they kept the Bavarians at bay. For four hours one officer with 70 men remained isolated north of the village. The cemetery was the scene of a terrible conflict. Officers could be seen working the machine guns or sniping at the enemy. In vain the German artillery ringed Guémappe with barrages, for a time completely isolating the village. The Bavarians were unable to overpower the brave garrison. At 6 p.m. fresh Highland troops dashed through the barrage from the direction of the Arras-Cambrai road. The Bavarians in the ruins were bayoneted or taken prisoners. Supported by their comrades whom they had come to support, the Highlanders passed onwards; Cavalry Farm was retaken and the enemy sullenly re-forded the Cojeul and sought refuge in Vis-en-Artois. On Tuesday and Wednesday the Bavarians, reinforced by the 3rd Guard Reserve Division, made furious efforts to drive the Highlanders from Cavalry Farm and Guémappe. Cavalry Farm

was recovered, but Guémappe, like Monchy to its north and Wancourt to its south-west, remained in British occupation. Another link in the German line had been gained.

On the first night of the battle, in the undulating open country between the Cojeul and the Sensée, down which it was designed to turn the enemy, there had also been a long and bloody struggle. The British 21st, 30th, 33rd, and 50th Divisions were engaged in this southern sector of the attack. The enemy had constructed a cordon of trenches from the Cojeul, in the neighbourhood of Wancourt, to the Sensée, south of Fontaine-lez-Croisilles. Through both villages counter-attacks could be delivered against the right flank of the British pushing forward between the streams. At dawn on Monday we attacked the 141st Pomeranian Regiment of the 35th Reserve Division holding this arc of trenches and redoubts. The nerves of the Pomeranians had been shattered by the bombardment and they put up a poor resistance. Some 1,600 prisoners were captured and a battery of field guns. Pressing on, our men approached Fontaine-lez-Croisilles, the whole area about which was a very labyrinth of trench and



[Official photograph.]

IN MONCHY.



fortified positions. At this moment parties of riflemen hidden in a disused quarry or concealed in craters suddenly fired on our men from the rear, while a body of the enemy rushed at them from the village. The British retreated, but at 6 a.m. again charged up to the outskirts of Fontaine. At 7 p.m. columns of the Germans issued from Fontaine and Chérisy and once more our troops fell back. During the night and on the morning of Tuesday we, however, again advanced. First the German 13th Division and then the 199th Division were brought up to stem the tide. They succeeded in saving Fontaine-lez-Croisilles but were unable to regain the trenches and the tower, on which had once stood a windmill, occupied by the Pomeranians at the opening of the struggle.

Such was the Battle of Gavrelle-Fontaine-lez-Croisilles. On the 24th the Kaiser sent the following message to Prince Rupprecht :

The fresh British assault on the battlefield of Arras has been broken by your troops. To the heroes of Arras and their trustworthy leaders, who in capacity, ability, and success have equalled their comrades on the Aisne and in Champagne, I send mine and the Fatherland's thanks.

God help you further.

WILHELM I.R.

It was even more a perversion of the truth than usual. The "fresh British assault," which had not been delivered on "the battlefield of Arras" but miles to the east of that city, had resulted in the Germans losing two sections of the Oppy-Quéant line and great numbers of killed, wounded and prisoners.

While the battle was proceeding we had also captured on Monday most of Havrinecourt Wood, and the remainder of the village of Trescault and Villers-Plouich and Beaucamp east of it, and gained ground east of Epéhy, reaching the Scheldt-Somme Canal in the neighbourhood of Vend'huile. In the minor operations south-west of Lens Cornish troops established themselves on the railway loop east of Cité des Petits Bois, and succeeded in maintaining their position in spite of numerous hostile counter-attacks. On the night of April 24, the hamlet of Bilhem, north-east of Trescault, was also carried.

On Friday, April 27, preparations for another thrust between Lens and the Scarpe were made. Our troops moved a little eastwards to the foot of the ridge, Greenland Hill. South of the Scarpe they dislodged the enemy from strong points on the Arras-



A BRAND-NEW GERMAN 59 HOWITZER, MADE ON THE 13th FEBRUARY, CAPTURED IN APRIL ON THE WESTERN FRONT.

*(Official photograph.)*



WANCOURT.

[French official photograph]

Cambrai road. During the preceding night we had ejected the enemy from quarries on the eastern outskirts of Hargicourt, nine miles north-west of St. Quentin, and we had defeated a minor attack near Foyet in the northern environs of that city.

The strength of the opposition encountered in the course of this attack was in itself evidence that our offensive was fulfilling the part designed for it in the Allied plans. As the result of the fighting which had already taken place 12 German divisions had been withdrawn exhausted from the battle or were in process of relief. A month after the commencement of our offensive the number of German divisions so withdrawn had increased to 23. On the other hand, the strength of the enemy opposite our front compelled us for a time to adopt the less aggressive form of a wearing-down battle.

On the Aisne and in Champagne, also, the French offensive had met with very obstinate resistance. It was becoming clear that many months of heavy fighting would be necessary before the enemy's troops could be reduced to a condition which would permit of a more rapid advance. None the less, very considerable results had already been achieved, and our Allies continued their efforts against the long plateau north of the Aisne traversed by the Chemin-des-Dames. In order to assist them, we arranged that, until their object had been attained, we would continue our operations about Arras. The necessary readjustment of troops, guns and material required to complete

our preparations for our northern operations was accordingly postponed, and preparations were undertaken to repeat our attacks on the Arras front until the results of the French offensive should have become evident.

The first of these attacks was delivered on April 28 on a front of about eight miles, north of Monchy-le-Preux. With a view to economizing our troops, our objectives were shallow; and for a like reason, and also in order to give the appearance of an attack on a more imposing scale, demonstrations were continued southwards to the Arras-Cambrai road and northwards to the Souchez River. The front attacked was smaller than in the battle of Gavrelle-Fontaine-lez-Croisilles. The Germans pretended that it measured nearly 19 whereas in reality it was about seven miles long. They also alleged that it was another "attempt to break through the German lines," which, on the face of it, was absurd, because Sir Douglas Haig would never have tried to storm the intact Quéant-Drocourt line, until he had made further gaps in the German line in front of it. Since the estimate (grossly exaggerated) of our losses given in the German *communiqué* of April 30 was only 6,000 killed and wounded, etc, and 1,000 prisoners, with 40 machine-guns taken and 10 Tanks\* destroyed, the German staff was well aware that it was lying. It could not have seriously supposed that a battle on a front of 19 miles, delivered with the object of piercing two fortified zones, would have resulted in loss less than that

\* No Tanks were, as a fact, employed in this battle.





*Drawn by S. Biggs*

BRITISH BOMBERS WORKING UP TO OPPY WOOD.

suffered by us in 1915 at the action of Neuve Chapelle.

It was with the object of clearing the way for an assault on the Quéant-Drocourt positions that the battle was delivered, not in "great masses," as the German Staff asserted, small numbers only being employed and only concentrated where serious attack was undertaken.

The left of the British now rested on the Vimy-Acheville road, some 4,000 yards south of Avion, the southernmost quarter of the Lens mining district. As the enemy's line at Arleux-en-Gohelle was well to the west of Acheville to the north of that village, no attempt was made to storm Acheville. The British advanced to within 1,200 yards of Acheville and awaited the result of the fighting between Arleux and the Scarpe. At Oppy a trench ran northward along a crest round Arleux-en-Gohelle to Acheville, and behind, to the east of it, another trench connected Acheville, Fresnoy and Oppy. Our main efforts were directed to securing the external or western trench with the villages of Arleux (this was taken by the Canadians) and Oppy. Our possession of Gavrelle, which was attacked no less than seven times on April 28 and 29, and ground to its north, enabled us to attack Oppy from the south as well as from the west.

Arleux, the buildings in which were still comparatively undamaged, consisted of a single straggling street, flanked by isolated groups of cottages with small gardens and orchards. Each of the cottages had been turned into a German redoubt. Wire entanglements of great width extended in front of the village. To its north three successive sunken roads had been wired and provided with numerous machine-gun posts. The ground before Arleux was undulating, and the attackers had to advance along two hollows, an intervening ridge hiding one column of assault from the other. Behind Arleux a long dip ran backwards towards Fresnoy and German machine-guns swept this open funnel. The 111th German Division defended the line from Arleux to Oppy. Unfortunately our gunners had not completely destroyed the wire, and the Canadian battalion deputed at dawn to storm Arleux found difficulty in advancing. Its left, delayed by the machine-guns in the sunken roads, was for a time held up. The centre and right, however, penetrated into the village, and, though losing heavily, reduced one by one the strongholds there. Some 360 prisoners, including 7 officers, were captured, and when the last cottage fell the assaulting

infantry was rejoined by the companies on the left who had at last secured the sunken roads. Scarcely was this accomplished when the German artillery poured a deluge of shells on Arleux. Its buildings disappeared in clouds of red and yellow dust. Towards evening a violent counter-attack from Fresnoy was delivered against it; it was repulsed and, when sun set, the Canadians were well east of Arleux in front of Fresnoy.

Meanwhile at Oppy and in the wood which screened it an even fiercer struggle had been proceeding. In the branches of the trees platforms for machine-guns had been constructed and the English troops could only move slowly and carefully through the wood to the village. At last the wood was cleared, but in the cottages there were desperate hand-to-hand conflicts. In the German background lines of motor-omnibuses could be seen racing for Neuvireuil, whence streams of reinforcements were poured into Oppy and towards Gavrelle. Counter-attack succeeded counter-attack, and at nightfall we were still only on the outskirts of the village. Our advance, too, from Gavrelle on Oppy had been checked.

Still the enemy's trenches for two miles north and south of Arleux-en-Gohelle and some posts north of Gavrelle had been secured. At the same time we had advanced up the western slopes of Greenland Hill between Gavrelle and Rœux, the troops engaged here being the 37th and 34th Divisions, which had already seen very hard fighting in the Arras-Vimy battle and were much under strength. This ridge ran south-eastwards to the Arras-Douai railway near Plouvain, north-east of Rœux. Its capture would ensure the defeat of the Germans in Rœux. A thousand yards east of the western edge of Greenland Hill was a small patch of woodland, known as Square Wood. The trench in front of it had been obliterated by our gunners, and two companies of a London regiment crossed it and drove the German garrison out of the shattered trees. A thousand yards beyond was another and larger wood, called "Railway Copse." The Londoners, with both flanks in the air, made for it and forced the enemy to withdraw his guns on the western edge of the wood, entering which our men dug themselves in and waited for their comrades to line up with them. As these had had to halt to receive counter-attacks, the two companies fell back through Square Wood. In the meantime on their right a determined



effort had been made by other troops of the 37th Division to seize the crest of Greenland Hill. Round the remains of a windmill on the crest charge followed charge, but at nightfall the highest point above Plouvain still remained in German hands. While the struggle swayed to and fro on the ridge, troops of the 34th Division from the Chemical Works flung themselves on the cemetery and ruins of Rœux, which, in the words of a British officer, "simply bristled with machine-guns." Some progress was made but the bulk of the village was not reduced. Across the Scarpe, under fire from the Rœux Wood on the north bank and from the Monchy region, the British drew a little nearer to Pelves, and between Pelves and Monchy-le-Preux we slightly advanced our line.

In the course of the bloody fighting on the 28th an incident occurred worthy of mention. A Bavarian battalion, counter-attacking, expelled some of our men from a captured trench. Pursuing blindly they were cut off by a body of Lincolns and North Country troops inferior to them in numbers. A terrible combat at hand-strokes ensued, with bayonet, clubbed rifle and even stones and flints. The result was that the

British practically destroyed the whole battalion, except some two or three prisoners. On Sunday, April 29, we increased our gains by taking a mile of the enemy's trench system south of Oppy. The Germans offered a stubborn resistance and delivered several unsuccessful counter-attacks. On April 30, the date when the Battle of Moronvilliers had been renewed, the Germans counter-attacked between the Scarpe and Monchy-le-Preux, but were completely repulsed and failed to recover the ground lost between Arleux and Gavrelle. The Oppy Wood was the scene of very severe fighting.

During April 1917 the British had taken over 19,500 prisoners including over 400 officers, and captured 257 guns and howitzers, among them 98 heavy guns and howitzers, also 227 trench-mortars and 464 machine-guns. They had gained the Vimy Ridge and the Scarpe Heights. Nevertheless the area in front of any considerable section of the Wotan line (as the Germans called the Drocourt-Quéant line) had not yet been cleared.

To prevent Prince Rupprecht reinforcing the German Crown Prince's armies south of



CANADIANS IN POSSESSION OF AN OLD GERMAN TRENCH NEAR LENS.

[Canadian War Records.]



[Official photograph.]

### CROSS-ROADS NEAR TINCOURT BLOWN UP BY THE GERMANS.

Laon and north of Moronvilliers, Sir Douglas Haig on May 3 once more attacked. May 1, 1917, had been uneventful. The next day, Wednesday, May 2, all our batteries rained projectiles from the south of Lens to the neighbourhood of Cambrai. The German guns replied fiercely. This artillery duel was the prelude to the Battle of Fresnoy-Bullecourt.

The two preceding battles had brought us up to the Oppy-Quéant line. In that about to be narrated the objective of Horne and Allenby and Gough, whose Fifth Army cooperated on Allenby's right, was to clear the enemy out of it from the north of Arleux across the Scarpe to Bullecourt where the line touched the devastated region. The front assaulted measured considerably longer than had hitherto been the case. While the Third and First Armies attacked from Fontaine-lez-Croisilles to Fresnoy the Fifth Army was to move once more against the Hindenburg line in the neighbourhood of Bullecourt. The total distance was over 16 miles.

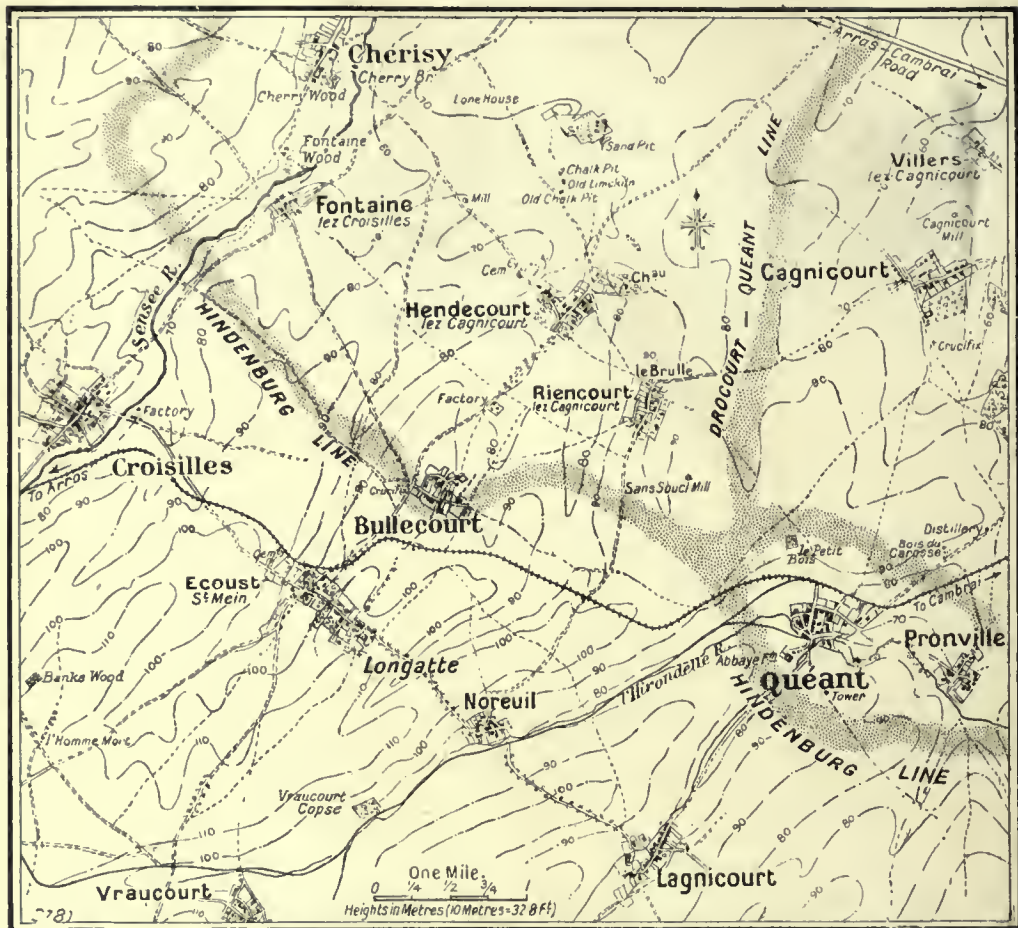
Our preliminary bombardment was terrific. On the night of Wednesday, May 2, the whole sky was lighted up with the blaze of guns and of hursting shells. At 3.45 a.m. on Thursday, May 3, the advance began in the dark. It was, indeed, by the accident of weather, too dark. Our men had great difficulty in keeping direction. The number of troops used was small in proportion to the front attacked, and taken as a whole, the day was, perhaps, the least satisfactory of all the fighting in this area.

The attack penetrated the German positions practically along the whole front. Eastern county battalions entered Rœux and captured the German trenches south of Fresnoy. On the extreme left Horne's Canadians from Arleux assaulted Fresnoy village; on the

extreme right Gough's Australians endeavoured to wedge themselves between Bullecourt and Quéant, the southern terminus of the German line from Drocourt, while south of the Canadians and north of the Australians, battalions of English, Scottish, and Irish regiments threw themselves at the German entrenchments in the district traversed by the Scarpe between Arleux and Bullecourt. It was a day of hot sunshine, and the physical energies of the men were tried to their utmost.

Fresnoy, defended by the German 15th Reserve Division (10th, 29th and 69th Regiments), was very strongly fortified and wired. Between the wire and Arleux the enemy put up a barrage of shells through which the Canadians who attacked here had to pass. Following our own barrage some of them rushed for the gaps in the entanglements, others tried to force the ruins from the north and south. Innumerable feats of valour were performed. For example, one Canadian single-handed killed the crew of a machine-gun as it emerged from a dug out; another Canadian when a Stokes bomb fell at his feet picked it up and flung it at a "pill-box." The Germans beat off the frontal attack but the flank attacks succeeded. Some 250 prisoners and eight officers were captured. The garrison in Fresnoy, which had been strengthened, made a sortie against our line an hour later and suffered very heavily. In the evening hostile infantry violently counter-attacked supported by an intense bombardment of heavy guns. Fighting of the most severe character ensued which raged during the afternoon and far into the night, and our troops were forced back from Rœux and Chérisy. They clung on, however, to Fresnoy and the Hindenburg line east of Bullecourt and to parts of the German trenches west of Fontaine-lez-Croisilles





MAP ILLUSTRATING THE FIGHTING AROUND BULLECOURT.

and south of the Scarpe. These operations had given us 968 prisoners, of whom 29 were officers.

While the enemy retained Oppy and Rœux it was impossible to advance on a wide front north of the Scarpe—against this part of the German line. Of the two villages Oppy was the more exposed, because it was menaced by the British in Arleux to its north and in Gavrelle to its south. Rœux, on the other hand, was protected on the south by the Scarpe and by the Germans between the river and the Sart Wood. To the defence of Oppy Prince Rupprecht sent forward the Prussian 2nd and 1st Guard Reserve Divisions. The 2nd was disposed round Oppy; the 1st confronted the British in the vicinity of Gavrelle. Before daybreak on May 3, English troops, after the guns had thinned the trees and demolished the entanglements in Oppy Wood, burst into it, and entered the street leading to Neuvilleuil. They penetrated as far as the south-eastern

end of Oppy, but were forced back by vigorous counter-attacks. The Prussian Guards had not been entirely cleared out of the wood. Many from platforms in the trees poured jets of bullets from their machine guns; the wrecked château in the wood had not been reduced. Attacked in flank from the south and south-east by masses of Prussian Guards our men slowly evacuated the village and wood. Between Fresnoy and Oppy, however, some progress had been achieved, and the English had united up with the victorious Canadians.

From Oppy to Gavrelle the ground, studded with "pill-boxes," had been the scene of desperate and prolonged fighting. The windmill on the outskirts of Gavrelle, just north of the Arras-Douai road, changed hands no less than nine times. The Prussian Guards, issuing from the ruins of Manville Farm, north-east of Fresnes, and from the Fresnes Woods, refused to abandon the brick-strewn mound, but at nightfall the British by a magnificent bayonet charge succeeded in securing this

coveted and long-disputed spot. The struggle between Fresnoy and Gavrelle had been indecisive; from Gavrelle over Greenland Hill to Rœux and Plouvain on the Scarpe the enemy also stubbornly maintained his position. The terrain was so churned up with shell craters that our troops could advance only with the greatest difficulty. In every crater were German snipers and machine-guns. At the end of the day we had not captured Rœux, but we had edged round it on three sides, and, in the afternoon, our artillery had inflicted heavy losses on two battalions of the enemy coming from Plouvain.

Plouvain were fairly protected from fire across the river.

It was with a view to rendering the position of the Germans between the Scarpe and the Arras-Cambrai road untenable that Allenby's right wing delivered its attack from Guénappe to Bullecourt. On May 3, Cavalry Farm, north-east of Guénappe, was stormed, and our troops forced their way down the road to St. Rohart Factory on the Cojeul, about a mile west of Vis-en-Artois. Just south of the road, the enemy were ensconced in a triangular patch of woodland, called "Triangle Wood," and in three quarries joined up by tunnels with exits leading



[Official photograph.]

#### BREAKING UP A GERMAN STRONGHOLD.

South of the Scarpe, Allenby's troops on May 3 won several minor actions. They advanced between the river and the Arras-Cambrai chaussée on the average about 500 yards, carrying "Infantry Hill." When sun set we were in Keeling Copse, 1,500 yards due south of Pelves, and our outposts were 300 yards west of the Vert Wood. The Sart and Vert Woods had been, throughout the day, converted into veritable infernos, the British gunners throwing streams of shells into them. But neither the woods nor Pelves was taken, and until they were, the Germans in Rœux and

to the Sensée. The wood was slowly cleared and the garrisons of the quarries bombed into the open, where they were annihilated by a barrage. At this point the Sensée was crossed.

Meantime our troops had assaulted Chérisy at dawn, from the banks of the Cojeul, west of the Sensée. Trench lines, heavily wired, and two sunken roads ran in front of the village. Overcoming all obstacles, the British troops burst over the ruins and reached the Sensée which was also crossed at this point. But a succession of German counter-attacks and powerful barrages obliged the British to retreat,





*Drawn by A. Forester.*

**HAND-TO-HAND FIGHTING AT GAVRELLE MILL.**

and Chérisy was recovered by the enemy. Simultaneously with the attack on Chérisy, other British troops had proceeded against Fontaine-lez-Croisilles on the east bank of the Sensée. The wood north of the village was gained, but in the ruins, in the sunken roads west of and in the trenches south and south-east of them, the enemy continued to hold his own. Prince Rupprecht was still fighting for time to complete the Quéant-Drocourt line, and the Germans clung desperately to Fontaine, the possession of which impeded our advance down the right bank of the Sensée.

From Fontaine-lez-Croisilles the German fortified zone ran southwards, passing to the west of Bullecourt. Thence it proceeded south-eastwards to the west of Quéant, where the junction was protected by a deep semi-circular system of trenches and wire entanglements of immense strength. On April 11, it will be remembered, Australian troops had broken the zone between Bullecourt and Quéant, to the left of the junction. It was the first effort to use Tanks instead of artillery barrage in an assault, but only a dozen were employed, and they failed to make any impression upon the great fortress of Bullecourt, on the Australians' left, which was to have been stormed by British troops after the Tanks had given the signal—a signal which was either not given or not seen. Nearly surrounded, enfiladed from both sides, without much artillery support, and without communication trenches, the Australians were ordered back.

This first peep into the much-vaunted Hindenburg line had been sufficient to prove its strength. But it was by no means unconquerable. It could not compare with the later "pill-box" and concrete redoubt system adopted by General Sixt von Armin in the north, which compelled on our part a strategy of limited offensives, and required in Flanders a policy of consistent steady thrusts. The Hindenburg line was little more than two lines of massive trenches, some 80 yards apart. Each line was heavily wired, and replete with deep dug-outs and shelters, but the British and Australian corps in the Somme country had so harried and hastened the retreat that the Germans had not had time to complete the system, and even as late as May no revetting had been done in the trenches.

The fighting in this sector was judged of special importance. For it was hoped that the Fifth Army by breaking the Hindenburg

line would cut off and capture the Germans as they were driven down from the north-west by Allenby.

The end of April and the first days of May saw the completion of Gough's far-flung preparations for his section of the attack. Battery after battery had been driven or dragged over the devastated Somme region, and there were great accumulations of shells. Although the Fifth Army had moved 20 miles from its winter lines, a barrage probably without parallel on our side until that date, was arranged. There was little time for the studied emplacement of guns, and detailed observation of enemy positions, which previously at Vimy and later at Messines and Ypres, made destruction of defences certain; it was a battle barrage under the conditions of the new war of movement, which Hindenburg's Somme retreat had brought into being. Yet it seemed to express the full meaning of Britain's vast efforts in the making of munitions. The "heavies" mercilessly pounded, for many days, the German defences and their covering wire-work. And when the barrage opened at dawn on May 3, it was like a rolling storm of projectiles. "Before the first grey light of the morning," wrote Mr. C. E. W. Bean, the Official Press Correspondent with the Australians, "guns for mile upon mile behind us, and to the north-west behind the British front as far as the eye could see, burst into a fire faster than the rolling of a kettle drum." This barrage continued without reduction for more than three hours. It showered destruction upon the Germans, rolling onwards to far beyond their trench system, whilst heavy guns pounded their back areas and the points where their troops left the vehicles to march on foot to the front trenches.

Varying fortunes attended the day. On the right half of General Gough's sector, the Fifth Corps dented the German lines, but did not get through. On the left, the Second Australian Division fought through the whole system of defences, and awaited the fall of Bullecourt for a further advance. That evening it seemed that the great aim was to be achieved. Strong counter-attacks were expected, but the ultimate junction of Allenby's troops with the Australians would have enveloped a large German force, and another attack at dawn was ordered against the great impediment—Bullecourt.

That fortress was to become the centre of a



maelstrom which raged for 13 days, and it is worth describing in detail. Wherever men of York, of Aberdeenshire, of Essex, tell of the deeds of their sons, Bullecourt will be on their lips; in the lonely country homes and thriving cities of Australia, it is known with Gallipoli, Pozières, and Passchendaele as a national battle-name. Its great strength lay in its concrete machine-gun emplacements and cellars, its deep tunnel through which reserves were constantly brought up, and in the tenacity of its defenders. Its few dozen cottages clustered

with the Australian division at Riencourt, up the hill, towards which Victorian troops (Sixth Brigade) had already gone according to time-table. That they did not manage this was due to nothing that valour or death could achieve; for in Bullecourt they had encountered a defensive position which with Thiepval will rank as one of the stoutest ever defended by German troops in France.

The fighting of May 4 brought no change, and all hope of captures had to be given up. Counter-attacks pushed back the troops



[Official photograph.]

#### GETTING A HEAVY HOWITZER INTO POSITION DURING THE ADVANCE.

between a large brick building at the south-western edge, and a refinery at the back. All lay on the flat and almost treeless side of a hill, overlooking the Hindenburg line to the south, and hidden to the north by the rise of the slope. It jutted out, a sinister ravelin, in such a way as to seem ahead of the chosen line, like a solitary fortress; but it was stiffly connected into the general defence, and a strong trench system ran round it.

The 62nd Division had penetrated through this system on May 3, and had proved the merits of the late divisions of the New Army by storming many of the village defences. Isolated parties were in Bullecourt throughout the day; some even reached the refinery across the Hindenburg line. They were desperately anxious to keep their appointment

at Chérisy and Fontaine-lez-Croisilles to their original line, and the attack on Bullecourt, which was not accompanied by heavy artillery fire, owing to the hope of saving the resolute British troops holding out in it, failed. The Australians had had a severe day and night. They had indeed several times been within an ace of that retirement to the old line which had become inevitable along other portions of the battle front. Their hold on the Hindenburg line was extraordinarily slender. Originally it was a mere 400-yard break made by the 23rd and 24th Battalions (Victorian), whose third wave had passed on towards Riencourt before the failure of the attacks on Bullecourt had been realized. The Fifth Brigade (New South Wales) which had advanced on the right of the Sixth, forming the extreme right flank in the



A BOMBARDMENT WITH HEAVY HOWITZERS IN PROGRESS.

order of battle, had found the German lines held in great strength, and all those who reached it were killed. Part of the Brigade later joined their Victorian comrades, and with great dash bombed down the German trenches towards their first and second objectives. This work was continued by the Seventh and the First Brigades, and by night time the Australians had secured all that portion of the Hindenburg line marked out for them in the general scheme—some 1,200 yards. More than half of this had been won by bombing, which was now the intensest form of hand-to-hand fighting on the Western front. Some Western Australian troops had also been sent against the southwestern side of Bullecourt, to aid the 62nd Division; the first wave was annihilated, and the orders to the others were countermanded.

Throughout the night the Germans tried desperately to turn the Australians out of the line, and counter-attacks were numerous. The Australian position was like a large flower on a very slender stalk—a single communication sap, bravely dug by the engineers during the first hours of the attack, being the only link between the new positions and the old. The heaviest counter-attack was made at 10, and consisted of waves of "storm troops," who advanced from Bullecourt on the one side and from Quéant on the other. They used flame throwers, mortars and bombs, and were met with a hail of Stokes mortar-bombs and with cold steel. The Australians' right was slowly

driven in. The Germans reached even to the sap. They came on wave after wave; the heroic survivors of the 23rd and 24th Battalions, which still clung to their gains of the morning, seemed doomed to isolation. "The precious grip on the Hindenburg line," wrote an Australian correspondent, "seemed to slacken and fail under mere weight of the enemy thrusts. Back at the railway embankment, the old Australian front line, every man was given a post of defence. The Brigadier seized a rifle. Eight hundred yards forward in the new line the word went round to retire. 'Who said retire?' said the men. 'None of our officers will say retire.' They resolved, these Victorians, to die where they stood rather than give up their gains. And it seemed at that moment that the choice had definitely come."

The counter-attacks were beaten back before midnight, and during the day troops of the First Australian Division recovered by bombing all the lost ground. By the evening of May 4 the battle had become a stern struggle for the retention of this pathway through the Hindenburg line. To the north the fighting simmered down; the hope of great captures was abandoned. But here was the vital breach, through which further advance might become possible; and the forthcoming events on the French front demanded that the full enemy strength should be kept employed.

General Gough brought up the Seventh Division, which renewed the 62nd on the



Bullecourt front; the remaining brigades of the First Australian Division moved up in support of the Second Australian Division, and General Hobbs's Fifth Australian Division was brought within striking distance. It was determined to take Bullecourt by a series of frontal assaults, and to hold at all costs the breach in the Hindenburg line to the right, despite the mass of artillery which the Germans were now concentrating on this solitary spot

that some of the 62nd Division were still holding out, was commenced. Bullecourt changed shape visibly under our fire. During May 5 and 6, and indeed, though in lesser degree, throughout the remaining days of the battle, Bullecourt and the positions to the south were an inferno of explosions. The enemy barrages were little less fierce than our own, whilst our steady pounding of the ruined buildings cast a pall of dull reddish smoke over the battlefield.

A strong assault was launched by Gordons



[Official photograph.]

#### A TRACTOR DISABLED BY THE ROUGHNESS OF THE ROAD.

The battle of Fresnoy-Bullecourt had thus yielded appreciable results. Horne's Canadians had secured Fresnoy, Birdwood's Australians had inserted themselves between the Oppy-Quéant and the Drocourt-Quéant lines. On the first day we had taken over 900 prisoners, including 28 officers, and we had prevented Prince Rupprecht reinforcing the German Crown Prince, who, as described in Chapter CCIX, was successfully attacked on May 4, 5 and 6 by General Nivelles north of the Aisne.

Some brave reconnoitring work by officers' patrols and aeroplane observation established the fact that all the life showing in Bullecourt was German. The drenching with heavy shells, which had been avoided in the hope

of the 7th Division in the early morning of Monday, May 7. The 207th German Division had been brought up to defend it, and the fighting was stubborn. The Gordons penetrated into the ruins, and at the same time troops of the 1st Australian Division began to bomb down the trenches on the western side. Since May 3 the Australian position had been fully exposed on each flank, the points where their occupation of the German system ended being marked only by sand-bag barricades. The Scottish troops, known everywhere amongst the Australians as "Joeks," clung to a line across the south-eastern corner of the village, and about noon that day the union of Scottish and Australians took place in the Hindenburg line on

the south-western slope of Bullecourt, and a continuous front was established firmly from the pounded hillside to which the Australians had so tenaciously held.

The Germans would not yet admit defeat. But in a supreme test of strength, in which they showed no lack of men, guns, or shells, they were being steadily thrust back off their highly-prized ground. Their leaders seemed apprehensive and nervous. They were not yet ready with the Drocourt-Quéant line,

from one, and seeming to lurch forward and plunge into the next. It was well done, but it was irresistibly funny to watch. Our men stood on the parapet, and breast-high against it, with cigarettes in their mouths, and shot as they have seldom had the chance to shoot. The attackers were simply wiped out with rifle and machine-gun fire, though some got close to our line. They tried at the same time a bombing attack on the flank, and this was well countered by our Stokes guns."



[Official photograph.]

**A GERMAN OBSERVATION POST DESTROYED BY GUN-FIRE.**

according to the reports of our airmen, and they placed great importance upon regaining what they had lost near and in Bullecourt. By May 8 they had counter-attacked in this area no less than 13 times. New methods were employed. An Australian general thus described a counter-attack in which shell holes were used: "It was for all the world like a school of seals. First the heads of a number of Germans were seen in the sunken road, near Riencourt, to which some of our men had penetrated during the first minutes of the assault. The counter-attacking troops were forming up. Then they came over the top. They came, two or three hundred together, diving from shell-hole to shell-hole—crawling

By all the theory of war the Australians should have been thrown out of their position. A captured Prussian officer, who could not understand their venturing to retain so exposed a salient, spoke of them hopelessly as "those madmen from the Antipodes." But every yard gained in Bullecourt increased the area over which the Germans had to distribute their shells, and the linking up with the 7th Division firmly secured the left flank.

By a second assault the 7th Division slightly increased their grip on the village, but for four days after the junction great efforts were still required to consolidate the position, defeat counter-attacks, and prepare for the assault planned for May 12





*[Drawn by F. de Haenen.]*

THE FIGHT IN BULLECOURT.



At dawn on that day the village was assaulted from three sides. Gordon Highlanders and Devons dashed into the ruins from the west, English troops from the south-west, and Australians from the south-east. The battle proceeded during this day and the next with all its old fury. The Australians' part was entrusted to the 15th Brigade (Victorians), who were so close to the German positions that an artillery preparation had to be dispensed with. There were in particular here two strong posts bristling with machine guns in concrete emplacements, and fenced with thick wire. Fearing to withdraw his men whilst artillery destroyed the entanglements, lest the Germans should occupy their old positions, Birdwood decided to rely wholly upon a hurricane fire with Stokes mortars. The fight was a lively one, but thoroughly successful. A heavy German barrage descended before the attack, and two sections of Stokes mortars were blown away or buried. The remaining guns, however, together with the larger trench mortars, provided an adequate though singular barrage. In and about one strong point there were 150 dead Germans, and those who survived seemed utterly cowed. The storming troops met a shower of bombs, but the Germans soon capitulated.

Similar success on the other sides of the village brought the British line on Sunday, May 13, through the northern corner of Bullecourt, and all that remained to be done was the capture of a strong point near the refinery. Sunday we spent in repulsing counter-attacks and evicting the enemy from the cellars and dug-outs, and the gap in the Hindenburg line became nearly two miles in width.

A final effort was made by Prince Rupprecht to re-establish it. On May 12 he had withdrawn the Lehr Regiment from the 3rd Guard Division, which opposed the Australians.\* The regiment was one of the most famous in the German Army. It was told that the honour of recovering the Hindenburg line was to belong to it, and that after the battle it would be sent to a pleasant resting place. Whether the "Cockchafers"—the regiment's nickname at Potsdam and Berlin—enjoyed the prospects—which had been earned,

they were told, by their singular prowess on the Eastern Front—is not related in the records of the prisoners afterwards taken. But they appear to have rehearsed the attack with great thoroughness. Aeroplane photographs were taken of the Australian positions, and model trenches made for the rehearsals. The regiment went over the attack by day, and then by night. Little white screens were used to mark the distances, so that the men would by practice know almost by instinct the places they had reached. Every man was taught his exact duty in the attack.

A great bombardment preceded this assault. All day on May 14 German artillery and mortars pounded the Australian line. At night the bombardment intensified, and an hour before dawn it became terrific. At 3.45 the "Cockchafers" advanced. They attacked the Australians from right flank, which was still in the air, to the junction with the 7th Division, whilst other specially trained troops advanced towards the British in Bullecourt itself. At this point the Germans had to come in frontal assault across level ground, and our garrison of London troops shot them down before they reached the trenches. On the right, however, where Australians and Germans were only 40 yards apart, severe hand-to-hand fighting took place. Mr. Bean wrote the following description of the "Cockchafers' " temporary success :

One after another, four waves of dark figures attempted to rush over the tumbled earthen sea against the two ends of the trenches held by the Australians. A good part of them were mown down at once with bombs and machine-guns. A portion managed to struggle through towards our front trench, and the dark figures could be seen running along it and at once dropping in. But the attack was always utterly disorganized. Within two minutes of the assault having been begun, the results of all this careful planning and practice had been thrown to the winds. All that remained of it was between two and three hundred Germans in a section of Australian trench, with scarcely any idea of where they were and what was happening, machine-gun bullets sweeping above their heads and making any sort of movement utterly perilous.

The Germans held their small gain for some three hours. None escaped. All were immediately cut off from their own line by a heavy barrage, which thundered down with fine precision behind them. Two counter-attacks, both launched straight at them across the top by the New South Wales garrison, accounted for the lot. The first counter-attack drove them into a small corner of the trenches; the second, which was supported by Londoners, who temporarily took over part

\* The Lehr Regiment consists of small detachments brought together from the various Prussian regiments to be trained together so as to ensure when they return to their units that they may impart instruction on identical lines.



of the Australian line, cleared them all up. This counter-blast was delivered in broad daylight, and it marked the finish of the German resistance in the battle of Bullecourt. Next day the last strong point on the battlefield was seized by British troops.

The prolonged battle for Bullecourt and for the consolidation of the conquered southern sector of the Oppy-Quéant line had its main value in the distinct beating and hammering it inflicted upon Prince Rupprecht's army. As events turned out, the possession of Bullecourt was not made use of in further movement in this sector, for immediately upon the stoppage of the French offensive changes were made in the Allied plan, and the centre of the British actions moved farther to the north. But Bullecourt tied German divisions to the sector during fateful days, it mauled them, and it had a distinct moral effect. It proved our definite capacity, despite massing of troops and guns, to advance into and even beyond the Hindenburg line.

During the battle of Fresnoy-Bullecourt and in the interval between it and the battle of Wytchaete-Messines, several incidents occurred deserving of detailed notice. On Saturday, May 5, a day of great heat, when there was a haze so thick that from a height of 2,000 feet aviators could scarcely see the ground, five of our aeroplanes engaged a squadron of 27 German machines arranged in three formations, one of which had cut in behind the British fliers. For a full hour, from 5 to 6 p.m., the unequal combat proceeded, the enemy's anti-aircraft guns pouring shells upward through the haze to the danger of friend and foe alike. In the first few minutes one German machine was seen to fall in flames. Then another went down, turning over and over. A third was sent spinning down and crashed on the ground. Directly afterwards a British machine in trouble dived from 11,000 to 3,000 feet pursued by a German aeroplane. The pursuer was in his turn pursued and put out of action, and our machine righted itself, in the midst of exploding shells, and rejoined its comrades at the moment when still another German aviator was sent to his doom. Again a British machine, with its reserve petrol tank in flames, was obliged to descend and was pursued. It made its way towards our lines. A German aeroplane which dived at it was mortally hit and dropped like a stone. Three more German aeroplanes were

next disposed of, and the rest of the squadron, which was believed to be "von Bülow's circus,"\* retired. The performance of our men was the more meritorious because, with the exception of the flight leader, few of them had had much experience of aerial fighting.

The same day Captain Ball, the well-known aviator, fought two of his last successful fights. Having disposed of hostile machines he returned safely to his aerodrome. On Sunday, single-handed, he attacked four Albatross scouts of a new type, sent one to the ground and put the remaining three to flight.

Saturday, May 5, was also memorable for the capture of a section of the German front line south of the Souchez river. On Sunday morning a counter-attack was beaten off.

It was on the evening of Monday, May 7, that Captain Ball closed his career. Together with another machine he drove down a Hun aeroplane and then closed with four others. His comrade sent one crashing to the ground, but, wounded in the wrist, was forced to make for home. What exactly happened to Captain Ball has not yet transpired. He was in his 21st year; he had accounted for some forty enemy machines in the course of his brief and heroic career and he met his death in glorious encounter.

The next day, Tuesday, May 8, the Germans gained their first distinct success since the opening of the British offensive. Under cover of a tremendous bombardment and clouds of a new poison gas, the 15th Reserve and the 4th Guard and 1st Guard Reserve Divisions assaulted the Canadian and English troops in and around Fresnoy. They were repulsed, but, later in the morning, an entirely fresh division, the 5th Bavarian, was flung in close formation at our weary men. Fresnoy and its Wood were lost. A few hours later part of the abandoned ground was recovered, but the village remained in the hands of the enemy. In the evening German attacks north of Fresnoy and north-east of Gavrelle collapsed.

On Wednesday, May 9, there was violent fighting round Fresnoy. The next day, May 10, at nightfall, the Germans, encouraged by their recovery of Fresnoy, attacked Arleux and the British defences between that ruined village and the Souchez river. Columns and

\* There were two of these "circuses" at this date; the other was commanded by Captain Baron von Riechhofen. Each comprised from 24 to 30 machines. They travelled along the front and were used at various points. Hence the name.

waves of men were recklessly thrown forward, only to be thinned and checked by our guns and machine-guns. On the 11th the attacks were renewed for three hours against our positions south of the Souchez. With flame-throwers the enemy succeeded in driving us back, but all the trenches were recaptured in the afternoon by counter attacks.

Meanwhile the loss of Fresnoy had been counterbalanced by the capture of most of Rœux. After a terrific bombardment on the evening of Friday, May 11, English, Scottish

Haig was able to announce that the whole of Rœux was in the possession of the British.

On May 16, in the morning, the enemy counter-attacked between Gavrelle and the Scarpe. The advance was preceded by one of the heaviest bombardments yet experienced by our men. Three several columns came on behind the German barrage. One moved up the north bank of the river; another between Rœux and the chemical works; the third followed the embankment of the Douai-Arras railway. The first two columns were smashed



[Official photograph.]

#### COOKING DINNER AMID THE RUINS OF A CAPTURED VILLAGE.

and Irish troops at last cleared the enemy, consisting chiefly of troops of the 4th Ersatz Division, out of the chemical works, the château, cemetery and western houses of the village. On the morning of Saturday, May 12, we continued our advance and carried the German positions on a front of about a mile and a half. Some 700 prisoners, including 11 officers, and a number of trench mortars and machine-guns, were captured. Simultaneously, south of the Scarpe along the Arras-Cambrai road, we stormed a German fort and pushed forward to a point about 1,500 yards east of Guénappe. On Monday, May 14, Sir Douglas

by the British shells and bullets; the third temporarily penetrated our lines, to be promptly evicted before many minutes had elapsed. A number of prisoners were left in our hands.

North-west of Bullecourt, near Fontaine-lez-Croisilles, our troops the same day progressed a little on the left bank of the Sensée.

The capture of Bullecourt was followed by a vigorous and successful blow aimed at the German lines between Bullecourt and Fontaine-lez-Croisilles. Shortly after 5 a.m. on Sunday, May 20, the day when the French finished the Battle of Moronvilliers by capturing Mt. Cornillet and its tunnel, English, including



Kentish, and Scottish, troops attacked the German 49th Reserve Division, consisting of the 225th, 226th and 228th Regiments. Our guns had been relentlessly pounding the sector for several days, and the Germans on both sides of the Sensée offered little effective resistance. Some 3,000 yards of trenches and redoubts—600 yards west and 2,400 yards east of the river—were captured. A second attack in the early evening carried us forward into the enemy's support line, and involved the capture of the huge long tunnel beneath it. Constructed by gangs of British and Russian prisoners and fitted with alcoves containing sleeping bunks, shelves for rifles and bomb supplies, and lighted by electricity, it had formed a valuable shelter for Germans, the loss of which involved a long part of the trenches connected with it. Over 200 prisoners had been secured in this operation. With the exception of a front of 2,000 yards adjoining Bullecourt on the north-west, the Germans now retained nothing south of Fontaine-lez-Croisilles.

The action on May 20, like that on the same day at Mt. Cornillet, virtually closed for the time being the Allied offensive between Lens and Anberive. From May 20, to the opening

of the Battle of Wytshaete-Messines, on June 7, little was accomplished on the British front in the Arras region. On the 23rd we successfully raided the enemy's lines south-east of Gavrelle. Two days later (May 25) a portion of the enemy's front trench system south-east of Loos was secured with 25 prisoners, and counter-attacks north-east of Arleux and south-west of Fontaine-lez-Croisilles were repulsed. West and north-west of the last-named village we progressed slightly on Saturday, May 26, and on Sunday, May 27, when also, after dark, German raids south of Lens and north-west of Chérisy ended in our inflicting numerous casualties and taking prisoners. On the 27th several combats in the air occurred. We wrecked 12 and drove down 10 other machines out of control with a loss of three of our own aeroplanes. One hostile machine was shot down by our anti-aircraft guns. During the night of May 29-30, more enemy raids near Fontaine-lez-Croisilles and west of Lens were repulsed. The next night a slight advance was made by us west of Chérisy. By that date, since May 1, we had captured 3,412 prisoners, including 68 officers, 1 field gun, 21 trench mortars, and 80 machine-guns.

In the first days of June there was renewed



PRISONERS AWAITING THEIR RATIONS.

[Official photograph.]



[Official photo-graph.]

## WORKING PARTIES FOLLOWING UP THE ADVANCE.

liveliness. On the night of Friday, June 1, the Germans vigorously attacked a post south of Oppy, and on the night of Saturday, June 2 the Canadians west and south-west of Avion assaulted the enemy on a front of 2,000 yards south of the Souchez river, while the Germans attacked our line of advanced posts south-west of Chérisy. The moon that night shone brightly. By early dawn on June 3, the Canadians had taken the trenches garrisoned by troops of the 56th Bavarian Division, and also the ruins of the electric-light works, 500 yards south of the Souchez, and those of a so-called brewery on the Arras-Lens road 700 yards farther east. Over 100 prisoners had been made. The Canadians were, however, not destined to hold the captured ground long. Numerous German guns east of Lens opened fire and waves of Germans advanced. By nightfall our men had been forced back to their original position.

At Chérisy during the night of June 2-3, the enemy made some progress, but counter-attacks drove him back and the last post won by him was retaken on the night of June 3-4. Twenty-four hours afterwards the electric power station south of the Souchez river passed into our hands, and the next night (June 5-6) and on the morning of June 6, between Gavrelle and Rœux, we ejected the Germans from a mile

of trenches on the western slope of Greenland Hill, 162 prisoners (including 4 officers) being brought in.

On the British front in less than a month there had been captured nearly 20,000 prisoners, including 400 officers. The gains in material amounted to 257 guns of which 98 were of large calibre, 464 machine guns, 227 trench mortars and immense quantities of other war material.

While the fighting which followed the Battle of Fresnoy-Bullecourt proceeded between Lens and Bullecourt, nothing occurred of much moment north of the former and south of the latter. Apart from some small progress made north of Havrincourt Wood, north of Gonnelleu, north-east of Hargicourt, east of Le Verguier and Gricourt—a village between Le Verguier and St. Quentin within a few hundred yards of the Cambrai-St. Quentin chaussée—the British marked time and consolidated their front in the devastated region. Between Lens and the Belgian coast several raids by British and Germans were reported in the neighbourhoods of Ypres, Messines, Wytschaete, Ploegsteert Wood, Armentières, Neuve Chapelle and the battlefield of Loos.

Whit Monday, May 28, was celebrated by our aeroplanes bombing St. Pierre Station at Ghent, the junction of the Bruges, Dixmude,





[Official photograph.]

#### A TIMBERED ROAD THROUGH A CAPTURED FRENCH VILLAGE.

Courtrai, Oudenarde lines. The Kaiser and Hindenburg were in the waiting-room when at 8.45 p.m. our airmen appeared above the station. Considerable damage was inflicted but the German Emperor and his suite escaped unscathed.

On the night of June 4-5, the hostile shipping in Zeebrugge was successfully bombed and on Tuesday, June 5, our monitors shelled Ostend. The majority of the workshops in the dockyard were either wrecked or totally destroyed. The entrance gates to the dockyard basin, the wharf, the submarine shelter and a destroyer under repair were badly damaged. The next day (June 6), a squadron of naval aeroplanes hit a big shed at the aerodrome at Nieuwmunster, 15 miles from Blankenberghe.

On that day a German soldier on the Messines ridge wrote a letter, which was subsequently found by our men, the address of which was, "A Shell Hole in Hell."

We are quite helpless against the English. Thirty men have been buried in mine galleries, and are burning into the bargain. Every day the English fetch over some of those in the front trench, or rather hole. What are the poor fellows to do? Every one refuses to go to the front line. We wait all night in immediate readiness for action. We can no longer sit or lie down. Our heads ache from the gas. Our cigarettes taste of gas.

The 23-centimetre steel shell would drive a lion mad, and its effect is indescribable. Our artillery cannot fire in the daytime. Three days more and we shall go right up to the front line again for five days. We all look forward with joy to being made prisoners. We do not touch the hand grenades. It would be useless. Nowhere can a man be worse off, not even among Hottentots. Such a pitiful life—no food, no drinking water all day, and the sun burns. At midnight dinner, and at 3 in the morning coffee, but not always, as in every act there is danger to one's life. If we are not soon relieved we shall go mad; we are already all muddled.

He had only 24 hours to wait to find a still worse fate would overtake him, when on the opening day of the British attack he and thousands of his countrymen were blown sky-high by the mines which had been driven under their position.

The above letter shows admirably the nature of the British preparations which preceded the battle delivered by Sir Herbert Plumer on June 7, against the German positions between Wytshaete and Messines on the eastern edge of the Mt. des Cats ridge.

In the period just described the main operations may be taken as terminating on May 5, which brought to an end the first half of General Haig's plan. The decisive action which it had been hoped might have resulted from the French advance had been proved to be impossible.

for a time, though the results obtained presaged well for the future. So far as the British gains were concerned our line had been pushed forward along 20 miles to a depth which at some points exceeded five miles and which everywhere represented a large and important conquest of enemy positions. We had snatched from his hold some 60 square miles of territory.

The ground now held represented a very great improvement in our military position, compared with that at the commencement of the operations in question. The occupation of Vimy ridge had removed a constant menace to the security of our line and had turned what had been a danger to us into one which now threatened the enemy. His new lines from Oppy to Quéant had been penetrated, and we were in a position to assume more active steps against him whenever we saw fit so to do. But for a time it was not necessary to press forward in this quarter, and in accordance with his plan previously alluded to Sir Douglas Haig took the second step in the general advance of the British.

General Sir Herbert Plumer, with the Second Army, was now to advance on June 7 against the Messines-Wytschaete Ridge. Its

capture was of the highest importance, as it was a perpetual source of danger to our trenches in front of Ypres, which were completely dominated by it. Moreover, the Germans from these positions were able to see far over our lines farther north and to the west. The situation was analogous to what had been the case at the Vimy Ridge, but even more dangerous to us. To conquer it was an indispensable postulate to the Flanders advance to be undertaken later.

The British Commander-in-Chief had none too many troops at his disposal, and to obtain sufficient it was agreed that the French should again take over charge of part of the front which had been occupied by British on the Allies' left at the commencement of the year. This operation was carried out without hindrance on May 20, by the French extending their front to the River Omignon.

But something more was needed than a mere offensive against the line Messines-Wytschaete. It was necessary to keep the enemy fixed in front of the newly won positions, and so to attract attention as to render it impossible for him to judge from which quarter the next blow was to be aimed. This was accomplished



[Official photograph.]

"PINE-APPLE" GRENADES LEFT BEHIND BY THE GERMANS IN THEIR HURRIED RETREAT.





Official photograph.

## CAVALRY TAKING THEIR HORSES TO WATER.

by a carefully considered series of operations limited to a selected series of important objectives. They were to be attacked mainly by powerful artillery fire, the infantry being used on the most economical scale compatible with the proper carrying out of the objects to be attained. Here feigned attacks were made; there others were undertaken beyond the immediate area of operations. The result was that the enemy was quite unable to determine from what point the new assault was to be delivered.

The Germans naturally made the best they could out of the situation. In accordance with their habitual practice, every raid limited in character and from which our men were as a matter of course drawn back was magnified into a bloody repulse of enormous British forces. These existed only in the Teutonic imagination; but they probably served to placate popular

opinion in Germany. These various movements appear also to have puzzled the leaders of our enemy's forces, for although they knew attack was likely to come in the Messines Ridge direction, the attack was quite unexpected at the moment it was made. Yet there had been going on in that quarter a series of mining and counter-mining operations which could only be the prelude to a more definite attack.

Of course, Sir Douglas Haig was unable to deny the gigantic successes claimed by the Germans—it was not to his benefit to publish the details. But the various undertakings he had set going did their work, and our leader had no cause to complain of the campaign of German lying, which was a very feeble offset to the solid British successes which had been gained and were now about to be repeated on a larger scale.



## CHAPTER CCXXIV.

# THE WESTERN OFFENSIVES OF 1917 : MESSINES.

THE GERMAN RIGHT IN JUNE, 1917—THE BRITISH OBJECTIVE—PREPARATIONS FROM YPRES TO THE LYS—THE FRONT OF ATTACK—WYTSCHAETE—MESSINES RIDGE—SIXT VON ARMIN—GENERAL PLUMER—MINING OPERATIONS AT THE RIDGE—EXPLOSION OF THE MINES ON JUNE 7—THE ADVANCE—MAJOR W. REDMOND—CAPTURE OF THE RIDGE—THE BRITISH VICTORY.

**I**N earlier chapters we have seen the successes gained by the French from Craonne-Reims to Moronvilliers, described the capture of the Vimy Ridge, and observed the reasons why the Messines ridge was to be the next objective of the British Forces. The more advanced positions which had been gained by the French were better suited for defence than those they had held before, but still were not favourable, for a time at any rate, for a further forward movement in that region.

In front of the Vimy Ridge, which had resisted the attempts of Foch to take it in September 1915, but had now been stormed by the British, Sir Douglas Haig had decided for the present not to push forward into the plain of Douai or to fight a second Battle of Loos. Nor did he propose to attack the La Bassée salient, which, owing to the gains of the British at the Battle of Loos, was, like the salient of St. Mihiel, too narrow for Hindenburg to use as his base in an offensive westwards.

From the western environs of La Bassée through Neuve Chapelle to Frelinghien on the Lys a belt of fortifications protected the British against an advance westwards of Prince Rupprecht's Army from the Aubers ridge, the northern face of the La Bassée promontory. Sir Douglas could, therefore, safely mass the

bulk of his available forces north of the Lys and fight a third Battle of Ypres.

Now undoubtedly, from a strategical point of view, the most favourable direction for the Allies to deliver their main stroke was against the extreme German right in Belgium. For this it was a necessary preliminary to improve the British position at Ypres, pushing back the German trenches from the location they held which completely dominated our own.

The aim of Joffre and French in 1914 at the first Battle of Ypres and at the Battle of the Yser had been to move on Ghent, so as to turn the right flank of the German Army. Met by an enormous superiority of men and guns, they had been forced to adopt the defensive. Thanks largely to inundations, the Duke of Württemberg's army had been baffled on the Yser and the Germans had been unable to force their way along the coast to Dunkirk and Calais.

In June 1917 the enemy's outposts were in the Dunes, well east of Nieuport. Thence, southwards, by Dixmude, extended a lagoon to the edge of the forest of Houthulst north of Ypres and east of the canal which connects the Yser with the Lys. As the tongue of dry land between Nieuport and Ostend was of no great width and the enemy's coast batteries forbade a landing from the sea, the area in





MAP ILLUSTRATING THE BATTLE OF MESSINES.



which it was possible in the summer of 1917 to attack the Germans lay between the flooded region and Frelinghien on the Lys. This area was traversed by the canal known north of Ypres as the Yperlee and south of that city as the Ypres-Comines canal. The Allies, at the end of the first Battle of Ypres, had retained a considerable salient east of these canals from near Steenstraete on the Yperlee, well south of the Forest of Houthulst, to a point north-west of Hollebeke, some three miles from Ypres on the canal which from Ypres

even on the western bank. The effect of these untoward events was most unfortunate. The Ypres salient and Ypres itself had become shell traps which had, it is true, been gallantly clung to, but which were intrinsically bad.

It has been seen that the enemy possessed a footing on the Yser-Lys canal bank north of Ypres. South of Ypres, during the first battle of that name, he had fought his way up the wide valley between the canal and the eastern end of the Mont-des-Cats range, almost up to St. Eloi, two and a half miles from Ypres ;



[Official photograph.]

**A FRENCH SOLDIER CARRYING A WOUNDED BRITISH COMRADE.**

enters the Lys at Comines. This salient had been greatly reduced in size during the second Battle of Ypres in April-May 1915, when, with the aid of poisonous gas, the Germans had temporarily broken our line. Near Hollebeke we had been driven from Hill 60, an earth heap formed from the cutting of the Ypres-Lille railroad ; we had had to abandon the woods, so celebrated in the first battle, on both sides of the road from Ypres to Menin and, further, to evacuate Broodseinde and also Zonnebeke on the Ypres-Roulers railroad. Pushed back to about three miles from Ypres on the latter line, our front and that of the French, which had originally embraced Lange-marek and Pilkem on the Ypres-Staden-Thourout railway, had been withdrawn westwards to the immediate vicinity of Ypres and to the Yperlee canal at Boesinghe. At some points north of Steenstraete the enemy were

he had captured the woods north and west of Wytshaete and the end of the range from Wytshaete to Messines. From Messines his line went south over the Douve, a tributary which joins the Lys at Warneton.

Since, apart from the hill of Cassel, south of Dunkirk, the eight mile long Mont-des-Cats, a range of abrupt, isolated elevations, contains the only considerable eminences in the vast plain between the Lys and the North Sea, the presence of the Germans at Wytshaete and Messines was a menace to the Allied forces in Flanders. Their communications with Ypres and the salient east of the canal were under observation and, at any moment, the Germans might take the offensive and endeavour to deprive us of Kemmel, the highest point of the Mont-des-Cats range. This, and the remainder of the range, secured, they would render untenable our lines north and south of





[Official photograph.]

#### THIRSTY SOLDIERS AROUND A WATER-CART.

it and be in a position again to strike at Dunkirk and Calais.

Before, then, it would be safe to break out from the Ypres salient, it was necessary to expel the enemy from his strongholds on the Mont-des-Cats range and also to compel him to abandon a large part of the low, broken ground between it and the Ypres-Comines canal. From Wytshaecte undulating but lower ground stretches north-eastwards to the Ypres-Menin road and then northwards past Passchendaele to Staden on the Ypres-Thourout-Bruges railway. If this rising ground could also be captured, it would form an advantageous step for the advance on Roulers and Ghent, and the position of the Germans towards Lille and south of it would also be menaced.

Further, the British attack might ultimately turn the German defences on the Belgian coast so that they would be compelled to abandon it and give up Ostend and Zeebrugge, those bases for torpedo boats, light cruisers and submarines from which so much harm had been done to Allied shipping carrying food and raw materials to Great Britain.

The plan of Sir Douglas Haig and General Pétain was first to throw the British Second

Army at the German salient south of Ypres, and to expel the enemy from the eastern end of the Mont-des-Cats range and the high ground north-east of it between Wytshaecte and the neighbourhood of "Hill 60," east of the Ypres-Comines canal. That being accomplished, the British Fifth Army, moved up from the south of Arras, supported on its left by a French Army under General Anthoine, the victor of Moronvilliers, and on its right by the British Second Army, was in the autumn to debouch from the salient east of Ypres and endeavour to gain the high ground between "Hill 60" and Staden.

Since November 1916, when the plan of campaign for the next year had been settled at the conference of military representatives of the Allied Powers, the preparations of the British in Flanders had been steadily proceeding. The change of plans described in the last chapter had delayed the offensive north of the Lys, and it was not till the prior demands of the operations round Arras had been satisfied that labour and material in sufficient quantities could be released. The work of preparation was then swiftly carried to completion. At the opening of the war the area behind the British front from Ypres



[Official photograph.]

#### CARTING STONES FOR ROAD-MAKING.

to the Lys had been served by only one railway, the trunk line from Calais to Lille by Armentières. At Hazebrouck, a line branched off from it which, skirting the western end of the Mont-des-Cats range, connected Ypres with the railroads leading to Ostend, Bruges and Ghent. Between the first Battle of Ypres and the Battle of Vimy-Arras these inadequate railway communications had been greatly supplemented, and in the subsequent weeks they developed to such an extent that behind our lines there existed, in the language of a war correspondent, "a series of Clapham Junctions, with broad gauge and narrow gauge trains, all as busy as a London terminus before a football Final."

At the same time the roads and paths in the district were enlarged, metalled or extended. Forward dumps of material were made for the purpose of constructing new or reconstructing old thoroughfares in the crater-pitted region defended by the enemy. As the battle was to be fought in the summer, special precautions had to be taken to supply the assaulting infantry with water. Existing lakes were tapped, pits to catch rain-water were dug on the Mont-des-Cats range round Kemmel, and

the water of the Lys was pumped into barges and then sterilized. From lakes, pits and barges, pipe lines were taken forward and provision made for their rapid extension in the event of victory. What was achieved by our engineers may be surmised from the fact that six days after the battle—on June 15—from 450,000 to 600,000 gallons of water daily were being supplied to our men.

Arrangements were also made for the transport of water, rations and stores by mules, horses, and men. So successful were they that during the attack water was delivered to the troops within 20 to 40 minutes of the taking of new positions, while in one case carrying parties arrived with water and rations four minutes after the capture of an objective.

It will be recollected that, before the Battle of Vimy-Arras, a plasticine model of the enemy's position had been constructed. A model, but on a larger scale covering more than an acre of ground, had also been made of the German lines. There, officers and men could study hour by hour miniature reproductions of the ruined villages, farms, inns and shattered woods. Thanks to our airmen, most of the German trenches, redoubts and "pill-boxes",



were indicated on it. The battle had been rehearsed bit by bit. Particular features on the model had been, in another place, enlarged to their natural size and infantrymen carefully trained to act against them.

The front selected for attack measured nearly 10 miles, from Mt. Sorrel to St. Yves. Our final objective was the Oosttaverne Line, which lay between these two points. Beginning at Mt. Sorrel, it extended south-westwards through "Hill 60" to the Ypres-Comines canal. West of the canal, it ran just south of St. Eloi and ascended to the Grand Bois north of Wytschaete. Skirting the western side of this wood, it went southwards well to the west of the village of Wytschaete (260 ft. high), which commanded the ruins of Ypres and the whole of the British positions in the salient east of the Yser-Lys canal. North-east of Wulverghem the German line zig-zagged eastward down the valley of the Steenebeck—a tributary of the Douve—traversed this rivulet and, on the southern slopes of the spur of Messines, again turned southwards, crossed the Douve and ended east of St. Yves. Messines, behind the German front, besides giving observers there a wide view of the valley of the Lys, enfiladed the British lines from the Douve to the Lys.

The main road from Ypres to Armentières on the Lys passed through St. Eloi and crossed the Wytschaete-Messines ridge. From St. Eloi another chaussée went east of the ridge, through the low ground between it and the Ypres-Comines canal to Warneton, also on the Lys. On this high road, level with Wytschaete, was the village of Oosttaverne, and level with Messines that of Gapaard. The villages of Hollebeke (north-east of Oosttaverne) and Houthem (north-east of Gapaard) on the western bank, the château of Hollebeke and the hamlet of Kortewilde on the eastern bank, barred an advance to the Lys along the canal, and beyond, or east of, the canal the famous broken and wooded ground round Klein-Zillebeke lay in the path of our men.

In the sector of the arc between the Ypres-Menin road and the canal the most important features were Mount Sorrel and "Hill 60." The latter, since the Second Battle of Ypres, had been constantly attacked above and below the surface of the ground. The German position in this part was a mass of tunnels and redoubts. As "Hill 60" was the most favourable of their three artillery observation posts in the Ypres

region, the Germans had used their best endeavours to strengthen its defences. To give one instance, they had constructed a timbered gallery leading to a chamber 8 ft. high. The roof of this receptacle consisted of concrete 6 ft. thick in which were embedded masses of iron rails, rivetted solidly together. A flight of steps led up to a horizontal loophole in the outer wall, through which could be seen the whole of Ypres, the back of Mt. Sorrel and all our intricate mesh of trenches on the flank of the city.

Between "Hill 60" and the canal there were two spoil banks, one behind the other, very strongly prepared for defence.

Beyond and on the edge of the canal and west of Hollebeke, was a park surrounded with a wood, "Battle Wood" or "Ravine Wood." In this, opposite the second of the spoil banks, were the ruins of the Château Matthieu or White Château, once a fine mansion. In the park surrounding it a stream, in places 20 ft. broad, connected the canal with an artificial lake, south of which were the remains of some large stables. The timber in park and woods had been cut down and torn by shell fire, but the trunks and branches with the brick work still afforded some cover to the garrison, when it emerged from its underground shelters there.

A straight road or drive, the Damm Strasse, ran up from the White Château to Wytschaete. This road was partly sunken and partly, in front of St. Eloi, raised on an embankment half a mile long and some 15 ft. high. The sunken portion of the road was protected by deep concreted dug-outs, which sheltered the necessary garrisons, while on the embankment were rows of "pill-boxes." In front of the Damm Strasse facing St. Eloi was the "Mound," a heap of earth, the spoil bank from a tunnel. This mound had been lost by the Canadians the year before. Its surface was now pitted with craters produced by our mines.

South of the Damm Strasse were innumerable redoubts and stretches of barbed wire. An inn on the side of the St. Eloi-Warneton road, called In de Sterkie, had been converted into a formidable defence. Between the latter road and Wytschaete lay Oosttaverne Wood, honey-combed with dug-outs, while, nearer Warneton, the villages of Oosttaverne, Wambeke and Gapaard had been prepared for a stout defence by the enemy's engineers.

Two chord positions had been constructed south of the Damm Strasse. The first ran



[Australian official photograph.]

#### PREPARATIONS FOR THE ADVANCE.

Australians examining a large scale model of the battlefield.

slightly to the east of Oostaverne. The second—a little more than a mile to the east of the first—was known as the Warneton line, because it ended at that town. Both barriers would have to be dealt with by the British descending from St. Eloi to the Lys.

From Wytschaete to the White Château and the Ypres-Comines canal stretched the Damn Strasse, with its belt of "pill-boxes." Between

the Mound and the Grand Bois was a series of formidable defences with barbed-wire entanglements covering the Wytschaete end of the Wytschaete-Messines ridge. The Grand Bois was powerfully fortified, and just below the eastern crest of the ridge were obstacles called the Obvious Trench and Obvious Alley. Beyond them a farm building, known as the North House, had been made into a nest of dug-



outs and machine-gun shelters. North House commanded the approaches from Obvious Alley to Oosttaerne Wood.

Wytshaete, a mere shapeless mass of masonry, had been organized as a circular fort; west of the village a large wood—Bois de Wytshaete—and, beyond it, the Petit Bois, formed defences of the type so familiar in this war.

Seen from our side, the Wytshaete-Messines ridge south of the former village was only a long, low slope running north and south—a few fields and patches of woodland showing above marshy ground. But this slope, so easy of ascent in times of peace, was seamed with trenches, and dotted with concrete redoubts sticking up from an enormous barbed-wire entanglement. Along the top of the mile and a half long plateau ran the road which ascends from St. Eloi, and, traversing Messines, descends to the Douve, and, by the west of Ploegsteert Wood, joins Ypres to Armentières.

At a point midway between Wytshaete and Messines were the ruins of some buildings christened by us "Middle Farm." Beyond

"Middle Farm," on the crest looking down into the Steenebeek valley and across to the British lines, were Hell Wood (Bois de l'Enfer)—organized, like the other woods—north of it a strong point with works of heavy blocks of concrete called "L'Enfer," and south of it a nest of redoubts, known as Hell Farm. Numerous machine-guns in L'Enfer enfiladed the area south of Wytshaete, those in Hell Farm the region north of Messines.

In front of Hell Farm was a curved projection, concreted and wired, "Occur Trench," and, hard by Hell Farm, another redoubt, "Styx Farm." To reach the Wytshaete-Messines road our men would have to advance down a long, exposed slope, cross the Steenebeek rivulet, mount the ridge and carry, beside Hell Wood and the redoubts, three lines of trenches. The road crossed, they would have still to storm two other trenches—October Trench and October Support Trench—which ran south-eastward from a little east of Wytshaete to the east of Messines, and also Despagne Farm at the head of the shallow valley running down to Gapaard. North of Deconinck Farm



[French official photograph.]

THE SURE-FOOTED DONKEY DOES USEFUL WORK ON SLIPPERY ROADS.

Carrying reels of telephone wire.

there was a flat plateau, affording no cover till Oosttaverne and Gapaard were carried. Messines itself was strongly defended and the approach to its western face protected by the work constructed round the hospice.

To penetrate the mile and a half of fortified ridge and plateau between Wytschaete and Messines was, therefore, as difficult a task as any set by the German engineers to the Allies on the Western Front.

It need hardly be mentioned that the garrison of the ruins of Messines and the southern and western slopes of its hill had been provided with every device for resisting the British. Beneath the foundations of the ruined church and in the main square a number of deep concreted caves had been established. A redoubt—"Fanny's Farm"—guarded on the north-east the approaches to the village. At the southern foot of Messines Hill ran, like a ditch, the Douve, three or four yards wide. Both banks of the river eastwards from the spot where the Ypres-St. Eloi-Wytschaete-Messines-Armentières chaussée crossed it were in the possession of the enemy, whose external line ran over a low ridge southwards east of St. Yves and the Ploegsteert Wood to the Lys at Frelinghien. The road from the Douve upwards to Messines was wired and protected by defences such as Grey Farm and Hun's Walk. The neck of land between the German outermost line and the Lys from Frelinghien to Warneton where it is joined by the Douve, was a tangle of trenches and "pill-boxes."

The Germans had had over two years to prepare the position above described. As it may be looked on as the gateway to Dunkirk, Calais and Boulogne, they had naturally not wasted the time at their disposal, and a large number of prisoners of war had been ceaselessly at work on this sector.

Anticipating danger in this quarter, Hindenburg had entrusted the defence to General Sixt von Armin, a veteran of the war of 1870-1, who had fought at Gravelotte and had recently commanded a corps at the Battle of the Somme. The Fourth Army under him was posted between the Douve and the Ypres-Menin road. South of the Douve the right wing of the German Sixth Army held the line to the Lys at Frelinghien, while several divisions were held in reserve at Bruges and elsewhere ready to support Sixt von Armin, should he be attacked.

To deal with the British Tanks four of the new anti-tank batteries were stationed behind

the second-line trenches on the Wytschaete-Messines ridge. Two were close to Wytschaete, two near Messines. Each battery consisted of six short 7.7 cm. guns mounted on low carriages which could be rapidly moved along the trenches. They fired shells capable of pene-



{Official photograph.

#### SAPPERS DIGGING A COMMUNICATION TRENCH NEAR MESSINES.

trating the walls of a tank, which if hit by one of these was almost certain to be rendered *hors-de-combat*. But on this occasion these weapons did little harm. One battery was literally knocked to pieces by our artillery as its position had been accurately ascertained by one of our aeroplanes, although only brought into action at the last moment. In this particular instance three of the six guns were actually struck by direct hits.

Quite early in June, when the British intensive bombardment was already in progress, Sixt von Armin warned his troops that they would be attacked. The front of the expected battle was defined with considerable accuracy.



General von Laffert, the commander of the 4th Corps, entrusted with the defence of the Wytshaete-Messines ridge, issued on June 1 an Order to his men pointing out that the retention of the natural strong points of Wytshaete and Messines was of the greatest importance for the domination of the Wytshaete salient. "These two strong points," he added, "must, therefore, not fall, even temporarily, into the enemy's hands. Both must be defended to the utmost and be held to the last man, even if the enemy cuts the connexions on both sides and also threatens them from the rear." The reserves of the divisions attacked would, von Laffert assured his officers, be available for the purpose of repelling assaults. These, kept in forward positions, would strengthen the parts of the line attacked and aid them in holding it, and thus give time to bring up the division reserves for an immediate and powerful counter-attack. The troops were also to be told that very strong battle reserves both of infantry and artillery were posted close behind the front. These were to be used to thrust back by a concentrated and powerful

then any specially weak or threatened point. Behind all these were the special battle reserves at the disposal of the commanders of the various sectors for the support of threatened points or for counter-attack.

The Germans had, as we know, introduced poison gas into warfare, although this was distinctly forbidden by the Hague Convention of July 29, 1899, which had been signed by Germany and Austria-Hungary on September 4, 1900. Naturally we had replied to this by like measures. We seem, indeed, to have gone one better. At any rate, it is quite certain that German leaders and German troops had, as they would themselves express it, "a heathen anxiety" with regard to the British gas, as the Commander of the German 40th Division in an Order addressed to the troops under his command shows. He said the greatest precautions were to be taken against hostile gas attacks, as the next division on the left had recently lost one hundred men from this cause. Disguise it as they might, there could be no doubt that the forthcoming attack was looked upon with apprehension, not merely



[Official photograph.]

#### BRITISH SOLDIERS ON THE WAY TO THE TRENCHES.

attack any of the hostile forces which might manage to break through, if the divisional battle reserves failed to stop them.

The method employed seems to have been somewhat as follows: The actual front trenches were held by the minimum forces necessary for immediate security, behind these were sheltered supports, the two belonging probably to the same regiments, and forming together the first fighting line. Farther back, but still fairly close and under shelter, each division had in second line reserve troops which could be used to streng-

by the troop leaders, but also by the troops under them. For the same General von Laffert instructed his troops that it was very important to determine the instant the actual attacks were begun by the British so that their infantry forces, while advancing, might at once be subjected to the most powerful fire to make their losses as heavy as possible. An excellent maxim suited to most occasions, but one not always easy to put into practice. For our plan was first of all to bombard a length of German trenches far he-



**GENERAL SIXT VON ARMIN,**  
Commanded the German Fourth Army.

yond the point selected for assault, and further by bursts of high intensive artillery fire and other means to make our opponents think an attack was imminent at various points. These feints deceived them and made them nervous. "Is it coming here?—no, there!" Were reserves brought up, they were subject to heavy fire on the road. Far back the lines of approach were swept. Numerous trench raids added to their anxiety. Did these mean the first attempts of a heavy attack or were they merely little local affairs?

The sum total of these acts completely puzzled the Germans, at any rate so far as the front trenches were concerned, and kept their garrisons in a constant state of nervousness.

Added to this was the necessity of seeing that reinforcements sent up to the front line actually reached it. When a column was moving up to the trenches it was laid down that "an energetic officer must always march in the rear of the column to prevent the men falling out." In other words, the men were shirking the duties of the fire trench. "Every man who left the front or reserve lines must have a pass." This was plainly for the same reason. "In casualty reports nothing is to be concealed about the condition of the troops, on the other hand the conditions are not to be painted unnecessarily black."

The whole of the 3rd Bavarian Division, which, as it transpired, relieved the 40th Saxon Division on the ridge the night before the battle, had been placed at von Laffert's disposal\* to support if necessary the counter-offensive.

Sixt von Armin, it may be added, had, before our bombardment began, vastly increased his reserves of ammunition and the number of his howitzer batteries. At the same time, in anticipation of a reverse, he had removed farther back many of his heavy batteries. The troops in the front line, in case they were isolated, had been supplied with extra quantities of ammunition, food and water.

The reverse side of the German position from



**GENERAL VON LAFFERT,**  
In command of the 4th Army Corps.

the Ypres-Comines canal to St. Yves was by nature of about the same strength as the side about to be assaulted. At the crisis of the First Battle of Ypres this position had been successfully defended for 48 hours against two "nearly fresh German Corps" by our weary dismounted troopers (probably some 4,000 men) of the then depleted British cavalry Corps, supported by two Indian battalions, and by 4,000 men of British infantry together with a battalion of the London Scottish Territorials, placed in roughly constructed trenches affording but little cover. Since the First Battle of Ypres the enemy had had more than two years to render their naturally strong position vastly stronger. From his posts on Hill

\* This division had an unfortunate and brief experience. It came up, was severely handled, and retired within 24 hours. It had also suffered heavily in the fighting south of Lons.





[Official photograph.]

#### LAYING A RAILWAY LINE ON GROUND JUST CAPTURED.

60, the Mound, Wytshaete Wood and near Messines every movement of the British, unless they were underground or otherwise hidden from view, was visible. The confidence displayed by von Laffert was, therefore, apparently justified, and a frontal assault on the position was no light task. Fortunately the General opposed to Sixt von Armin was cautious and ingenious yet, withal, daring.

Sir Herbert Charles Onslow Plumer, who commanded the Second Army, on which the task devolved, was a Devonshire man. Born on March 13, 1857, the year of the Indian Mutiny, he was in June 1917 just turned 60 years of age. He entered the York and Lancaster Regiment in 1876. Promoted captain in 1882, he first saw active service in the Soudan in 1884, when, as adjutant of the 1st Battalion of his regiment, he was present at the Battles of El Teb and Tamai. During the campaign conducted by Sir Gerald Graham, he distinguished himself and was mentioned in dispatches, receiving the medal with clasp, the 4th Class of the Medjidieh and the Khedive's Star. A major in 1893 he, three years later, served with Sir Frederick Carrington in Rhodesia. There he raised and commanded a corps of mounted rifles, which materially helped to put down the Matabele rebellion. Again he was mentioned in dispatches and received the medal.

In the summer of 1899, he was sent to South Africa as a Special Service officer. Under Colonel Baden-Powell's direction, he raised a

force for the protection of the southern frontier of Rhodesia in the event of our being engaged, as was then highly probable, in hostilities with the Boers. When the South African War broke out, Colonel Baden-Powell, as will be well remembered, threw himself into Mafeking. For seven months Plumer with a few hundred men, though completely isolated, maintained a vigorous offensive, diverting large Boer forces from the lines round Mafeking. In May 1900, Plumer joined Mahon's force for the relief of this place, which was accomplished on May 17, 1900. Joining subsequently in the advance on Pretoria, Plumer received the command of a column. His tireless pursuit of De Wet through Cape Colony won him golden opinions, and in the rapid and successful advance on Pietersburg in April 1901 he exhibited great energy. Slightly wounded in the course of the South African War, he was mentioned three times in dispatches, received the brevet of Colonel, made A.D.C. to King Edward VII., created a C.B., and finally promoted Major-General for distinguished service in the field in August 1902. "Throughout the campaign," wrote Lord Kitchener in his dispatch of June 23, 1902, "he has invariably displayed military qualifications of a very high order. Few officers have rendered better service."

Plumer left South Africa with a high reputation. In the interval between the Peace of Vereeniging and the opening of the Great War he commanded the 4th Brigade, 1st Army Corps,

and the 10th Division and the 19th Brigade, 4th Army Corps. He deserves, therefore, some of the credit for the training of the troops who rendered such invaluable services in the first year of the gigantic struggle on the Western Front.

In 1904-5 he was Quartermaster-General to the Forces and Third Military Member of the newly created Army Council. When Lord Haldane became Minister of War, Plumer was given the command of the 5th Division, Irish Command, and in 1908 was made a Lieutenant-General. From 1911 to 1914 the Northern Command was under his direction.

Plumer was not among the officers who accompanied the original Expeditionary Force to France. His organizing abilities had, however, ample scope at home in those momentous months when Lord Kitchener was busy creating the New Army. But in January, 1915, he was given the command of the Vth Corps, forming part of the Second Army under Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien. His powers of leadership were at once subjected to a severe test. The Vth Corps (27th and 28th Divisions) had to be hurried into the Ypres salient to relieve troops of General d'Urbal's Army.

"The trenches (so-called) scarcely existed," says an eye-witness, quoted by Sir A. Conan Doyle, "and the ruts which were honoured with the name were liquid." On March 14, two days after the Battle of Neuve Chapelle, Plumer was violently attacked in the region of St. Eloi, but, though he had to give ground, he prevented the enemy breaking through. At the Second Battle of Ypres in April-May 1915, during the surprise caused by the treacherous use of poisonous gas by the Germans, the Vth Corps was on the right of the Canadians, and it was largely due to Plumer's action in reinforcing the latter, that the surprise failed. So well had Plumer behaved in the Second Battle of Ypres that, when Smith-Dorrien returned to England at the end of April, Plumer took his place.

Since the successful termination of that desperate contest for Ypres, Plumer had had to remain on the defensive. The Second Army had formed the northern pivot of the British line, when it attacked to pierce the German position at Loos, north of the Somme and north and south of Arras. The minor engagements (Hooge and the Bluff) fought by Plumer between May 1915 and June 1917 have been



*Official photograph.*

A CONCRETE STRONGHOLD LEFT INTACT BY THE GERMANS.



described in previous chapters. He had fully justified his selection and was now about to associate his name with one of the most striking successes won in the war.

After the improvement of the roads, rail-roads, and water supply behind Plumer's lines, other measures had been taken. In the days preceding the battle a great number of guns of all calibres, howitzers, and trench mortars were brought up for the final bombardment, and poured a continuous and overwhelming



[Official photograph.]

#### A SMASHED FORT AT MESSINES.

rain of shells on the German positions. Most important of all, the gigantic series of mines designed to blow up the whole main German front position was brought to completion.

To obtain the command of the air was in this case a condition precedent to victory, because otherwise observation of the German position was impossible. Unless the entrenchments and gun positions were accurately ascertained the attack would have been very costly.

When the Arras offensive died down in the middle of May a strong aerial offensive was commenced against the enemy. Between June 1 and June 6, at a cost of 10 machines, no less than 24 German aeroplanes were destroyed, and 23 others driven down out of control. The result of this attack was so successful that the mastery of the air was gained over a line which overlapped considerably the front of attack. Accurate observation located every new trench or strong point. Every gun position was noted and the German communications to the rear were continuously bombed. So far as our airmen could accomplish it, the fortified zone to be stormed was isolated.

Behind their front line the German communica-

tions, billets and hack areas were all brought under heavy fire.

The supremacy in the air which was thus obtained not only assisted our map-makers but most materially aided the gunners engaged in the work of sweeping away the wire entanglements, destroying the defences and silencing the German batteries. The devastation wrought by the bombardment which opened on the last day of April and continued steadily up to the eve of the battle exceeded anything hitherto attempted in war. Trees were reduced to match-wood, the slopes of the hills stripped bare, and the villages—notably Wytschaete and Messines—were turned to shapeless heaps of broken brickwork. In a week the guns had reduced the scene from cultivated civilization to primeval chaos.

The Germans in the Great War had sprung several surprises on their enemies. The huge Austrian dismountable howitzers had reduced Liège and Namur. Throwing their treaty obligations to the winds they had introduced flame throwers and asphyxiating gas, though neither of these produced the effect their treacherous inventors hoped for. The British Army had also brought many novelties into the field. The Stokes mortars with their very rapid fire of shells; the Tanks, which had proved so useful on the Somme were completely new to war; while our liquid-fire shells were a great improvement on the clumsy flame-throwers of the Germans.

The result of our continuous artillery fire was that the carefully prepared defensive organizations of the enemy were swept away by our batteries. Gun-pits were wrecked; telephone lines above ground were cut and even some of the hurried cables destroyed, thus rendering it almost impossible to keep up communication from front to rear. Forward posts could only summon aid by rockets, and it was often almost impossible to send up supports or provisions to the first line. In the latter, life was a complex hell of devastating explosions and deafening noise, and the garrisons could do little more than sit down under it and wait, with rapidly deteriorating nerves, for the coming blow. The general direction of this was, as we have seen, known to the enemy, but not the special point of assault. Yet all this whirlwind of destruction bore but a small proportion to the absolute annihilation which was to come.

For many months mining operations had



GENERAL SIR HERBERT C. O. PLUMER, G.C.B.

[Elliott &amp; Fry.]

been in progress on so vast a scale that nothing like it had ever before been seen in war. The Messines-Wytshaete ridge offered favourable ground for subterranean war. Mining galleries could be driven underneath it which for some time would be unlikely to be detected by the enemy, and undeterred by the magnitude of the task the British leaders had undertaken it. For if successfully carried out, its effect on the enemy's front position would be decisive—it would be blown bodily away.

The project had been under discussion since July 1915, when indeed some steps were taken. But it was not till January 1916 that it was finally determined to begin the mining operations on the gigantic scale on which they were thenceforward conducted. The British Army was fortunate in having many mining companies of Royal Engineers recruited among miners from the Mother Country and from the Dominions beyond the Seas. To these trained men the excavation of the galleries,





[Official photograph.]

#### A MINE EXPLODING ON THE WYTSCHAELE RIDGE.

compared with what they had been accustomed to in civil life, was mere child's play. But there were features in its actual carrying out which were novel; they were exposed to the risk of destruction by the enemy's counter-mines, a danger greater naturally than any they had previously run in the most dangerous coal mines.

It is difficult for those who have never been engaged in a struggle of this kind to comprehend its trying nature. The gallery is driven onward, here and there listening galleries will be pushed out right and left to listen for the sound of the enemy's counter-operations. A faint sound of picks or the deadened sound of mining machinery shows that the opponent is also thrusting out his galleries, to intercept or blow in our own. He will go on till he is near enough to strike, then the sound ceases—he is loading up to blow in our gallery. We endeavour to anticipate him and, if successful, blow in his counter-mine and gallery. The charges used in these cases, technically known as camoufflets, are smaller than for mines intended to produce a crater. This is not their object, but rather is it to be avoided, as if a crater were made it could be seized by the aggressive side and would act as a stepping

stone onward towards its objective. The camoufflet aims only at destroying the gallery and killing the miners without disturbing the surface of the ground.

This short description shows the trying nature of subterranean warfare. The men engaged on it once they have approached fairly near to the enemy's line never know when they may suddenly be destroyed by an explosion or confined behind a destroyed gallery which alone can give them a safe exit, and thus find themselves imprisoned in a living tomb.

Besides the inherent dangers of their task the British miners on the Messines Ridge found many physical difficulties in their way. Water-bearing strata were met which had to be coffer-dammed off and the water which had run into the mine, before this had been done, pumped out. In such conditions had many of our men worked over a year. Well might an Australian officer exclaim, "No more underground work for me after this war." On one occasion he had been buried for 48 hours, and had to dig his own way out!

Twenty-four mines were constructed, four of which were outside the front eventually assaulted, while one was destroyed by a German counter-mine. Of the 19 left many had

been completed a year before they were made use of, and these required ceaseless care to prevent injury from the enemy's counter-measures. For the Germans had become aware in a general and, fortunately, inaccurate way of the work we had in hand, and were themselves using a deep-lying mine system to counteract it.

Thus beneath Hill 60 a continuous struggle was kept up during the 10 months before the final explosion. Here we had two mines of great importance which were only saved from destruction by persistent watchfulness in the face of always threatening danger. Just before the date settled for the advance, it was discovered that the Germans were driving a gallery which would have cut into the one which gave access to our two mine chambers under the German lines on the Hill in question. Careful listening and careful deduction from it enabled our engineers to say that if the date for the assault were adhered to the enemy would *just fail to reach our gallery*. The reader can judge for himself the delicacy of this situation.

Altogether the length of galleries driven

amounted to little short of five miles. The mines they served were loaded with over a million pounds of the high explosive ammonal, an amount which had never been used in any land operation before, but of which the aggregate effect had been precisely calculated by the engineers who had prepared it. The whole operation did them much credit.\*

While listening to the operations of the enemy the mines had to be loaded, and this done so quietly as not to attract attention by the rumbling of trucks bringing up the charges or other materials, so that the enemy should hear nothing which would lead him to believe that we were getting ready. It was a near thing, but was successfully accomplished, and on "Our Day" we were ready and the enemy was not.

At the point known as the Bluff also the

\* On October 10, 1885, some 140 tons, or 313,600 lb., of Rack-a-Rock had been employed to blow up the Flood Rock at the dangerous point for navigation known as Hell Gate in the Channel approaching New York. Nine acres of rock had been shattered; and the surrounding water had risen by the explosion to a height of 200 ft. On the Messines-Wytschaete ridge, it will be observed, more than three times this amount was employed.



Australian official photograph.

GERMAN SHELLS BURSTING IN YPRES.



underground combat went on without cessation between January 16, 1916, and June 7 in the following year; 27 camouflets were exploded in this locality. Seventeen of these were our work, 10 that of the Germans.

From the beginning of February 1917, it became evident that the enemy was beginning to be uneasy at the extensive mining operations which he had in some measure begun to realize. Camouflets were fired to crush in our galleries, and several heavy mines exploded in the hope of severely damaging our work. One of these blew in a gallery which led to the Spanbroekmolen mine, and cut through it, thus rendering it useless. Two Australians stationed in a listening gallery hard by were isolated there. Neither, fortunately, was injured, and they contrived to keep a record of what they heard until both were rescued. Communication with them was only reopened after the most strenuous efforts and only terminated on the day preceding the attack. Then the mine was loaded and when it was exploded at the right moment, produced the largest crater of all the nineteen, which completely annihilated everything over a radius of 70 yards.

On Wednesday, June 6, 1917, all was now ready, and the final touch had been given to the preparations, with a thoroughness and attention to detail beyond all praise which reflected the greatest credit on Sir Herbert Plumer, the Commander of the Second Army, and his staff, as well as on the leaders of the various formations concerned and on the artillery and engineers.

The final objective of our troops was the Oosttavernc Line, which lay between Mount Sorrel and St. Yves. This represented a depth to be captured of two and a half miles.

During the previous night the 3rd Bavarian Division was coming into the German trenches to relieve the Saxons on the Wytsehaete-Messines ridge, at the same time as the men of the British Second Army made their way to the posts assigned to them, when our protecting barrage started. Both German divisions were caught by it, and both alike suffered heavily. The contemplated transfer of duties never took place, the few Germans who tried to stop were thrust back a mile by our infantry advance. The 11th Division after its experience in the Bullecourt fighting had been sent to support von Armin's men by forced marches. It is not to



*Australian official photograph.*

GUNNERS AT WORK DURING A GAS ATTACK.



BRIDGING A MINE CRATER ON A ROAD.

Official photograph.

he wondered that it had but small stomach for further fighting.

The following extracts from the diary of a German stretcher-bearer at Messines from May 27 to June 6 show what the preliminary treatment of the German lines had been :

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

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

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

JUNE 2.—The English never cease their bombardment. All the trenches are clodded up. Nothing more to be made of them. Casualties follow on casualties.

JUNE 3.—The English are trying to demolish our dugout, too.

JUNE 4.—The casualties become more numerous all the time. No shelter to bring the men under. They must now sleep in the open; only a few dugouts left.

JUNE 5.—Casualty follows casualty. We have slipped out of the dugout and moved elsewhere. There are many buried by earth. To look on such things is utter misery.

JUNE 6.—The English are all over us. They blow up the earth all around us and there is shell hole after shell hole, some of them being large enough for a house to be built in. We have already sustained many casualties.

It is not surprising that nerve-shattered as the Germans were they did not put up any great resistance to the first attack.

Along this front three of the six army corps composing our Second Army were disposed. The northernmost of these was the X. Corps under General Morland, comprising the 23rd, 47th, and 51st Divisions in front line, with the 24th Division in support. Next this came the IX. Corps, General Hamilton Gordon, with the 19th, 16th, and 30th Divisions leading the attack, and the 11th Division supporting it. On the south was the II. Anzac Corps, General Godley, having the 25th (Ulster) Division on its left, then the New Zealand Division, the 3rd Australian Division on the right and the 4th Australian Division in reserve.\*

The 3rd Australian Division was astride the Douve, the New Zealanders above them faced Messines. The ridge from Messines to L'Enfer had been assigned to the 25th Division, which included the Cheshire Regiment. In reserve behind was the 4th Australian Division.

The right flank attack mustered in the trenches north of the village of Wulverghem. L'Enfer and the ridge as far as the southern defences of Wytshaete were the objectives of the Ulster Division. A South Ireland

\* The order of these Corps and Divisions is given from left to right.





[Australian official photograph.]

#### BATTLE OF MESSINES: GERMAN SHELLS BURSTING.

Division on its left was to storm the Petit Bois and the Bois de Wytschaete and assault Wytschaete from the west. Welsh and West Country troops had the task of clearing the Grand Bois at the angle of the enemy's line north of Wytschaete. Thence to the Ypres-Comines Canal were deployed other English County regiments with the Londoners on their left. The Londoners were to advance on both banks of the canal; the others were to assist them in capturing Ravine Wood and the White Château, and were also to carry the Mound, south of St. Eloi, the Damm Strasse, and, in conjunction with the Westerners, the outskirts of Oosttaverne. To the east of the Londoners, English North-Country troops formed the extreme left of the army. It may be pointed out that Sir Herbert Plumer placed the Australians side by side with the New Zealanders, and the South Irish Division (composed mostly of Catholics) between the Ulster and Welsh troops. Thus, the various races were placed in a friendly rivalry.

The few days preceding the battle had been almost continuously fine and extremely hot. On June 6, between 6 and 7 p.m., a very violent thunderstorm, accompanied by torrents of rain, burst north of the Lys. The heat caused the mist to rise up from the rain-soddened low ground and covered for a time the ground over which the attack was to be delivered. The sky was overcast, rendering the air warm. The enemy suspected something was about to happen and sent up Very lights and red, green and yellow rockets from their lines, asking for

barrage fire and possibly for the divisional supports to come up into the front line. In answer to these signals the enemy's guns poured shrapnel and high-explosive on the roads leading back from our lines and on all places where our troops were expected to be congregating. The British bombardment on the other hand was becoming somewhat less intense as if for the time the intention to attack had been abandoned. It caused, however, soon after midnight, a huge conflagration north of Wytschaete, probably due to the ignition of an ammunition dump.

By 2.30 a.m. on Thursday, June 7, the clouds had almost disappeared and a full moon looked down on the battlefield. A party of bombing aeroplanes, each showing a tiny light, came back, and other machines by fours and sixes flew eastward to continue the work of bombing various objectives behind the enemy's lines. In the half light balloons went up, flashing back luminous signals to report what they saw. The flames from a thousand or more German guns showed up their positions behind their front, while the shells they fired hurtled through the air and burst about our lines.

A little before the hour fixed for the explosion of the mines, groups of officers stood in various dug-outs round the switches which were to make the electrical contact to fire the charges and set in action the huge masses of explosives.

"The last two minutes," related one officer, "seemed interminable. I thought the final 30 seconds would never finish. Slowly the tired hand of my watch crawled up the finishing

quarter of the dial—60 seconds were complete—it was ten minutes past three—Fire!”\*

Precisely at 3.10 a.m. the order was given. The surface of Hill 60 was seen to be thrown into mighty waves with a dull sound, and mounting upwards to the sky they were rent in segments, accompanied by a mighty roar which was heard in London and other parts of England. The first phase of the battle had begun.

The smoke towered aloft and among its clouds were seen fragments of trench and concrete, of wire entanglement, and portions of what, a few seconds before, had been living human beings

onlookers from the Mont-des-Cats observing positions, the scene was indescribably grand and terrible. Volcanoes belching fountains of orange flame suddenly appeared on the long arc from Hill 60 to the ruins of Messines. Pillars of dust and smoke shot up to the sky; the earth rocked and the deafening noise and earth vibrations carried the news far over the Flemish plain to the North Sea. Below, southwest of Wytshaete the side of the Hill seemed to be rent asunder as if the door of some huge blast furnace had been flung outwards with its molten contents. The Spanbroekmolen mine, opposite L'Enfer Hill when fired created a



*[Canadian official photograph.]*

#### SMASHED GERMAN TRENCHES.

In some instances hardly waiting for the smoke to clear away our men went over the parapet. As it cleared away the Australians saw in front of them a vast crater, some 60 feet deep and 90 yards broad—littered with a tangle of barbed wire and smashed concrete, broken weapons and human remains. Round the edges of the crater, south of St. Eloi, there tumbled thick slabs of concrete scattered about from riven fortified defences. At one point there stood a solitary pill-box among the ruins, whether missed by the explosion or flung there by it none could say. The dead, distorted occupants within could tell no tale.

Such was the scene at but two spots. To the

crater 140 yards in diameter and 70 feet deep, a huge cavity which would have held a cathedral.

Scarcely had the echoes of the explosions died away, while the 19 columns of smoke and debris were beginning to disperse, than the background of the British lines was lit up with thousands of lightning flashes of our guns accompanied by a volume of deafening sounds which became amalgamated into one continuous roar as they began to pour a concentrated fire of the most intense and rapid character on the position where the German lines had stood before the explosion, and on the support trenches farther back. To the nerve-shattered Germans, the air appeared to be alive with

\* *Morning Post*, June 11, 1917.



myriads of shells, their bursts standing out against the pale morning sky, while above, behind, before them, to left, to right, spraying them with liquid fire or molten metal, choking them with poison gas, smashing concrete into atoms or raining shrapnel upon steel helmets, crushing all courage out of the few who had survived the terrible explosion, fell the awful rain of projectiles. A bank of smoke and fumes rapidly settled down over the battlefield from Mt. Sorrel to the Douve; and behind rose the sun, flushing the sky with an angry red. On both sides of the fog compounded of mist and the smoke of battle rose captive balloons, while thousands of feet above them squadrons of our aeroplanes darted and wheeled, here descending to observe the effect of the bombardment, there passing swiftly on to pepper with bombs and with their Lewis guns the enemy's reinforcements hurrying up the roads leading to the ridges. Others went on to bomb aerodromes, bridges, railroads, and batteries. Few, if any, aviators of the Germans ventured to ascend, but the sky was dotted with the puffs of bursting shrapnel discharged by their anti-aircraft guns. Still some of the enemy clung to parts of the shattered ridge, and the ceaseless rat-tat-tat of their machine-guns showed they were trying to

carry out the orders they had received to cling at any cost to the Messines-Wytschaete position.

Onward through the still clinging gas fumes went our men, some held up for a brief time by their poisonous effects, but always trying to follow close on our artillery barrage.

The feats performed by the men in the reeking, smoke-and-gas-laden atmosphere can be but briefly outlined. East of the Ypres-Comines canal the tremendous explosions in the Hill 60 region caused a veritable panic among the Germans. Below Mt. Sorrel and Armagh Wood groups of Würtembergers and Jaegers rose from dug-outs and with outstretched hands implored mercy of the English troops. Some were found covering half-dazed at the bottom of the smashed concrete observation posts. Hill 60 itself was secured with little difficulty, and our losses on the extreme left were trifling, one English battalion reaching its goal with only three dead and seven wounded. Another battalion had a death-roll of less than thirty.

On the eastern and western banks of the canal there was a different tale to tell. The Londoners were held up by machine-gun fire from the two spoil banks. One of these they stormed, but the other put up a spirited resistance. The troops, therefore, paused and



*Australian official photograph.*

BRITISH SIEGE ARTILLERY MANNED BY AUSTRALIANS.



Official photograph.

#### BRITISH TROOPS MOVING FORWARD OVER SHELL-PITTED GROUND

waited until their comrades west of the canal had stormed Battle Wood, the White Château and the eastern end of the Damm Strasse.

The rest of the Londoners, rushing in the half light along the western bank of the canal, at first carried everything before them. They entered Battle Wood, crossed the end of the Damm Strasse—smashed out of recognition by our artillery—and assaulted the château, which was defended by a company and a half of German infantry. They were met by volleys of bombs, yet managed to penetrate the ruins, only, however, to be driven back. In nowise deterred by this rebuff our gallant men swung round its flanks, tossing incendiary bombs for nearly an hour into the cellars. At last the garrison emerged into the open with their hands up. The stables, outhouses and orangery were next attacked and reduced; 450 prisoners were captured as a result of the fighting.

The lake, which was nearly dry, was seamed at its edges with tunnels and dug-outs. Some time elapsed before these were cleared of their defenders, and the stream connecting the lake with canal traversed. All through the morning and the early afternoon the Londoners were engaged in putting out of action the numerous strong points in this neighbourhood which remained to be taken. In Battle Wood they also rendered valuable help to the Southern

English troops struggling with the Prussians for Ravine Wood, west of it.

On the night of June 6 the Southerners had occupied the trenches south of St. Eloi opposite the Mound, which, like Hill 60, had been blown up when at 3.10 a.m. the charges were fired. The hummock disappeared and a chasm took its place. With ringing cheers, wave after wave of riflemen and bombers swept forward, capturing the dazed defenders and passing to the right and left of or between the craters. Beyond loomed the formidable Damm Strasse which, under the heavy fire of high explosive shells directed against it, was seen to be crumbling to pieces. Struggling up the broken embankment and casting bombs into the few "pill-boxes" left intact, the men cleared this obstacle and joined hands with the Londoners in Battle Wood. Hundreds of prisoners were taken.

Descending from the Damm Strasse, the Southerners moved against the Ravine Wood on the top of the slope and down the Rodzebeck valley, the lower and eastern end of which was being occupied by detachments of the Londoners. At this moment from the In de Sterkie inn our men were struck by a torrent of machine-gun bullets. Taking cover, they opened fire with their rifles, silenced the machine-guns, and





THE GREAT PUSH — BOMBERS  
 HOLDING A POINT OF VANTAGE WHILE  
 LEWIS GUNS ARE HURRIED UP —  
 THE ATTACK SWARMING UP THROUGH  
 MESSINES RUINS  
 AFTER THE FRONT TRENCH SYSTEM HAD BEEN BREACHED  
 BY THE MINE EXPANSIONS

AT MESSINES: BOMBERS HOLDING A POINT OF VANTAGE WHILE LEWIS GUNS WERE HURRIED UP.

then advancing bayoneted the few surviving gunners.

Fresh waves of English troops arrived on the scene and Ravine Wood was assaulted. Among the broken down and entangled branches a long and severe combat ensued. Companies of the German 35th Division counter-attacked at the point of the bayonet. They were met by Kentish troops, and the morning sun gleamed on the crossing bayonets. It was but for an instant. "Fighting like lions," as an officer present described it, "the British thrust and stabbed to death their adversaries." Tanks joined the victors, and helped to expel or kill the few Prussians left in the wood.

While the fortified zone from the canal to the eastern outskirts of Oosttaverne was being stormed, the great assault on the Wytschaete-Messines ridge at right angles to it had been delivered. On the northern slopes of the ridge was the Grand Bois. It was attacked from the west by Welsh and from the north by West Country troops. The entrenchments running eastward from it across the Ypres-Armentières high road were carried by other Westerners.

The Welsh, a large proportion of whom were miners, mustered at the opening of the battle round Hollandscheschuur Farm. Between them and the wood were strong points, underneath which were British mines. Like the others these were exploded at 3.10 a.m., and the Welshmen went over the top of their assembly trenches against them. Skirting the edges of the huge craters, they made for the works just in front of the wood, bayoneting and bombing their occupants. Entering the wood, after much heavy fighting they reached the farther edge. The wood bristled with numerous machine-gun emplacements. East of the wood the Welshmen paused and waited for reinforcements. When these appeared the advance was resumed, and "Obvious Trench" and "Obvious Alley," just over the edge of the crest, were secured. Twelve guns and two trench mortars were captured there. The ruins of the farm building, North House, were next stormed, Oosttaverne Wood was slowly threaded, and the assault on Oosttaverne itself begun. By 3.45 p.m. the village was finally carried. The Welsh troops halted in Oosttaverne, the miners rapidly entrenching the village and its environs.

Simultaneously with the advance on Oosttaverne of the Welsh and West-Country troops

over the northern shoulder of the ridge, the South Irish Division moved on Wytschaete. To reach the crumbled village they had to traverse Petit Bois and the Bois de Wytschaete. The former wood, garrisoned by a company, had been mined, and at 3.10 a.m. it was wiped off the map by an explosion so violent that it broke timbers even in our own dug-outs. Singing

And if perchance we do advance  
To Wytschaete and Messines  
They'll know the guns that strafed the Huns  
Were wearing o' the green,

the Irish swept round the Petit Bois and raced for the larger wood. "I have heard," said an astonished German officer who was taken prisoner, "that the Irish were great fighters, but I never expected to see anyone advance like that." At their head was John Redmond's brother, Major Willie Redmond, M.P., who, well over military age, had joined the Army on the outbreak of war. After gallant service in the trenches he had been appointed to the Staff, but on this day, which was destined to be his last, he had insisted on accompanying his old battalion. Scarcely had he got out of the trenches than he was struck by a fragment of a shell and mortally wounded. An Ulster ambulance carried him to the rear, where, after lingering for a few hours, he died, lamented by Irishmen of every party and admired throughout the British Empire.

The fall of Redmond, which signified so much to them, roused his comrades to their fullest fury. Machine-guns played on them through webs of uncut wire, but nothing could stop their ardour: in a moment Wytschaete Wood was rushed by the enraged soldiery. The cries of bayoneted Germans, the explosions of grenades, the rattle of musketry, all told that the beloved commander was being grimly avenged. Soon only one machine-gun, isolated in a defence of wired trunks in the centre of the wood, continued firing. Salvoes of rifle grenades\* speedily killed the little garrison, and Wytschaete Wood was won. Still a German non-commissioned officer heroically remained at his post up a tree signalling to the guns. He was not at first observed,

\* A section of each platoon carries these weapons. They consist of a grenade on a long stem (a species of ramrod) which is fired from the rifle by a special cartridge with a small charge. Fired at a high angle they come down into the point aimed at. Thus, when troops are held up for want of artillery and are not near enough to throw hand-grenades they can by the rifle grenades bomb out the defenders.



and it was not till later that he was discovered and brought down

The sun was well above the horizon when the Irish, issuing from the wood, poured across the open ground and assaulted the northern and western faces of Wytschaete. In the meantime the Ulstermen to their right, assisted by the panic caused among the Germans by the explosion of the gigantic Spanbroekmolen mine, had reached L'Enfer Hill and the southern side of the village at 5.30 a.m. They had on the way taken over 1,000 prisoners.

Before noon Wytschaete, turned on the east by the Welshmen descending on Oostaverne, was ours. The leading companies of South Irish and Ulstermen had at first been checked, but, when the supports arrived, machine-gun posts and redoubts were soon reduced. A strong point in the centre of the village alone offered any serious resistance. It was stormed, and the Irishmen, crossing the Ypres-Armentières road, commenced to move down the eastern slopes of the ridge in order to protect the flank of the Welshmen preparing to assault Oostaverne.

Between L'Enfer Hill and Messines the fighting on this day was exceptionally hard.

The English troops on the right of the Ulstermen had here a broader fortified zone to cross. The valley of the Steenebeek lay before them, and they had to advance down its long exposed western slope under fire of numerous machine guns\* hidden in the eastern face of the hollow. When the English got across the little brook running along the bottom of the valley, they had in front of them the succession of obstacles described at p. 80.

From the Kruistreat trenches to the summit of the Wytschaete-Messines ridge was some 2,000 yards in a straight line. The actual distance the troops had to traverse was considerably longer. The English were about to meet, not troops dispirited by bombardment, but the 3rd Bavarian Division, which arrived after a forced march to relieve the 40th Saxon Division during the night of June 6-7.

The charge of the English was preceded by a daring feat. During the evening, the Cheshires near Wulverghem entered No Man's Land and dug a trench 4 ft. 6 in. deep and 1,050 yards long for their jump-off line the next day. As this trench would not be likely

\* The day before 26 more of these weapons had, it was known, been brought up and posted on the slope.



THE GRAVE OF MAJOR W. REDMOND, M.P.

[Official photograph

to be marked on the enemy's maps, it was hoped that, if the Cheshires started from it, they would escape the German barrage which would be naturally directed more to the west. When the hour approached for the opening of the battle, the Cheshires, who had returned to our lines, slipped into this trench and there awaited the explosion of the mines. At 3.10 a.m. the Spanbroekmolen mine and the other mines north-east, north, and south-east of it went up and immediately afterwards the Cheshires and the other English troops picked their way through the smoke and fumes down the slopes to the Steenebeek, crossed this stream, and in waves began the ascent of the ridge. The trench which curved round Hell Farm and the trenches in front of it had been obliterated by our guns. On the crest of the ridge, in Hell Wood, the south-west corner of which was entered by the Cheshires, hand to hand fighting began. A company of Bavarians attacked our men in flank, but an officer whipped round two machine guns and sprayed them with bullets. Almost all who escaped were bayoneted. The Cheshires captured 14 machine guns and 50 prisoners. The Saxons and their relieving Bavarians were driven back with severe loss. Hell Farm and Styx Farm were stormed by the same troops, who then dug themselves in.

From Hell Farm it was no great distance to the Ypres-Armentières road before which lay October Trench with Middle Farm attached to it and, beyond it, October Support Trench. The Cheshires resuming their advance and moving on October Trench, got ahead of the time table. An officer suddenly realized that they would be caught by the British barrage. He ordered the men to take refuge in shell craters. The barrage crept over them, inflicting some few casualties.

Meanwhile the other troops of the Division, linking up with the Ulstermen on L'Enfer Hill, prepared, like the Cheshires, to assault October Trench. A broad belt of uncut wire barred approach to it. A couple of companies of troops farther south turned the position, while our men smashed their way through the wire as best they could. Bleeding and torn the survivors stormed Middle Farm, round which a few minutes later lay 300 German corpses.

There was now a pause while fresh troops arrived to storm October Support Trench. In long unbroken waves they lined up beyond the groups of wounded men. The German last line

on the ridge, already turned by the Ulstermen in Wytshaete, was speedily carried after sharp fighting and the Cheshires captured Despagne Farm, repulsing a violent counter-attack from the direction of Gapaard up the shallow valley. The Bavarians retiring over the ridge



[Swaine.]

MAJOR W. REDMOND, M.P.

melted away under the fire of machine-guns and rifles and never even reached the Cheshires' improvised trenches.

Long before the October Support Trench and Despagne Farm were carried, the New Zealanders, with Australians in support, had expelled the enemy from Messines and Fanny's Farm, north-east of it. Under heavy shell fire the New Zealanders went forward through the dense clouds of smoke caused by the mines and shells into the valley of the Steenebeek, and ascended the southern end of the ridge. At 4.20 a.m. the red dome of the sun began to rise and some 23 British aeroplanes, fired at by shrapnel, droned overhead. At 5.8 a.m. the skyline of the crest of the ridge appeared out of the haze and smoke. Near the northern end of the humps and hummocks, which showed the position of Messines, the figures of the English and a Tank could be perceived. South of the village the New Zealanders were slowly proceeding towards the site of the church and the square. By 7 a.m. the Germans in Messines were all killed, wounded or captured. The New Zealanders at once proceeded to dig a trench





A DUCK-BOARD BRIDGE.

[Official photograph.]

along the whole of the position they had taken, while the Australians came up and carried on the work of thrusting the enemy off the ridge. The redoubt at Fanny's Farm, north-east of Messines, for a time held up their advance, but the Tank referred to came forward and with two or three shots forced the garrison to surrender. Hard by, in a hedge, was found one of the batteries of anti-Tank guns, which had been smashed before our machine came on the scene.

Messines and its hill were not the most southerly points attacked by Sir Herbert Plumer. If Messines Hill were captured it would have to be protected from counter-attacks delivered up its south-eastern slopes. Beyond the Douve towards St. Yves other Australian troops had, therefore, been detailed to advance our line, and then cross to the north bank of the stream and assist their comrades and the New Zealanders. Against the Australians were the forces forming the extreme right of the German 6th Army, the northern wing of which rested on the rivulet. The Douve at this point, it will be remembered, is only some three or four yards wide. "Duck-board" bridges, resembling wooden tables, had been prepared and were carried by the Australians.

The operation was skilfully carried out. Our men got through the German barrage, placed the bridges and passed over them to the northern bank under fire from the ruin called Grey Farm. A young Australian officer, with his company, crawled through a hedge and set fire to the combustible materials in this redoubt. The garrison, driven into the open, were shot down. Farther to the north, Huns' Walk, on the road to Messines, held out. The wire round it had been uncut. A Tank crawled along the entanglement, flattened it, and shelled the Germans into submission. Other machine-gun emplacements were reduced in similar fashion and the enemy expelled from the area between the slopes of the Wytshaete-Messines ridge and the Douve. Taken on the whole the progress of the attack all along the line had been marvellously rapid and our final objectives on both flanks were reached, except at a few places, early in the afternoon. These were at the eastern end of Battle Wood and in strong points in the spoil banks of the Ypres-Comines canal. In the centre our line advanced to within 400 to 800 yards of the German Oosttaerne line and parallel to it.

The guns needed for the further attack on this portion had now been brought up, while the

troops and Tanks detailed to take part in the new movement were steadily arriving. Meanwhile our long-range artillery shelled the bridges and roads leading out of the triangle formed by the Lys and the Canal. The final attack of the day was about to be delivered.

By 3.45 p.m. the Welshmen finally got possession of Oosttaverne.

At 4 p.m. troops from the northern and western English Counties entered the Oosttaverne line east of the village and captured two batteries of German field guns. This line was a mile to the east of the Warneton line and was the last of the three fortified zones between the British and the Lys eastward of Frelinghien. Half an hour later other English battalions broke through this line farther north. The enemy was becoming demoralized at this point, he had suffered very heavy casualties and his men were surrendering freely.

The capture of the main ridge had enabled our guns on it to fire down at the Germans in the Oosttaverne line and to enfilade that portion of it between the southern outskirts of Oosttaverne and the Ypres-Comines canal. This had materially aided the final assault. By sunset the Oosttaverne line had been taken, and our

objectives in that part of the field had been gained. During the night the captured positions were consolidated, and Tanks patrolled to the east and south between the Oosttaverne and Warneton lines and assisted to repulse a counter-attack of the Germans made up the Wambeek Valley. This act of the battle has been graphically described by Mr. C. E. W. Bean, the official correspondent with the Australian Forces. Mr. Bean watched the struggle from a spot at its southern end. He wrote :

It was about three in the afternoon that the shelling suddenly became heavier to the right of Messines. It was both British and German. It suggested that the Germans were preparing the way for a counter-attack, and we knew that within a few minutes the Australians, who were moving beyond and through the New Zealanders and the British, were to attack farther along the whole of the south of the line, while the British advanced along all the line to the north of them.

At a little past three, parties began to move up the open, past the farthest Australian line. They seemed, at the first, too small for the great distance they had to go. But it was only a preliminary move. A few minutes later there moved up near to them two "Tanks," a third following at a short distance. As the "Tanks" passed where the front of the infantry had been, the whole hill slope suddenly swarmed with men. "Tanks" and men moved together over the crest, the "Tank" guns flashing continually. The German shells were falling thick, again and again blotting out all sign of the advance in dust and smoke. But whenever the dust



[Official photograph.]

LOADING SHELLS ON A LIGHT RAILWAY.



cleared you could see the "Tanks" and the infantry still going. The "Tanks" stood still on the crest for a moment, firing heavily, but a moment later moved towards a nest of German trenches hidden by the trees. With them went the infantry. For a few minutes men could still be seen going beyond the crest. Then the battle passed out of view. The farthest objective where we could see it had certainly been gained.

A quarter of an hour later a grey shape appeared around those far trees, followed shortly by another. It was the "Tanks" returning, their duty done. One of the two was on fire; the roof of it could be seen blazing. But it still continued to work its way out. For several minutes it stopped, and the onlookers thought it des-

the total loss was probably not far short of 50,000 men and many weapons were buried beneath the falling earth.\*

Our losses were about 10,000 killed and wounded, including Brigadier-General C. H. J. Brown, D.S.O., of the New Zealand Forces.

No description of the battle would be complete without an account of the great assistance given to the British attack by the aeroplanes. We have seen in previous pages



*[Belgian official photograph.]*

#### THE BELL OF WYTSCHAETE CHURCH.

Found by the British troops amid the ruins of the Church, this bell was presented by General Plumer to the King of the Belgians.

troyed. But presently it veered and found another way down the hill. For 25 minutes, with that fire blazing from the roof of it, it made its track down the hill to safety. The "Tanks" came back, but the infantry stayed.

At 4 a.m. on June 8 the British captured a small portion of trench near Septieme Baru where the Germans had managed to hold out against our first attack.

Plumer had decisively defeated Sixt von Arnim. Some 7,200 prisoners, 67 guns, 94 trench mortars, and 294 machine guns had been taken by the British. The total loss of men and material suffered by the Germans has never been made known. How many Germans and German guns had vanished in the mine explosions, it is difficult to say, but

what they had done before the assault in the way of reconnaissance, how they had located the enemy's battery emplacements and bombed his communications, shelters, and ammunition dumps. But on the day of battle they surpassed all their former deeds. Working hard through the night, they had poured destruction on the German aerodromes and other points

\* Among the trophies in this part of the field was the fossil remains of a mammoth. It was discovered in certain digging operations, and with it were flint implements used either to kill the beast or to cut it up. The process of exhumation was not complete, indeed had hardly begun at the time of the attack though it had gone far enough to show that it was an unusually good specimen, and was handled with due scientific care. The country where it was found is rich in remains of prehistoric man.



[Official photograph.]

### A BRITISH HEAVY BATTERY.

at which aeroplanes were congregated. As day broke their audacity increased; they came down to quite short ranges, often not over 500 ft. above their target, braving anti-aircraft shells, machine-gun, and rifle fire. One airman discovered a four-gun battery moving up to the front. Coming down almost on top of it he poured on the teams a stream of bullets from his Lewis gun. His next move was against an infantry battalion. Swooping over it he shot a blast of bullets among the men and sent them helter-skelter to seek the shelter of the nearest woods and ditches they could find.

German anti-aircraft guns were volleyed on and machine-guns in more or less open positions shattered by their fire. Like hawks they went for groups of Germans sheltering in shell-

craters, and far back wrought havoc among the lorries and motor cars bringing men or munitions to the front. One pilot swept so close to a motor car that the driver lost his head and overturned car and passengers into a ditch beside the road it was moving on.

Another aviator, flying over the back roads of the German lines, spotted an aerodrome. No sooner seen than he went for it. A machine gun was fired at him and this he silenced with his own, then, turning his attention to the aeroplane sheds, he proceeded to bomb them and sweep them with his machine-gun fire. It is astonishing to learn, and shows the demoralization that a daring attack can create, that he made his way back in safety, though on his return journey he lost his left elevator.



[Australian official photograph.]

### AUSTRALIANS MARCHING THROUGH A VILLAGE NEAR YPRES.





A BRITISH "CAMEL" (SOPWITH BIPLANE) CHASING AN ENEMY.

It was not one but many airmen who performed such deeds, firing on troops in their trenches and forcing them to rush for safety into their dug-outs. Trains bringing up troops

were so bombed and deluged with machine-gun fire that the Germans in them abandoned them to seek for better shelter. This audacity, in fact, so greatly damaged the *moral* of the enemy's aviators that they made no serious attempt to dispute the mastery of the air with ours. Thus it was that our flying men could locate and send back to our artillery such accurate information as to German gun positions that approximately 300 hostile guns were reduced to silence.

The results which were obtained on this day showed what might be expected in the future when really large numbers of powerful aeroplanes were employed in war. At present this arm, if no longer in its infancy, had certainly not yet emerged from childhood.

So severely had the enemy been handled at the Battle of Messines that, apart from the feeble counter-attack above narrated, he made practically no attempt on June 7. Nor was it till seven in the evening of the 8th that a serious attempt to recover his lost positions was made. Covering the movement by an intense bombardment, Sixt von Armin, whose army had meanwhile been heavily reinforced, made a not very severely pushed effort to capture the line we had gained, but was bloodily repulsed.

Consolidation of our line and the establish-



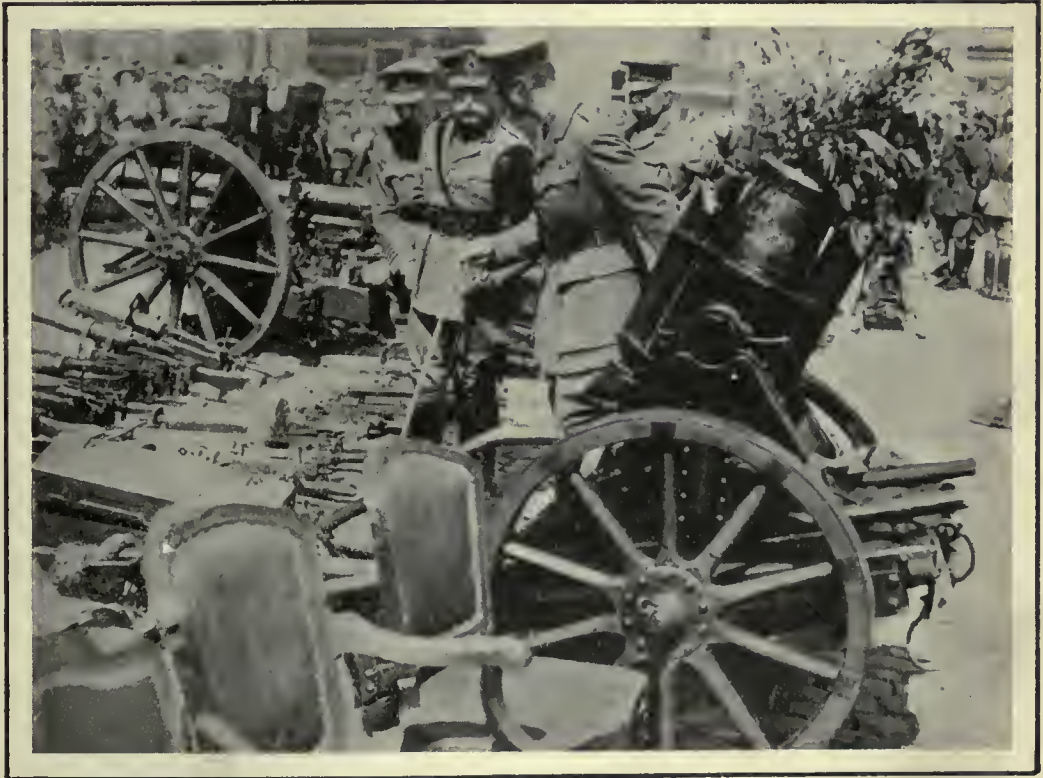
A BIG WATER DEPÔT.

[Official photograph.]

ment of advanced posts continued during the four following days. The Australians seized La Potterie Farm, south-east of Messines, and Gapaard, a mile and a half to the east of Messines between Oostaverne and Warneton on the Ypres-Warneton road.

Our progress on the right of the battle front had made the enemy's positions in the neck of ground between the Lys and St. Yves untenable. The right wing of the German 6th Army therefore gradually evacuated this area until it rested on the Lys at La Basse Ville.

When these consolidation steps had been taken and our defensive position thoroughly secured the British Commander-in-Chief turned his attention to his main offensive north and east of Ypres. To carry this out effectively a re-arrangement of our battle front was necessary. In the first place the French troops holding the line from St. Georges to the sea were replaced by British units, and the change was completed by June 20. The Fifth Army was brought from the British right centre and took up ground from Observatory Ridge to Boesinghe on



*New Zealand official photograph.*

#### TROPHIES FROM MESSINES INSPECTED BY THE DUKE OF CONNAUGHT

Our patrols kept touch with the enemy and by the evening of June 14 the Warneton line had been abandoned. On that evening we again attacked on both sides of the Ypres-Comines canal in the direction of Hollebeke and south and east of Messines. The attack was completely successful, and our line was advanced on practically the whole front from the river Warnave to Klein Zillebeke.

By this operation the Second Army front had pushed forward as far as Sir Douglas Haig then thought desirable, and on this portion of our line our efforts were limited to strengthening our new defences and establishing forward posts.

June 10. The French First Army under General Anthoine extended the British left flank beyond Boesinghe and relieved the Belgian troops who had hitherto kept the front from that point to Nordschoote.

While these movements were in hand the communications behind the front and the left flank of our main force were undergoing the same improvements which had been carried out before the Vimy-Ypres operations had been undertaken. The further offensive more northerly will be dealt with later.

In accordance with their usual practice, as soon as they had been beaten the Germans set



to work to belittle or explain away the results of the fighting. Their official report of June 8 ran as follows:—

**FRONT OF CROWN PRINCE RUPPRECHT.**—On the coast and on the Yser front the fighting activity still remains slight.

The attacks of the English delivered between Ypres and Ploegsteert Wood, north of Armentières, after days of strong destructive fire, were repulsed to the south-east of Ypres by Lower Schleswig and Württemberg Regiments. We also fought successfully on the southern wing of the battlefield.

On the other hand, the enemy succeeded, as the result of numerous explosions, in penetrating into our positions at St. Eloi, Wytshaete, and Messines, and in advancing, after stubborn variable fighting, *via* Wytshaete and Messines.

A strong counter-attack by Guard and Bavarian troops drove the enemy back in the direction of Messines. Farther north he was brought to a standstill by fresh reserves.

Later our regiments, who were fighting bravely, were withdrawn from the salient protruding towards the west into a prepared position between the bend of the canal to the north of Hollebeke and the Douve basin, two kilometres (about 1½ miles) to the west of Warneton.

On the Arras front the artillery duel was of great intensity in several sectors.

**EVENING.**—To-day the English were unable to continue the battle in Flanders with the forces which they employed for the attack yesterday. A local advance to the east of Messines was repulsed.

The official proclamation was, of course, backed up by various semi-official utterances in

different German newspapers. Some reported the battle as a surprise, and seemed to think we had taken an unfair advantage of them. Others stated boldly, following the official lead, that the conquered positions had only been held lightly and that the troops were intended from the first to retire into a prepared position between Hollebeke and Warneton. If this were the case, why were the troops in the front line ordered to hold on to the last, as we have previously seen on page 82? Why, moreover, were such elaborate measures taken for reinforcing the front and for counter-attack to regain it if lost? Plainly it was thought, and quite rightly thought, that the front position, with its command of view and fire over the ground to be crossed by our troops, was of the highest value. When the superior fighting power of our men turned them out of it the Germans had resort to the meanest subterfuges and silliest falsehoods to cover their defeat. Their reserves were used to re-establish the battle, but failed to do so.

Take, again, the question of gun losses. The Germans claimed that the whole of the large number lost had been previously rendered useless. This is entirely without foundation.



[Official photograph.]

GERMAN PRISONERS CAPTURED IN THE MESSINES BATTLE.



BATTLE SCENE AT PILKEM.

*[Official photograph.]*

Many of the German heavy guns had been withdrawn before the assault took place because von Arnin was afraid of losing them. Some were destroyed by our fire, but not deliberately by their own detachments, and many guns of all calibres were captured, and as considerable dumps of ammunition were found they were turned on their late possessors.

Two novelties were employed at this battle. Our own incendiary shells, which contained a large amount of highly inflammable liquid. These were "lobbed" over into the German trenches and caused hideous havoc. The other was a German one—the anti-tank gun which has been described in the foregoing pages. Of course, if a shell of any size penetrates a Tank it destroys it. But on the whole the special German batteries created to stop the Tanks obtained little success. The reason is a plain one: they were in fixed positions, or at any rate were kept stationary, and they were not behind solid cover. Consequently they were detected and snuffed out either by our aimmen or by our artillery. The fire of our guns was astonishingly accurate, as indeed it had been for a long time past. A good proof of it was shown at one part of our line.

Passing over No Man's Land a narrow strip

of almost unhurt grass was to be seen. It was a narrow ribbon of green where no shells fell between the two wide brown streaks of the opposing lines. In it the grass was rank, high and full of flowers. Then some 20 yards on this side of the German front line came the area where our shells fell, and gave wonderful evidence of the accuracy of our fire. The line was clean cut and ran for miles. On one side of the line was deep green grass and on the other was chaos—nothing but a mere wilderness of interlocking shell holes, in which the German barbed wire lay heaped in twisted knots. The chaos continued to where the German front-line trench had been, but which was now mere shell holes, where no man could walk more than a few yards continuously. It was the same over all the network of the second line and support and reserve and communication trenches. Coming down the gentle slope of the Ridge was a tumbling progression from shell-hole to shell-hole, climbing out of one and sliding down into another; and everywhere was the wreckage of dugouts and once solidly built machine-gun emplacements.

Modern artillery fire is an affair of science. Meteorological conditions are taken into consideration at intervals during the day, because





[Official photograph.]

#### HAULING OUT A CAPTURED GERMAN GUN NEAR MESSINES.

temperature and barometric pressure affect the products of explosion of the propellant. The gunner rarely lays in his opponent over his gun-sights, but from a hidden position shoots on his target and regulates his fire by the reports of the forward observing officer and the information of the aviators. In this he is aided by a map divided into squares, so that the information enables him to place accurately the point he wishes to fire on. Results such as described above are only possible

when fire is conducted by modern scientific methods, but so certain are these that our infantry could follow in behind the artillery barrage in perfect safety while the latter moves on at regular intervals of time, sweeping away opposition, destroying constructions and blowing to pieces men and guns.

Since the beginning of the war artillery had made greater progress than it had done in the whole period from the introduction of rifled cannon to the outbreak of the hostilities in 1914.



## CHAPTER CCXXV.

# INDIA DURING THE WAR.

INDIA'S INTERNAL LINES OF CLEAVAGE—NATIONALISM BEFORE THE WAR—THE MORLEY-MINTO REFORMS—LORD HARDINGE AS VICEROY—SITUATION IN 1914—GERMAN INTRIGUES AGAINST INDIA—GERMAN TRADE—THE EMPLOYMENT OF INDIAN TROOPS—INDIA'S REMOTENESS FROM THE WAR—LOYALTY AND PATRIOTISM—LORD CHELMSFORD AS VICEROY—MESOPOTAMIA—REFORM SCHEMES—INDIAN DELEGATES TO IMPERIAL WAR CONFERENCE—INDIAN WAR LOAN—COMPULSORY SERVICE—THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION—MR. CHAMBERLAIN AND MR. MONTAGU—BRITISH POLICY IN AUGUST 1917—MATERIAL PROSPERITY—FINANCE AND INDUSTRY—MORE GERMAN PLOTS—CONSPIRACY TRIALS—THE SINGAPORE MUTINY IN 1915—THE NEUTRALITY OF AFGHANISTAN—THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER.

**I**N no part of the Empire are the effects of the war more complex and difficult to appraise than in India. Though we speak of India as one country, and our centralized system of administration as well as the increasing diffusion of English as the *lingua franca* of the western-educated Indians from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin has produced a somewhat artificial appearance of unity, this great sub-continent, with its 315,000,000 inhabitants—one fifth perhaps of the human race—still remains a vast congeries of peoples of different stocks, different creeds, different languages, different customs and traditions, different stages of civilization. Though the great social religious system of Hinduism, which claims to embrace two-thirds of the whole population and has exercised a permanent influence, sometimes negative and sometimes active, on millions who are nominally outside its pale, has no doubt been in the main a unifying force of resistance against successive tides of foreign invasion, the dominant institution of caste, which is the cornerstone of the system, has created and perpetuated internal lines of cleavage as immutable in all essentials as they are profound. There are 50,000,000

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of backward people who count as Hindus and whose ambition it is to climb on to even the lowest rungs of the Hindu social ladder, but who are still called and treated as "untouchable" by all other Hindus within the recognized pale, whilst the Brahmin, in virtue of his mere birth into the highest caste of all, still reigns hierarchically supreme over all. Besides various small and quite distinct communities, such as Sikhs and Jains and Parsees and the remnants of the followers of Buddha, whose religion about 2,000 years ago went near to superseding Hinduism, the Mahomedans form another fifth of the population, and between them and the Hindus the antagonism bred of centuries of conflict lies deep and fierce beneath the surface of all temporary compromises. Politically the Native or Feudatory States, with a total area more than a third and a population nearly a fourth of the Indian Empire, have retained a varying but always very considerable measure of autonomy under their own hereditary rulers and constitute so many enclaves outside the sphere of ordinary British administration, enjoying special but often ill-defined relations with the supreme Government which the late Sir William Lee-Warner described





INDIA AND HER FRONTIERS.

not inaptly as relations of subordinate alliance. Different climatic conditions quite as much as differences of descent and tradition have produced yet another broad and by no means arbitrary distinction between the fighting and the non-fighting races of India, the former belonging for the most part to the plains of Northern Hindustan and the lower slopes and valleys of the Himalayas.

It was the anarchy let loose amongst all these discordant elements by the decay of the Mogul Empire during the eighteenth century that compelled the East India Company to extend its authority reluctantly, but irresistibly, north and south, east and west, from its original small trading settlements on the coast and to build up the vast Indian Empire which was finally placed directly under the British Crown in 1858 after the expiring convulsion of the Mutiny. Under British rule a highly efficient system of administration brought India a measure of peace and justice, of good government and prosperity such as had never been known in the whole course of her long

history, and all the old forms of internal strife were damped down. But the western education it had imported into India was destined to produce a new form of unrest which, though in itself inevitable and by no means altogether unhealthy, has taken on at times a very dangerous character, and has rendered the task of British rulers on the accustomed lines of a paternal, if benevolent, despotism more and more difficult. Western education long ago outstripped the objects which Macaulay had immediately in view when he urged its introduction into India more than eighty years ago for the purpose of supplying the subordinate indigenous agency required for the administration of the country. Appealing at first almost exclusively and still mainly to the same priestly and clerical castes of Hinduism that had always enjoyed a monopoly of such learning as existed in earlier times, it spread rapidly in all the larger Indian towns, and began to find favour with other sections, too, of the urban communities. Fed largely on English history and English literature, the

youth of India who passed through the new colleges and universities we had founded were bound to be affected by the new British ideals of freedom and the British conceptions of government thus set before them. Out of this ferment there grew up at first a wholesome reaction against the barbarous superstitions and cruel customs which degraded their own social system, and the most enlightened leaders of the western-educated classes seemed for a time to realize that far-reaching social reforms could alone form a fitting preparation for those changes in the political relationship between the rulers and the ruled for which the more immature spirits were already beginning to agitate. When the Indian National Congress was founded, in 1885, to give an organized expression to the aspirations of the new western-educated classes, it was hoped that the social reform movement would receive a great impetus, as the many delicate religious and social questions which such a movement was bound to raise were just those with which the Indians themselves rather than their alien rulers were best qualified to deal. But unfortunately on these very questions the most acute differences were soon shown to prevail amongst even western-educated Indians, and the social reform movement, browbeaten by

the reactionary forces of Hindu orthodoxy, subsided into the background to make room for a more facile agitation in favour of political reforms. The Indian National Congress became a platform for the ventilation of racial grievances and for the assertion of political rights based upon the theories of British democratic government, for which, in the eyes of her rulers and of the bulk of Indian opinion outside the small western-educated classes, India was still utterly unripe. A considerable enlargement of Indian representation on the Imperial and Provincial Legislative Council, under Lord Lansdowne's Viceroyalty in 1892, was a distinct concession to the Congress agitation, but it gave the Indians no real power and no real responsibility, and it served mainly as a jumping-off ground for further demands. Various causes, amongst which perhaps not the least potent was the increasing familiarity of many Indians who had been to Europe with the seamy side of western civilization, tended to produce a new school of Indian thought which, harking back to the more or less mythical legends of a golden age when India was free and wealthy and wise beyond the wisdom of all the rest of the world, resented not only a system of administration entirely controlled by aliens, but the as-



DELHI: MAHOMEDANS AT PRAYER.





THE CORONATION DURBAR AT DELHI, DEC. 12, 1911: THE NATIVE HERALD DECLAIMING THE IMPERIAL PROCLAMATION.

cedancy of an alien civilization and the very fact of alien rule. The South African war, in which the two small Boer republics held the whole forces of the British Empire so long at bay, and the Russo-Japanese war, which showed even an Asiatic people to be capable of defeating a great European Power, gave a tremendous stimulus to the new creed of Indian nationalism. At this juncture the Partition of Bengal and Lord Curzon's Education Act, which even the more moderate amongst the western-educated classes chose to construe as a direct challenge to them, gave the Extremists a welcome opportunity for inflaming political passions and racial prejudices to white heat. A campaign of unprecedented violence on the platform and in the Press led to a series of dastardly murders and outrages, of which the victims were not only Englishmen, but even more often Indians in the service of Government. However hostile the Indian Nationalist might be to western civilization, he never hesitated to import into India the latest and most approved methods of western anarchism. These methods nevertheless had one good effect. They gave pause to some of the more sober Indian politicians who had at first been almost carried away by the rising tide of Extremism; and thanks mainly to the firm stand made by the late Mr. G. K. Gokhale and Sir Pherozshah Mehta, an attempt by the Extremists to capture the Congress at Surat at the end of 1907 collapsed, though the meeting had to be dissolved amidst scenes of wild confusion which discredited it for several years. Government, which had lamentably failed to foresee the storm or to appreciate at first its significance, realized once more, though again very late in the day, that, whilst the forces of disorder had to be met by repression, it was equally necessary to rally to the cause of order the moderate elements in India by some generous political concessions. The Indian Councils Act of 1909, better known as the Morley-Minto reforms, marked a considerable step in the direction of giving to Indians a larger share in the conduct of public affairs. Its most notable feature was the appointment of Indians to the Executive Councils of the Viceroy and of the Provincial Governors, and to the Secretary of State's Council at the India Office. For the rest it was practically an extension of the Act of 1892, for it provided for a greatly enlarged Indian representation on an elective basis in the Imperial as well as

in the provincial Legislative Councils, though in the former an official majority was still retained intact. The inherent weakness of these reforms was that, whilst they gave the Indian opposition vastly increased opportunities for discussion and criticism, they still gave it no real power and no real responsibility.



SIR PHEROZSHAH MEHTA,  
An opponent of "Extremism."

The satisfaction which they afforded to Indian sentiment proved, therefore, short-lived. They helped, indeed, to rehabilitate the more constitutional methods of agitation for which the Congress claimed to stand and they stemmed the epidemic of anarchist outrages. They also prepared the way for the visit of the King Emperor and his Consort to India at the end of 1911, which evoked a great and genuine outburst of Indian loyalty to the person of the Sovereign. The bomb thrown at Lord Hardinge whilst he was making his state entry into Delhi on the first anniversary of the Imperial Durbar at which it had been proclaimed as the new capital of India, showed however, that if anarchism had been scotched, it was not yet killed, and the subsequent Delhi conspiracy trials revealed a widespread network of sedition and crime, the full extent of which was only disclosed during the war. In Bengal, too, the continuance of "political"



dakoties perpetrated by youths of the better classes proved how persistent were the effects of the poison with which students and school-boys had been inoculated, even by so-called moderate leaders like Mr. Surendranath Banerjee, during the anti-partition campaign.



*Haines.*  
**VISCOUNT MORLEY, O.M.,**  
 Secretary of State for India, 1905-1910.

Lord Hardinge, who had succeeded to Lord Minto as Viceroy in November, 1910, had not been slow to realize that the Morley-Minto reforms could only mark a stage in the development of Indian political institutions. In a statesmanlike dispatch the new Viceroy propounded; on August 25, 1911, a scheme of provincial autonomy with a large devolution of powers by the Central Government which, had Lord Crewe, then Secretary of State, endorsed it, and been ready to carry it promptly into effect, might have deflected Indian political activities into safer paths. The appointment, in 1912, of a Royal Commission of Enquiry into the Indian Public Services was designed also to meet the growing demand of the western-educated classes for a larger share in the actual administration of the country. But whilst Indian opinion recognized Lord Hardinge's sympathetic attitude towards a progressive policy

and was touched by the fortitude and absence of any vindictiveness which he displayed after the Delhi outrage, he owed his unprecedented popularity amongst Indians chiefly to the courage with which he was known to have on several occasions championed Indian rights and interests, even in opposition to Whitehall, notably in regard to the treatment of British Indians in South Africa. But, whilst many thoughtful Indians were disposed once more to turn aside from the barren field of politics to that of social service or at least to follow the lead given by Mr. Gokhale when, without abandoning the political arena, he founded and devoted a large share of his energies to his Servants of India Society, the more advanced parties were successfully exploiting the general disappointment with the practical results of the Minto-Morley reforms in order to revive the Nationalist movement, or at any rate to press for a radical transfer of power from the British administrators to the self-styled representatives of the Indian people. The Congress which had been always inclined to play the part of an Indian Parliament, though a Parliament entirely divorced from responsibility, recovered no little of the influence which it had lost after the scandalous scenes at Surat and still more on the enlargement of the Indian element in the Legislative Councils which at first seemed to dwarf its importance.

Moreover, a considerable change had taken place in the attitude of a certain section at least of the Mahomedan community towards the Congress. For many years the Mahomedans held entirely aloof from the Congress and, acting upon the advice of their great leader Sir Syed Ahmed, they preferred to rely solely for the protection of their social, political and religious interests on the justice and impartiality of their British rulers. They had, however, been seriously alarmed as time went on by the growing influence of the Congress, which was essentially a Hindu organization, and they had founded in 1905, as a counterpoise to it, an All-Indian Moslem League, whose first achievement was to secure from Government the special representation of Mahomedan interests, in the Morley-Minto reforms scheme. Meanwhile there was growing up a younger generation of Mahomedans whom western education had brought into closer touch with the more advanced school of Hindu politicians and whose feelings towards their rulers had been very unfavourably affected by the unfriendly policy,

as they read it, of Great Britain towards the Mahomedan Powers outside India, and especially towards the greatest of them, Turkey. In the occupation of Egypt, in the recognition of French ascendancy in Tunis and in Morocco, in the Anglo-Russian Convention with regard to Persia, and in the pressure constantly brought to bear upon Turkey for the benefit of the Christian races under the Sultan's rule, they detected evidence of a settled purpose to destroy what remained of Mahomedan independence and power. The Italian invasion of Tripoli in 1911, and the

Balkan wars in 1912-13, strengthened their belief in a conspiracy of the Christian Powers against Islam to which Great Britain was a party, and some of the "young" Mahomedan leaders who went to Constantinople in charge of Indian Red Crescent missions and came there into personal contact with "young". Turkey, returned to India with their hearts full of bitterness. The re-partition of Bengal in 1911, which was held to favour the Hindus at the expense of the Mahomedans, had also caused much bad blood. Even so paltry a question as that



DELHI: STATE ENTRY OF LORD HARDINGE, DEC. 23, 1912,  
On which occasion he was injured by a bomb.



which arose at Cawnpore out of the demolition of an outlying building belonging to a mosque to make room for a new road, whereas the road had been deflected in another part merely to spare a Hindu shrine, revealed a dangerous feeling of irritability which was not confined merely to the local Mahomedans, but spread to those of other provinces and into the Native States. Lord Hardinge even thought



[Elliott & Fry.]

LORD HARDINGE, K.G.,  
Viceroy of India, 1910-1916.

it advisable to take the matter out of the hands of the Local Government and settle the dispute by his own personal intervention on the spot. The compromise served to assuage Mahomedan feeling, but it did not disarm the hostility of the "young" Mahomedan party, who allied themselves more and more closely with the advanced Hindu party in the Congress on the basis of a common nationalism.

Thus when the Great War broke out in the summer of 1914 the internal situation was not indeed dangerous but difficult. The Morley-Minto reforms had ceased to satisfy the demands of even the moderate Indian politicians, whilst the Extremists were endeavouring to give a more and more definite interpretation to the vague aspirations towards colonial self-government which the Congress had on various occasions publicly encouraged. The breach was widening between the western-educated classes, who claimed to voice the

wishes of the people of India, and the British administrators, who stoutly denied that claim with the tenacity of official conservatism and also with a strong sense of responsibility for the welfare of the Indian masses, holding that they were themselves in far closer touch with the real interests and desires of the vast agricultural population than lawyers and professors and journalists born and bred in a few large urban centres, which had little in common with the rural districts. Very few, even amongst educated Indians, had taken any sustained interest in European politics. The Congress, taking its cue from the Radical Party in England, had from time to time protested against military expenditure in India and against the Indian Exchequer being saddled with any part of the costs of the various military expeditions outside India in which the Indian Army had been, much to its credit, employed. Some of the Extremists had occasionally hinted with unconcealed glee at the possibility of grave European complications which might give India her opportunity to shake off the British yoke. But Indians and Europeans alike—and especially the soldiers—had been taught for so many decades to regard Russia as the one European Power capable of threatening our Indian Empire that the growth of Germany's world-ambitions and the significance of her activities in the Near and Middle East had never been more than dimly apprehended. Lord Hardinge knew, for he had been one of the first British diplomatists to realize the German danger, and had played an important part in bringing about the *rapprochement* first with France and then with Russia, by which it was hoped to keep the vaulting ambitions of the Emperor William II. within bounds. The Government of India were fully acquainted with the whole story of the Kaiser's pilgrimages to Constantinople, of German economic and political ascendancy in Turkey, of German railway penetration in Asia Minor, of the great B.B.B. line—Berlin-Byzantium-Baghdad—of German intrigues in the Persian Gulf, already recounted at length in Chapter LII. of this history. But the Government of India have never thought it their duty to enlighten or to guide Indian opinion, and even British Ministers, it must be remembered, deemed it often wiser to mislead than to lead public opinion at home with regard to the true inwardness of Anglo-German relations. Nor can Lord Hardinge, with his diplomatic

experience, have overlooked the choice which Germany insisted on making of picked diplomats to discharge the modest functions of German Consul-General in India, or the number of military officers attached to the German Consulate-General, or the large *suite* of experts whom the German Crown Prince brought in his train during his Indian tour, or the mysterious visit which Count Wolff-Metternich paid to India in company with a military nephew just after he had retired from the post of German Ambassador in London. That Germany had encouraged the Pan-Islamic propaganda which had spread to the frontiers of India, and to a lesser extent into India itself in the days of Abdul Hamid, and had been prosecuted on still more aggressive lines by the "young" Turks, was no secret, even before Prince Bülow cynically disclosed in his memoirs the sinister purpose with which the Kaiser posed as the friend of Turkey and the special protector of Islam. If William II. reckoned upon Turkey adding 10 army corps to the German legions in the event of war he reckoned with scarcely less confidence on the indirect support of the Mahomedan populations outside Turkey as soon as the Ottoman Khalif should unfurl at his behest the Green Banner of the Prophet. Nor was it the loyalty of Indian Mahomedans only that he hoped to tamper with. Even before the war Berlin was in close touch with the centres of Hindu sedition in Europe, and one of the officials of the German Consulate in Zurich was intimately associated with a dangerous group of Indian anarchists who had made Switzerland their headquarters. There can be no doubt either that the large German commercial community as well as the host of German missionaries in India acted, as in every other country, as zealous agents of German policy. Though the Indians themselves were, for the most part, in favour of protection for Indian industries, the British Government maintained their own free trade system in India, and German merchants had taken full advantage of it to develop of late years a growing import and export trade, which in 1913-14 had exceeded that of any other foreign country. In the import trade German travellers had pushed their cheaper manufactured articles with their customary energy, being more ready to adapt themselves to the requirements and taste of native purchasers, and at one time they were undoubtedly helped by the boycott

movement against British imported goods which the Extremists started in support of their political agitation. One of the most notorious Extremist leaders boasted, for instance, publicly that his newspaper was not printed on British imported paper, but only on paper brought from Germany and Austria. It was, however, in the export trade of raw materials for her own industries, such as hides,



[Vandyk.

THE MAHARAJAH OF BIKANIR,  
One of the Indian Members of the Imperial War  
Conference, 1917.



Malabar copra, manganese ore, wolfram or tungsten from Burma, that Germany had made the most determined and successful endeavours to capture the Indian market. In accordance, too, with her universal policy of economic penetration, she had set herself to acquire a footing in, and sometimes commanding control of, mercantile and industrial firms that were regarded as wholly British. As to the widespread diffusion of German influence through missionary channels, it may be enough to quote the statement of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel that in 1914 in the Chota Nagpur district of Orissa alone there were 32 German missionaries in charge of over 300 schools, with 42 native pastors, 449 catechists, 477 school teachers, and a total flock of about 100,000 native Christians.

When the storm broke Lord Hardinge was able to measure at once the magnitude of the struggle to which the British Empire was committed, though even he may not have foreseen its duration. He realized that great risks would have to be taken if India was to answer worthily to the military call of the Empire, and he was prepared to take them because he felt he could rely personally on the confidence and affection of the Princes and people of India. As the Maharajah of Bikanir testified three years later at the Mansion House Banquet, which he attended as one of the

Indian delegates to the Imperial War Conference: "We Indians often wonder whether it is fully realized in Great Britain how fortunate it was in every way for the Empire that a statesman of Lord Hardinge's sagacity, sympathy and broad-mindedness was representing the Sovereign in India when the storm burst." It required, indeed, not merely a knowledge of the military necessities of the Empire, but profound confidence in the essential loyalty of India to denude her without the slightest hesitation of almost all her British garrison as well of her Indian troops and to throw all her military resources into the melting pot in order to fill the gaps in our fighting line in France, which, owing to our own unpreparedness and the still greater unpreparedness of the Dominions for a great war, could not have been filled from any other quarter during the supremely critical period when the Germans, having failed to reach Paris, were making their great effort to break through to Calais and the French Channel coast.

The dispatch of the Indian Expeditionary Force to France and the important part played by it in the winter campaign of 1914-15 have been fully dealt with in Chapter LXI. Indian troops bore their share also in many other stricken fields, in Mesopotamia, in Egypt, at the Dardanelles, in East Africa, and in cooperation with our Japanese Allies in the



INDIAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE: GURKHAS DETRAINING TO GO ABOARD THE TRANSPORTS.



A STREET IN MADRAS.

Far East. But it was the crucial decision, due to Lord Hardinge's insistency, to send her sons straight to the chief battle front in the West to face, shoulder to shoulder with the British and the Dominion troops, the flower of the German hosts that reused a feeling of intense war-like pride throughout India and ensured her loyalty. The consciousness of brotherhood in arms seemed to obliterate suddenly all racial differences and to unite India, as never before under British rule, in one great impulse of loyalty to a common Empire and a common cause. Many of the Indian princes proffered and rendered personal service at the front. All placed the resources of their States at the disposal of Government. The great landlords and gentry of British India responded equally to the call. The great bulk of the Mahomedans vied with the Hindus in their assurances of devotion. The battle spirit stirred not only Rajputs and Sikhs and all the old martial races that form the backbone of the Indian Army, but many others who had not hitherto been wont to seek military service. The educated classes, who pride themselves on having assimilated something of the democratic spirit of the West, rallied to the Empire's cause as the cause of freedom, and even the

most bitter critics of the British *raj* were for the nonce converted to its merits by the far more intolerable menace of German dominion, to which the raid of the *Emden* and the half-dozen shells she fired into Madras lent momentary reality. At the Congress session in the last days of 1914, the President, Mr. Bhupendranath Bose, declared, amidst general applause, that that was "not the time to deal with matters on which we may differ. We must present to the world the spectacle of a United Empire." Both Government and the Indian opposition in the Legislative Councils agreed that during the war there should be a truce to political controversies. The Indian members of the Imperial Council gave a remarkable proof of their sincerity by passing in a single day, on March 18, 1915, on a mere assurance from Lord Hardinge that it was a necessary war measure, the Defence of India Act, modelled on the British Defence of the Realm Act, notwithstanding their repugnance to some of its more drastic provisions; and, as it were, in return, the Viceroy was able a few months later, on September 22, to confirm the new sense of India's partnership in the Empire by announcing that he was authorized by the British Government to accept a resolution introduced by a distinguished Punjabi



Mahomedan, Mr. Mohammed Shafi, to the effect that India, like the Dominions, should have her own representation in any future Imperial Conference. Further satisfaction was given to Indian sentiment by another announcement which Lord Hardinge was in a position to make before leaving India. He had obtained the sanction of the Secretary of State to the abolition of Indian indentured labour in the Colonies—a system productive of grave abuses and terrible social evils.

there was little to bring home to the Indian people the realities of war. Considerable as had been the total contingents furnished by India, they were, when compared with the huge levies in the United Kingdom or in the Dominions, small for her total population and only drawn for the most part from small sections of that population. The number of Indians who had kith or kin or close personal friends at the front was, therefore, very small, and smallest of all amongst the educated



*Official photograph.*

#### INDIAN CYCLISTS IN FRANCE.

Lord Hardinge's tenure of office, which would normally have expired in November 1915, was renewed for a further six months, to the intense satisfaction of Indian public opinion. But even before he left India there were only too many indications that the first great wave of enthusiasm had spent itself. The war was dragging on much longer than people in India had anticipated. Interest in the military operations, as endless apparently as they were often disappointing, began to flag. Except in the Bombay Presidency, where most of the sick and wounded were landed from Mesopotamia, and in a few other centres where hospitals had to be provided to meet the requirements of increasing losses.

classes, for whom the Indian Army provided no career, and soldiering, it was generally believed, offered in itself very little attraction. The most poignant element of personal interest which made the war bulk so large in the daily hopes and anxieties of almost every family in Britain was seldom present to the people of India, who, for the most part, were quite incapable of visualising the remote and unknown scenes amidst which the actual operations of war were carried on. From all the immediate terrors of war India was practically immune, and for a long time even from its financial burdens. In fact, after a first spasm of economic depression, the war brought her a steady increase of material prosperity

There was a mistaken notion that Indian opinion would take alarm if the strain of war were allowed to cause any very marked departure from the ordinary official or even social life of the European community. The keenness of the younger members of the public services to volunteer for the front was systematically discouraged, whilst the military authorities continued to treat the reserve of Indian Army officers, drawn mostly from the Anglo-Indian commercial class, with their customary frugidity, and every public department adhered as closely as possible to its usual routine. Thoughtful Indians, reading public speeches about the life and death struggle in which the Empire was engaged, were puzzled by this official attitude of seeming indifference which extended equally to suggestions made by Indians themselves for a fuller utilization of Indian resources, both of men and materials, for the prosecution of the war. Upon others the increasing horrors of the European war, the successive "methods of frightfulness" imported into it by a nation that prided itself upon being above all others the chosen exponent of European culture, and the concentration of the whole energies and resources of the western world on the mere work of destruction, produced a not unnatural revulsion against the vaunted superiority of our civi-

lization. On the other hand, the bulk of the western-educated classes, whose mind had been so long steeped in politics, dwelt chiefly on the generous and almost excessive praise lavished in the British Press and by responsible Ministers themselves on the loyalty of India. Whilst they indignantly repudiated all idea of claiming a reward for loyalty, they interpreted the promise of a "changed angle of vision" as foreshadowing nothing less than the speedy concession of all the political demands they had hitherto pressed for in vain. The Nationalists read into every declaration of the Allies that the war was being waged in support of democratic ideals and to secure the right of every small nation to shape its own destinies a justification of their own theories of Indian nationhood. There were some, moreover, amongst the Extremists who had perhaps swung rather reluctantly to the inflowing tide of loyalty, and who, less squeamish in their views as to the real obligations of loyalty, were not prepared to allow its reward to be deferred until the restoration of peace conditions might possibly diminish its marketable value. Anyhow they drew a broad distinction between loyalty to the Crown itself and loyalty to those who represented the Crown in India, and did not hesitate to resume their subversive agitation



[Official photograph.]

INDIAN CAVALRY IN FRANCE.



against British administration, though it was bound to render the ordinary task of government far more difficult in war-time than in times of peace. The old ferment was at work again, and when the Congress met in Bombay for its next annual session at the end of 1915, the atmosphere was very different from that of the previous session at the end of 1914. It required all the ability and prestige of Sir S. Sinha, who occupied the Presidential chair on this occasion, to restrain the advanced party and to defeat the aggressive tactics advocated by Mrs. Besant, who, having lost a good deal of the influence she had originally acquired as a Theosophist vessel of spiritual enlightenment with the more conservative and sober leaders of Hinduism, was seeking to gain new popularity with the younger generation by constituting herself the impassioned champion of the most extreme Indian Nationalism. Sir S. Sinha, speaking with the experience he had learnt as the first Indian member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, pleaded with the utmost earnestness and force for patience and moderation, and declared emphatically that though the goal to keep before them was ultimate self-government, India was not yet

ripe for it. His audience listened grudgingly to this language of sane patriotism, for Mrs. Besant had already adroitly launched the catchword of Home Rule for India, against which Lord Hardinge vainly uttered his own grave warning in his farewell speech to the Imperial Council at Delhi on March 24, 1916.

Lord Chelmsford, who, in obedience to the call of patriotism, had already spent over a year in India during the war as an ordinary Territorial officer, landed in Bombay, after a short visit to England, on April 4, 1916, to take over the Viceroyalty from Lord Hardinge, who sailed on the same day, after unprecedented demonstrations of gratitude and affection from the Ruling Princes as well as the people of India. In his very first speech in reply to an address of welcome at Bombay Lord Chelmsford pledged himself to continue his predecessor's policy. But for a time his attention had to be largely diverted to the grave military problems in Mesopotamia with which the fall of Kut almost at once confronted him. Evidence had been accumulating for some time past that Army Headquarters in India had failed to rise to the emer-



INDIAN TROOPERS IN FRANCE.



INDIAN MACHINE-GUN IN FLANDERS.

gency created by the first serious reverse which our arms had encountered on the Tigris—namely, at Ctesiphon in November 1916. The lack of river transport and the neglect to supplement it by the construction of a military railway had hampered all operations for the relief of Kut, and ever since the retreat from Ctesiphon harrowing stories had reached India of the sufferings of our sick and wounded which showed a lamentable breakdown of the medical field service as the result, in part at least, of inadequate transport. Lord Chelmsford had himself been on the point of proceeding to Mesopotamia, on a mission of inquiry which Lord Hardinge had asked him to undertake, when he had to change his plans on his appointment to the Viceroyalty. That mission was subsequently entrusted by Lord Hardinge to Sir William Vincent, afterwards Home Member of the Government of India with whom were associated Major-General Bingley, and later Mr. E. A. Ridsdale. Their report, ultimately made public with the Report of the Parliamentary Commission on the Mesopotamian Expedition, reached the Government of India after Lord Chelmsford had assumed office, and confirmed him in the opinion that sweeping changes were imperatively required both at Army Headquarters in India and in the higher command in Mesopotamia.

The Commander-in-Chief, Sir Beauchamp Duff, had proved himself an able administrator so long as no excessive strain was thrown on to the military machine of which he was in charge, and he had deserved and received great credit for the prompt dispatch of the large expeditionary forces sent from India to France at the beginning of the war. But the far-reaching changes in the system of Indian Army Administration effected in 1906 at Lord Kitchener's instance, when he held the post of Commander-in-Chief in India with Sir Beauchamp Duff as his Chief of the Staff, had borne the fruits which Lord Curzon had at the time vainly insisted they were bound ultimately to bear. For they combined in the Commander-in-Chief the twofold functions of executive and administrative head of the Indian Army. Even in peace time such a combination could only succeed with a man of Lord Kitchener's own masterful personality and indomitable energy. Under the stress of war its failure was inevitable. Sir Beauchamp Duff was tied to his Department by the increasing pressure of administrative work, which he was perhaps too reluctant to delegate to others, and though, as Commander-in-Chief, he ought to have been able at least occasionally to see things with his own eyes—especially when things were obviously going wrong—he had never found a day to spare during nearly three



years of war to emerge from the seclusion of his office at Delhi or Simla. In July, 1917, he was recalled to England to give evidence before the Mesopotamian Commission, and Sir Charles Monro, who had held with great distinction an important command in France, was sent out to succeed him as Commander-in-Chief, and at once proceeded to Mesopotamia to take the measure of the military situation for himself. Equally important changes had meanwhile taken place in the higher commands in Mesopotamia, and notably the supersession of Sir Percy Lake, formerly Chief of the Staff to Sir Beauchamp Duff—whose appointment early in 1917 to the supreme command in Mesopotamia had been much criticized at the time—by Sir Stanley Maude, the brilliant general who was so soon to retrieve the whole situation by the conquest of Baghdad, and then again so soon to be arrested by the hand of death in his splendid career of victory.

Even before these changes had relieved the new Viceroy from the grave military preoccupations of his first few months in India he had found himself compelled to take up the difficult problem of political reforms, to which his predecessor had already given much attention. In close consultation with the members of his Executive Council, Lord Chelmsford devoted his first summer in Simla to the preparation of an extensive scheme for submission to the Secretary of State. But the new Viceroy's natural reserve, from which, moreover, he could hardly have departed so long as the scheme had not obtained the sanction of the British Government, was soon skilfully exploited by the advanced party to cast doubts upon his "sympathy for Indian aspirations" and to stimulate the growing impatience of Indian politicians. The extremists did not hesitate to denounce him as the reactionary nominee of a reactionary Secretary of State (Mr. Austen Chamberlain), and, as a newcomer, he had not yet had time or opportunity to acquire public confidence sufficiently to counteract the insidious campaign directed against him. During the autumn session of the Viceroy's Legislative Council nineteen Indian "elected" members submitted a written memorandum containing a list of measures which, in their opinion, constituted a minimum instalment of the changes which India was entitled to demand from "the new angle of vision" at home. The memorandum had been hastily prepared, and at once provoked expressions

of dissent from other Indian representatives who had been ignored by the signatories as mere "nominated" members. Whilst some of its demands were quite reasonable, such as the repeal of the Indian Arms Act, and the granting of Army commissions to Indians, which had long been overdue, the constitutional reforms, as far as their meaning was intelligible, seemed calculated either to aggravate the defects of the Morley-Minto reforms by increasing the power of the Indian opposition to criticize and obstruct the action of the Executive without having to bear any corresponding responsibility, or else to involve a revolutionary change in the entire system of Indian government, only conceivable if India were endowed with really representative institutions. However crude this document was, the Government of India would perhaps have done better not to ignore it completely. Their silence played into the hands of the extremists, who captured the Indian National Congress at its next annual session held in Christmas week, 1916, at Lucknow. Mrs. Besant, whose mischievous activities had led to her exclusion from the Bombay Presidency and some other provinces, and Mr. Tilak, the great Deccan agitator, who reappeared for the first time on the scene after having served his six years' term of transportation to Mandalay for sedition, were the heroes of the session. After many impassioned orations, in which the most fervid Nationalists had, as usual, to declaim against "alien" misrule in an "alien" tongue, as English is the one language they have in common and the one practical bond of national unity between them, the Congress passed a series of resolutions claiming for India the status of a self-governing State, with complete financial, legislative, and administrative autonomy, and, as a first step, the election of half the Government of India by the non-official Indian members of the Viceroy's Legislative Council, and other reforms of a similar and even more drastic character for the Indian Provincial Governments. Lord Chelmsford had delivered in advance during a visit to Calcutta an earnest warning against such "cataclysmic changes," and, in reply to an address presented to him a few weeks later by a body of Indian journalists who demanded the repeal of the Press Act, he pointed out, with abundant quotations from the extremist press and, in particular, from Mrs. Besant's own organ,



LORD CHELMSFORD, G.C.M.G.,  
Appointed Viceroy of India, 1916.

[Vandyk.]



*New India*, the dangerous, if not actually criminal, lengths to which political agitation was being carried. Unfortunately, whilst the Viceroy's admonitions were so much breath wasted on the extremists, he was not in a



[Elliott & Fry.

SIR JAMES S. MESTON, K.C.S.I.,

Lieutenant-Governor of Agra and Oudh, 1912-1917.  
One of the representatives of India in the Imperial War Conference of 1917.

position to rally the moderates to his support by any definite enunciation of policy, as the Government of India were still engaged in a protracted exchange of views with the Secretary of State. Nor, indeed, did there seem to be any fixity of purpose or uniformity of policy at Delhi. Whereas the Home Rule agitation was spreading all over India and assuming the character of an unmistakably All-Indian movement, the Government of India shrank from the responsibility of dealing with it themselves, and left it to the Provincial Governments to take such measures as they might deem necessary under their own authority. The result was a deplorable lack of uniformity, which produced merely an impression of irresolution and weakness—*i.e.*, the most fatal impression possible in any Oriental country.

The appointment of three delegates to represent India at the special Imperial War Conference held in London in the spring of 1917 temporarily eased the situation. It was a generous fulfilment of the pledge which Lord

Harding had been authorized to give twelve months before. Besides Sir James Meston, Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces, well known for his warm sympathy with all legitimate Indian aspirations, the Maharajah of Bikanir, an Indian Ruling Prince of ancient lineage and great parts, and Sir S. Sinha, an able leader of moderate Indian opinion, who had been the first Indian member of the Viceroy's Executive Council in Lord Minto's time, and had presided over the Indian National Congress of 1915, proceeded to England to speak for India for the first time in the united counsels of the whole Commonwealth of British nations with an authority worthy of the share she had borne in the great war. The splendid reception given to them by their colleagues from the self-governing Dominions, as well as by the British Government and the British people, made a great impression in India and went far to counteract an organized campaign of suspicion and ill-feeling against the Dominions, for which the treatment of Indian settlers in South Africa and the whole very difficult and delicate question of Indian immigration into British colonies had often afforded good, or at least specious, grounds.

In the calmer atmosphere thus created, the Government of India were able to introduce two important measures connected with the prosecution of the war which received at first a considerable amount of support from Indian opinion. One was an undertaking to contribute £100,000,000 as India's share of the Empire's war expenditure and the issue of an Indian loan to cover a first instalment of that contribution. Many Indians had themselves expressed their regret that the Empire had not made a larger appeal to Indian patriotism, and the share India had hitherto borne of the financial burdens of the war had been scarcely appreciable, as it was only in the Budget of 1916 that a slight increase of taxation had taken place, and the Imperial Exchequer continued to defray all the extra costs involved by the employment of Indian troops in the various theatres of war outside India. It must, however, be remembered that, whilst the Dominions had spent very little before the war on Imperial defence, a considerable portion of the revenues of India had always been devoted to the Army, and she had thus been in a position to place a large and well-equipped force in the field at an early and critical stage of the war well ahead of

the Dominion contingents. The Indian War Loan was launched with very general approval, even from leading extremists, and ultimately produced a sum of nearly £40,000,000, which was four times as much as the Finance Member, Sir William Meyer, had ventured to anticipate.

The other measure was an Act to impose a restricted form of compulsory military training and service on the European community, and to arrange for the voluntary enrolment of Indians in a special military force to be raised for the war in all parts of India. It was a measure which might with advantage have been taken as soon as the war broke out, and the European Volunteer Corps would then have welcomed it heartily, whereas the manner and the season of the year in which the new Act was put into operation, just at the beginning of the hot weather of 1917, caused a great deal of unnecessary hardship and heartburning. It was none the less loyally carried into effect. The appeal to Indians was less successful. At first it also received general support from Indian public men, who seemed to realize how valuable such an experiment might prove for the future organization of an All-Indian army on territorial lines. Moreover, a good many young Indians of the educated classes had set an excellent example by volunteering during the early stages of the war for active service as doctors and in the Ambulance Corps, and had acquitted themselves very creditably in France and in Mesopotamia. A double company of Bengalis had also been voluntarily raised as a combatant unit under special authority granted in response to the insistent wishes of the people of Bengal. But the larger movement which Government was now endeavouring, again rather tardily, to encourage was blighted by political distrust. The conditions in regard to pay and status, though similar to those under which our own Territorials had been recruited at home, were keenly attacked by the extremists as conveying some slur of racial inferiority; and within three months Government had to give public expression to its disappointment in a resolution stating that only 300 Indian recruits had so far come forward in the whole of India instead of the 5,000 asked for by the military authorities.

Not the least potent of the influences which favoured a recrudescence of political unrest was the Russian Revolution. It created a profound impression all over India, and the extremists

hailed in it above all the downfall of a tyrannical bureaucracy with which for many years past they had been wont to compare the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy, and always, of course, to the latter's disadvantage. A powerful impetus was again given to the extremist propaganda by the publication of the Mesopotamian Report, which was construed into a scathing indictment not only of Indian military administration, but of the whole system of Indian Government, civil as well as military; and the language used in the course of the Parliamentary debates on the Report by Mr. Edwin Montagu a very short time before he was appointed to the India Office lent itself, unfortunately, to a similar



*Official photograph.*

#### INDIAN CONTINGENT IN MESOPOTAMIA.

Sepoys cleaning reserve bombs for front line trench.

interpretation. This was all the more unfortunate as the internment of Mrs. Besant (June 19) by the Government of Madras had given the extremists an opportunity to raise a storm of indignant protests and to threaten a campaign of "passive resistance." Many moderate Indians regarded the action of the Madras Government as, to say the least, ill-





IN MESOPOTAMIA: INDIAN MOUNTAIN GUN SECTION.

timed, and futile into the bargain, as it merely meant the transfer of that lady's activities, with very slight restrictions, from her own headquarters at Adyar, just outside Madras, to Ootacamund, the summer headquarters of Government, which she herself selected out of the various alternatives offered to her for her enforced residence. The Government of India continued to maintain a sphynx-like attitude of silent reserve, though the agitation which centred more and more round Mrs. Besant had spread throughout political circles all over India. The appointment of three new Indian members to the India Council in Whitehall—one of whom, Mr. Bhupendranath Bose, had presided over the Indian National Congress with marked ability and moderation during the first year of the war—was one of Mr. Chamberlain's last acts before he left the India Office; but he got little credit for it in the over-heated atmosphere of Indian politics, and his resignation on July 12, followed by the announcement that Mr. Montagu had been selected to succeed him, was welcomed as foreshadowing a repudiation by the British Government of the reactionary policy so mischievously but successfully imputed to him and to the Viceroy appointed during his tenure of the India Office.

What actually happened had a very dif-

ferent meaning. Mr. Montagu realized perhaps more fully than Mr. Chamberlain had done the importance of allaying the political excitement in India by a prompt declaration of policy, but the declaration which he made on behalf of the British Government, and in full agreement with the Government of India, was itself the result of the prolonged exchange of views that had already taken place between Mr. Chamberlain and the Viceroy. The announcement made by Mr. Montagu on August 20, 1917, marks so important a stage in the evolution of British rule in India that its terms deserve to be quoted in full:

The policy of his Majesty's Government, with which the Government of India are in complete accord, is that of the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration, and the gradual development of self-governing institutions, with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire. They have decided that substantial steps in this direction should be taken as soon as possible, and that it is of the highest importance as a preliminary to considering what these steps should be that there should be a free and informal exchange of opinion between those in authority at home and in India. His Majesty's Government have accordingly decided, with his Majesty's approval, that I should accept the Viceroy's invitation to proceed to India to discuss these matters with the Viceroy and the Government of India, to consider with the Viceroy the views of local governments, and to receive with him the suggestions of representative bodies and others. I would add that progress in this policy can only be achieved by successive stages. The British Government and the Government of India, on whom the responsibility

lies for the welfare and advancement of the Indian peoples, must be the judges of the time and measure of each advance, and they must be guided by the cooperation received from those upon whom new opportunities of service will thus be conferred, and by the extent to which it is found that confidence can be reposed in their sense of responsibility. Ample opportunity will be afforded for public discussion of the proposals, which will be submitted in due course to Parliament.

It was perhaps too much to expect that even so clean-cut and far-reaching a pledge of our determination to set the feet of India in the path of self-government would disarm an agitation which, if not openly directed against the British overlordship of India, had behind it some dangerous forces bent on paralyzing the whole system of Indian administration. The Government of India, anxious to restore a happier atmosphere in view of Mr. Montagu's arrival in India, prevailed upon the Madras Government to rescind the order for Mrs. Besant's internment, and would have extended the same indulgence to the Mahomedan extremist leader, Mr. Mahomed Ali, had he not refused to give a promise of good behaviour during the war in the form not unreasonably laid before him for signature. The election of this "young" Mahomedan, who before his internment had never made any secret of his sympathies with the "Young" Turks, to the Presidency of the All-India Moslem League was merely an empty demonstration, as he remained interned, but it was no less significant of an irreconcilable temper than that of Mrs. Besant herself to the Presidency of the Indian National Congress at the annual session of those two assemblies held at Christmas 1917, in Calcutta. How artificial was the "national" unity for which they professed to stand had been once more shown only a few weeks before by an unusually violent explosion of those racial and sectarian passions which even the strong arm of the British ruler cannot always keep under restraint. In the western districts of Bihar, adjoining the United Provinces, widespread disturbances, in which a number of educated Hindus played a shameful part, broke out between Hindus and Mahomedans, and considerable military forces were required to put them down, not without loss of life and only after the Hindus had indulged in a veritable orgy of looting and arson and violence, in which even Mahomedan women had not been spared. Nevertheless, the Congress and the League agreed to pass resolutions to the effect that nothing would satisfy India short of Dominion Home Rule within 10 years

and the immediate adoption of the extreme programme embodied in their resolutions of Christmas 1916. Such demands, to which Mrs. Besant's Presidential Address had imparted a very minatory tone, were not only in themselves extravagant, but they deliberately flouted that part of the British Government's



HON. EDWIN S. MONTAGU, M.P.,  
Secretary of State for India, 1917.



declaration, reserving to their own judgment the time and measure of each advance towards the ultimate goal of Indian self-government.

Happily there was a considerable body of Indian opinion far less noisy and more sober, which Mr. Montagu, who wisely kept his own counsel, had ample opportunity of eliciting during his progress through India in company with the Viceroy. Moderate Indians may seem at times to be carried away or submerged by the rising tide of extremism, but whilst it would be unwise to ignore the dangerous forces at work behind the Indian Home Rule movement in its more extravagant forms, the methods to which they resorted at a time when the whole Empire, including India, was engaged in a life-and-death struggle failed to affect the substantial and steady support which India as a whole continued to the prosecution of the war—a support which even the extremists themselves always professed, at any rate publicly, to endorse

Material prosperity is always a steady factor, and of material prosperity during the war India enjoyed a more abundant share than any other part of the Empire. If we take in the first instance the history of Indian finance during the period 1914-1917, we find it to have been a strange record of surprises, but of surprises which led up to unexpectedly satisfactory results. The broad characteristic of Indian finance is that the country has large obligations to discharge in England every year, estimated at approximately £20,000,000. It has in India a large unfunded debt, chiefly deposits invested in Post Office Savings Banks; an extensive note circulation entirely managed by Government; and a token currency whose sterling exchange value is guaranteed and buttressed by a Gold Standard Reserve maintained almost entirely in London. In order to ensure financial equilibrium it is necessary to preserve a substantial balance of trade in favour of the country, and it was always assumed that in time of crisis there would be a great demand for sterling exchange, which Government would have to meet from the Gold Standard Reserve if the financial policy inaugurated in 1893 and consummated in 1898, directed mainly to the maintenance of the sterling value of the rupee, was not to collapse. Furthermore, in India, owing to the shyness of capital and the undeveloped condition of

banking institutions, Government has to stand behind the principal banks in time of crisis, not only by the use of its credit, but by the provision of actual cash.

It was fortunate for India that the outbreak of hostilities found the country in an exceptionally strong financial position. The Treasury balances in England and India were £1,500,000 in advance of the estimated value, the gold holding was £23,500,000, and the Presidency banks, the principal financial institutions in the country, were unusually well provided with funds. Fortified by these resources, the Government was able to meet the first shock to credit with success. This shock took the form which was generally anticipated—an immediate demand for sterling exchange, which was not satisfied until gold bills on London of the value of £8,750,000 had been sold. This process automatically transferred a corresponding amount of the Gold Standard Reserve from London to India, and it was fortunate that this was so. There was an immediate rush on the Post Office Savings Banks, which induced the withdrawal of £7,000,000 and a demand for the encashment in bullion of currency notes to the extent of £4,000,000. By borrowing from the Gold Standard Reserve the Government was able readily to meet the demands on the Savings Banks, whilst confidence in the paper currency was speedily restored by increasing the facilities for encashment throughout the country.

So far Indian finance and currency had pursued the anticipated course; thereafter it assumed forms entirely upsetting all calculations and arrangements. Trade rapidly adjusted itself to the new conditions, and by the close of March, 1915, it had found a fresh equilibrium. The very large demand for the chief products of India, such as jute, cotton, oilseeds and hides and skins, coupled with the reduced import of manufactured goods arising from the closure of the chief Continental markets and the reduced productive power of the United Kingdom, brought about an increasing balance of trade in favour of India. A further factor of strength was introduced when the Indian Government began to spend very largely in India on account of the Home Government for the maintenance of the forces in Mesopotamia, East Africa, and Egypt; this expenditure amounted to an indirect remittance from London to Calcutta and



**INDIANS ON THE WESTERN FRONT:  
COOKING CHUPATTIES.**

Bombay. The result of these forces was to make the chief embarrassment of Government not the provision of sterling remittances from India, but the provision of rupee remittances from London; not to find sterling resources from the Gold Standard Reserve, but to meet in India an almost insatiable demand for rupee currency.

This necessitated a number of expedients. The ordinary sale of Council Bills on India in London was reduced to Rs. 80 lakhs, and then to Rs. 60 lakhs per week; Government took entire control of the imports of gold and silver; and with the price of silver soaring above the fixed ratio of the rupee to the sovereign—namely, 15 to 1—it raised the rate of exchange to Re. 1-5, approximately at that time gold point, taking into account the increase in freight and insurance. Towards the close of 1917 small notes of the denomination of one rupee and Rs. 2-8-0 were introduced to economize the use of silver. None of these expedients would have availed, in face of the very heavy expenditure on account of the Home Government, if the borrowings in India had not been on an unprecedented scale. In



**AT DINNER.** *[Official photograph.]*

normal years the Government of India esteems itself fortunate if it is able to borrow in the Indian market £2,000,000. In 1916 a conversion loan yielded £4,250,000, and in 1917 a special effort to raise a "Loan of Victory" brought to the exchequer the relatively large sum of £39,000,000. In the closing months of 1917 Treasury Bills were issued for the first time in India and freely taken up.

The interaction of all these forces produced in India conditions of great prosperity and considerable strength. All the manufacturing and producing industries of India were passing through halcyon days, and the prosperity of



the export trade was only limited by the amount of freight available for export. The banks were full of money, and a feeling of optimism was abroad. It was fairly claimed that the currency system of India had stood the shock of war better than the currency system in any other country in the world. India had not altogether escaped additional taxation. In the first year



[Lafayette.]

**SIR THOMAS H. HOLLAND, K.C.I.E.,**  
President of the Indian Industrial Commission,  
1916, and of the Board of Munitions, India, 1916.

of the war, acting in the belief that the war would be of short duration and it was unnecessary to look far ahead, it was arranged to meet the estimated deficit by new borrowings. In 1916-17 additional revenue amounting to £3,600,000 was raised by increasing the customs tariff, the salt duty and the income tax; in 1917-18 a super-tax was imposed for the first time, and the customs duties were further raised, including the duties on cotton piecegoods, despite the vehement protests of the Lancashire industry. Simultaneously India rendered valuable contributions to the financial strength of the Empire. She discharged all her floating debt in London, and invested large sums of the Paper Currency Reserve and the Gold Standard Reserve in British securities, and finally, in 1917, assumed the sole responsibility for interest and sinking fund on £100,000,000 of the Imperial war expenditure.

Whilst even reproductive State expenditure had to be severely curtailed in many directions,

as, for instance, important railway extensions and irrigation works, the lessons taught by the war proved invaluable for the future development of Indian economic resources. For the war showed just where the old policy of *laissez faire, laissez aller* had failed in the past. It showed how far-reaching German methods of commercial penetration had become. It showed how important it is, even in the interests of the Empire, to promote the growth of Indian industries and to make them self-contained and, in case of need, independent of reinforcement from home. The appointment of an Industrial Commission to investigate these matters was an earnest of the new interest taken in them by Government, though its fruitful labours had to be interrupted in order to allow its energetic chairman, Sir Thomas Holland, to undertake the still more urgent task of organizing the special war industries of India. Industrial labour never before received such high wages. Yet, whilst more liberal conditions of service and generous treatment of men who had returned disabled from the front and of the families of those who had fallen gave a fresh stimulus to recruiting amongst the old fighting races, it was found possible to raise at the same time very considerable labour corps for Mesopotamia and France. Above all, agriculture, which must always remain the greatest of Indian industries, was favoured by a succession of bounteous rains and abundant harvests. The overwhelming majority of the population of India ask for nothing more.

If on the whole, and in spite of an unfortunate re-erudescence of political unrest, British rule in India stood the test of the world-war with unimpaired and even increasing strength, there were from time to time, both within and beyond the frontier, insidious attempts to disturb the peace of India, which only the vigilance and firmness of Government turned to the confusion of the German plotters who engineered them. As soon as war broke out the chief Indian seditionists in Europe and some who had set up their headquarters in America and in Japan proceeded to Berlin, where they were organized into an Indian political department working under the orders of the German Foreign Office and War Office. A few of them were young Indians of considerable attainments, such as Har Dyal, a Hindu who had been formerly a Government of India scholar at

Oxford ; Chattopadhyaya, also a Hindu, who had been refused admission to the English Bar after the assassination of Sir Curzon Wylie in London ; Barkut Ullah, a Mahomedan who had been editor of an anti-British newspaper, *Islam Fraternity*, published in Japan ; and Ajit Singh, a Sikh, who had been deported from India in 1907, at the same time as Lajpat Rai, on suspicion of tampering with the loyalty of Indian troops. Herr von Oppenheim, familiar to many Englishmen when, as a peripatetic member of the German Consular service, he had his headquarters in Cairo, where he was a *persona grata* with the Egyptian Nationalists, and spent even more of his time on mysterious journeys, professedly of exploration and archaeological research in Northern Arabia, Syria and other Arab-speaking regions, was placed in charge of this Indian department. Its primary objects were to work up revolutionary movements in India itself and to stir up trouble in the borderlands. Amongst its minor activities it endeavoured, with very scant success, to induce Indian prisoners of war, especially Mahomedans, to take service against us with the Turks, and it composed a series of wonderful fables about the state of India, partly to cheer the German public, but still more, no doubt, for consumption in Turkey and other Oriental countries where fairy stories always obtain ready credence.

At one time it was the Nizam of Hyderabad who had been deposed by his Mahomedan subjects because of his loyalty to the British Crown. On another occasion it was a mythical Hindu rajah who was heading a combined insurrection of Brahmins, Buddhists and Mahomedans. Then again it was a tale of grave disorders at Bombay, Madras and half a dozen other places, where rebels had prevented the departure of troops for Europe and had seized the arsenals and barracks.

Hard as the Indian Bureau in Berlin undoubtedly worked, and large as were the sums which it expended, its actual achievements were on a much more modest scale, and in comparison with its ambitions proved lamentable failures. None the less credit is, however, due to the Criminal Investigation Department of the Government of India, whose agents, under the direction of Sir Charles Cleveland, tracked and mastered successively all the elaborate ramifications of a German organization which, from its Berlin base, extended across America to all the neutral countries in the Far East, especially the Dutch East Indies and Siam, and China, where it had its instruments ready to hand in every German settlement. It contrived even to secure a strong secret foothold in Japan amongst a disaffected section of the large body of Indian students who had flocked for



INDIANS IN FRANCE AT THEIR DEVOTIONS.



some time past to its universities and colleges.

It was to British Columbia and California that the attention of the Germans was in the first place directed by their chief adviser, Har Dyal, who had been engaged there for some years before the war in organizing a revolutionary movement known as the *Ghadr*, or Mutiny—the name given also to a newspaper he published in the Urdu and Gernukhi languages, which are respectively the chief Mahomedan and Sikh vernaculars in Northern India. This movement, which had its headquarters in California, was to secure the complete overthrow of British rule in India by means of another rising on the lines of the 1857 mutiny; and Har Dyal openly preached by word of mouth as well as in his organ a gospel of wholesale murder and massacre, based upon fierce racial hatred, which, however, did not prevent the Germans from welcoming him as a friend and ally. The disabilities imposed upon Indian immigrants on the Pacific slope had helped to embitter many of the Indian settlers, largely Sikhs, and Har Dyal and other Indian anarchists had thus found a fruitful soil on which to scatter the seeds of sedition. Har Dyal himself had foretold in a public speech, as early as May, 1914, the imminence of a war between Germany and Great Britain, which would be India's opportunity to shake off the British yoke. Just

about the same time, one Gurdit Singh, a Sikh, deliberately chartered a Japanese steamer, the *Komagata Maru*, to take over several hundred Indian labourers, mostly Sikhs from the Punjab, to Vancouver and land them there in defiance of the laws of British Columbia. He and his fellow conspirators knew that this attempt was foredoomed to failure, and the ignorant coolies, embittered by their treatment, were easily duped into venting their wrath, not upon the real authors of their misfortunes, but upon their British rulers, who had done their best to mitigate the hardships of their case and, indeed, defrayed the costs of their repatriation. A number of agitators took passage with them on their enforced return to India, feeding them constantly with seditious harangues and promises of an early and successful insurrection all over India. Details of dacoities and plans for suborning the native troops, looting the Government treasuries, and seizing the chief armouries in the Punjab were worked out, and parties were landed at Hong Kong, Singapore, Penang and Rangoon to seduce the Indian garrisons. The main body, numbering 329, reached the Hooghly in the *Komagata Maru* at the end of September 1914, where they were landed at Budge-Budge, near Calcutta. There had been abundant information that their arrival would mean trouble, and the Government of the Punjab had sent down agents to persuade the men to return peace-



DELHI, THE NEW CAPITAL OF INDIA, WITH THE JUMMA MUSJID.

fully to their homes and, if necessary, to issue the requisite orders under the Ingress into India Ordinance recently promulgated. The measures taken by the Government of Bengal proved entirely inadequate to prevent grave disturbances. Only 62 of the men agreed to get quietly into the special trains provided for them, and the rest set out in defiance of the authorities to march by road to Calcutta. A force of police and some troops hastily called out succeeded in barring their way and turning them back to Budge-Budge. But they still refused to entrain, and when hustled by the police constables present they opened fire upon them with guns and pistols they had secreted. The small police force was overpowered, and when troops arrived to quell the riot a small pitched battle ensued, and considerable loss of life, before the majority of the rioters surrendered, only a small number, including, however, the ringleader, Gurdit Singh, making good their escape.

This was but the forerunner of much more widespread trouble in the Punjab itself. Fresh arrivals of disaffected elements from Canada and the United States and from the ports of the Far East, where the local police forces for the European settlements had for many years past been largely recruited amongst Punjabi Sikhs, filtered steadily into India, and whilst a good many were dealt with under the Ingress Ordinance and interned, enough got through to carry on their nefarious propaganda in India, and very shortly a regular campaign of murder and dacoity was started in the Punjab. A rising was actually planned for February 19, 1915, with the object of seizing the Government arsenals at Lahore and Ferozepur, whilst continuous endeavours had been made to seduce the Indian troops in those cities as well as at Meerut, Wilsonpur and other smaller cantonments in Northern India. An attempt was actually made to blow up the Doraba bridge at Ambala by means of a bomb, and in the Ferozepur district a sub-inspector of police and one of his men were shot dead in broad daylight on the public road. But the Punjab Government were fully alive to the danger, and it had at its head in Sir Michael O'Dwyer a Lieutenant-Governor who, like the Lawrences and Edwardes of the old Mutiny days, had won the complete confidence of the law-abiding population of his province by the keen interest he had personally taken in their welfare and

by his accessibility and frankness as well as by his keen sense of justice. Like his great predecessors 60 years before, he was also prepared to strike fearlessly when necessary. The well-to-do classes showed no sympathy with the revolutionary doctrines and anarchical methods of the conspirators, and in the villages as well as in the towns the people rallied wholeheartedly to the cause of law and order. In



SIR MICHAEL O'DWYER, G.C.I.E.,  
Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab.

several cases it was the villagers themselves who turned upon the outrage-mongers and, having seized them, turned them over to the police. A large number of offenders had soon been laid by the heels, and whilst the majority were summarily dealt with by the ordinary courts, the worst criminals were committed for trial by a special tribunal at Lahore.

These trials disclosed for the first time publicly the part which Germany had played in fomenting the trouble. The evidence showed that the revolutionary propaganda amongst the Indians in America had been steadily engineered by the two men Har Dyal and Ajit Singh, who had proceeded to Berlin as soon as the war broke out to organize rebellion in India under the auspices of the German Foreign Office. Their programme specifically included, as soon as the rebellion started, the murder of all civilian Europeans, the wrecking of trains and railway bridges and a sudden attack on and the killing of all European



troops. That the conspirators would have fully carried out this sanguinary programme had they been given the chance, was abundantly shown by the cold-blooded brutality they displayed in the perpetration of the crimes brought home to them against their own innocent fellow-countrymen. One of the conspirators described an interview they had with a German Consul in the Far East who, whilst anxious not to commit himself to any definite engagements, impressed upon them the necessity of hastening on the revolution, as India would never have a better opportunity, and he promised to secure them from any harm from the Emden, which was just then successfully sinking our merchant-ships in Indian waters. Another witness, who had gone across from America to Europe at the beginning of the war, stated that he had been told by the German Consul at Geneva to go and see Har Dyal in Berlin. He visited him there with other Indians connected with the *Ghadr* movement, and their meetings were attended by German officials and other Germans who knew India, and at some of them Herr von Oppenheim presided and Har Dyal delivered lectures. Anti-British pamphlets were prepared and printed at a Government press.

Barely had this revolutionary conspiracy been nipped in the bud than serious disorders, due, however, mainly to economic causes, broke out in another part of the Punjab. The Mahomedans, who form the bulk of the population in the backward North-Western districts around Multan, took advantage of the panic caused by plague and the flight of many Hindu shopkeepers and moneylenders in the villages to start a sudden campaign of looting and violence against their "capitalist" rivals. It spread like a prairie fire, and troops as well as police had to be called out, and it took them a whole month to restore order. Though it was in its origin little more than an unusually severe explosion of the bitter hatred ever latent between Mahomedans and Hindus, it was certainly aggravated by mischievous reports about the war and German successes which induced the belief that British power was waning. Very significant was the evidence given during the trial of the ringleaders at Multan that two of the worst called themselves "the big German" and "the little German," and professed to represent the Kaiser and the Crown Prince, from whom they had received special authority to loot the Hindus!

Fresh light was thrown upon Germany's

connexion with the *Ghadr* movement by the trial at Mandalay in 1916 of another batch of disaffected Sikhs who had selected Siam and Burma for their operations. At the same time as one body of revolutionists were making their way direct to India in the Komagata Maru another stream turned off to Manila and Siam. So long as the United States remained neutral, Manila was a very convenient base for the conspirators, and the German Consul gave them abundant encouragement and assistance. They were even promised the cooperation of 300 Germans who were to be collected there "for the Siamese affair." A Sikh, called Jadh Singh, who had been sent over to America from Berlin by Har Dyal, was the prime mover, and two German agents, Jacobsen and Boehm, whom he met in Chicago, had told him that men were being sent to Siam to fight for Germany and a military expedition was to be directed from there against India. Bangkok became the headquarters of this branch of the *Ghadr* movement, which had already made a good many recruits amongst the Sikhs who had settled in considerable numbers in Siam, and some of the bolder spirits extended their propaganda into Burma, both by sea to Rangoon and by the longer land route up the Menam Valley to the Upper Burma frontier. Others tried to link up with German agents in Shanghai through the Chinese province of Yunnan and the Yangtse Valley. An approver stated that he was to have met German officers in Yunnan, and the capture, on another part of the frontier early in 1917, of important German officers who had come across the Pamirs with large sums of money from Peking, showed this statement to have been by no means improbable. After lengthy preparations which were repeatedly disturbed by the vigilance of the British authorities, the "military expedition" against India resolved itself into two small parties, loaded up with Browning pistols and explosives and an abundance of *Ghadr* literature. Some of them were promptly arrested on reaching Burma by men of a native mountain battery whom they tried to seduce, and a few escaped back to Siam. If the Germans built more upon "the Siamese business" and gave it more direct assistance and support than to "the Punjab business," it collapsed even more miserably. But it fully justified the judicial pronouncement that "Germany has consistently encouraged the *Ghadr* movement, has, in some instances,

financed it, has, in part, assumed the direction of its activities, and has been prepared to act in concert with the revolutionists and to use them for her own ends in the war, and that the revolutionists have eagerly associated themselves with Germany." Moreover, after the United States joined in the war, judicial investigations were conducted under Federal authority into the *Ghadr* con-

during his State entry into Delhi on the first anniversary of the Imperial Durbar. The Benares conspiracy trial at the end of 1915 disclosed the existence of a murder organization, in which the prime mover was Rash Behari Bose, an educated Hindu, at one time in Government service, who had figured prominently in the Delhi proceedings, but successfully eluded arrest. One of the religious



[Official photograph.]

**ON THE WESTERN FRONT: A SIRHIND BRIGADE BACK FROM A SUCCESSFUL RAID.**

spiracy which had until then continued its activities in California, and the indictments ultimately returned included the names of the former German Consuls at San Francisco, Chicago, Honolulu, and Manila, as well as of officials of the German Embassy in Washington.

But if the Berlin plotters pinned their faith principally upon the *Ghadr* movement, in which a small section of the Sikhs were their chief dupes, they certainly did not lose sight of the group of Hindu revolutionists with whom Har Dyal always remained in close touch, and who had first introduced the bomb as a political weapon into India. Their most notorious exploit had been the attempt to kill the Viceroy

rites performed by the conspirators, whose favourite deity was, as apparently with all Hindu revolutionists, the goddess Kali, consisted in cutting up white pumpkins which represented the heads of the European victims to be sacrificed to her. Rash Behari had brought rifles, revolvers and explosive substances from Calcutta, and he taught his adepts that whatever they did was done by God, and that they should not therefore be held responsible for their deeds. Their only duty was to be ready to die for their country, and the hour had come, as risings were imminent all over the United Provinces. Bengal, too, was a province to which the Germans naturally turned their attention.





ON THE MESOPOTAMIAN FRONT: INDIAN OX-CARTS BRINGING UP STORES.

For ever since the troublous years 1905-1910 there had been a good deal of seditious lawlessness amongst the younger generation, chiefly in the shape of political dacoities, *i.e.*, looting by organized bands, who do not even shrink from murder. Government got, on the track of certain remittances from Germany, and towards the end of 1915 information was received that German agents in Batavia were collecting arms and ammunition to be dispatched in a neutral vessel and landed in the Bay of Bengal for distribution to a party of Bengalee conspirators who were to raise the standard of rebellion on Christmas Day. This plot ended in a complete fiasco, for the neutral vessel was unable to run the gauntlet of the British naval patrols, and the police were waiting for the revolutionists and received effective help from the local peasantry in laying them by the heels. Nevertheless the anti-British propaganda and the constant dissemination of adverse rumours concerning the war kept the embers of Bengalee disaffection smouldering, and an increasing number of political outrages, which in 1915 included five murders and seven dacoities in Calcutta itself, necessitated the vigorous use of the preventive powers conferred upon the authorities by the Defence of India Act, and the internment of several hundred suspicious characters.

Whilst in India itself the endeavours of Indian seditionists to tamper with the loyalty of the native troops rarely met with any success, and only in the case of a very few individuals, whom their comrades were generally prompt to denounce, there is evidence now to show that they had a hand in the serious Singapore mutiny which broke out on February 15, 1915—*i.e.*, almost on the same date on which the general rising in India was to have started in the Punjab. The Fifth Light Infantry Regiment was on the point of embarking for Hong Kong, and had only that morning been satisfactorily inspected by the general officer commanding, when at 3 p.m. a shot fired at the Regimental Guardroom at the Alexandra Barracks proved the signal for an outbreak which was only quelled after several days' sharp but intermittent fighting and considerable loss of life. The British officers of the regiment, several of whom were brutally murdered by their men, were taken completely unawares, and no one in Singapore, where the large Chinese community was celebrating the Chinese New Year with the usual festivities and daylight fireworks, appears to have anticipated any trouble. European civilians and ladies who were taking their usual afternoon drives were struck down

without any warning. The only military forces at once available were very small, and the loyalty of the mountain battery of the Malay States Guides stationed at Alexandra Barracks was at least open to suspicion. But a landing party from H.M.S. Cadmus and the European Volunteer force gallantly held up the mutineers and occupied the most important points for the protection of the city and the harbour until the arrival of reinforcements from French, Japanese, Russian and further British warships summoned by wireless. Within a week order was completely restored, and 614 mutineers had been captured or surrendered. The circumstances which determined or precipitated the outbreak remained obscure. But it is known that emissaries of the *Ghadr* movement had landed at Singapore on their way from America to India, and some of those subsequently concerned in "the Siamese business" had actually been in Singapore when the mutiny broke out. The mutineers themselves lost no time in throwing open the gates of a German prisoners-of-war camp near the barracks, and tried to demonstrate their friendly intentions by shaking hands with the prisoners, but the latter were at first, it is said, too terrified to respond, and

only some hours later did a few of them avail themselves of the opportunity to escape, and most of them were easily recaptured. According to the official report, there were no signs of any organized plan of action amongst the mutineers, or of any real leadership. Nor did the whole regiment mutiny. A body of 80 men came over almost at once, and some other batches soon gave themselves up. The worst mutineers seemed to be dazed after their first excesses, and, though for some hours Singapore was almost at their mercy, they took no advantage of their opportunity. After the second day they were mainly on the defensive, and mere fugitives thereafter. Those who came in and gave themselves up at an early stage were afterwards given an opportunity of redeeming their reputation in Africa, and they made good use of it.

It was to the Indian Mahomedans far more than to the Hindus that Germany, as we know, had for some time past looked to overthrow, or at least to paralyse, British power in India, if she could only succeed in dragging Turkey after her in a war against Great Britain, and the German Press did not conceal its exultation when Turkey actually joined the Central Powers on October 31,



SIAM: THE KING HEADING A PRO-WAR PROCESSION IN BANGKOK.





WITH THE FORCES ACTING AGAINST THE GERMANS IN EAST AFRICA,  
Indian Troops entraining on the Ugaoda Railway.

1914. For the entry of such a great Mahomedan Power into the war in alliance with Germany was bound to distress and disturb the Mahomedans of India, who already disliked the idea of fighting on the same side as Russia, whom they regarded as the sworn foe of Islam. The Viceroy lost no time in issuing a full statement of the British case, and a subsequent announcement that Great Britain would not interfere with the holy places of Arabia or with the port of Jeddah, in the Red Sea, which serves Mecca, so long as the pilgrim traffic was not molested by the Turks, went far to reassure the Mahomedan community, whose loyalty to the *raj* never seriously wavered, even under so severe a strain upon their religious allegiance to the Sultan as Khalif. Only a section of the "young" Mahomedan politicians who had been in close contact with the "young" Turks showed signs of restiveness, and some of the newspapers they controlled were so little able to conceal under a thin veneer of lip loyalty their sympathy with the Turks and their admiration for Germany that Government had to suppress their organs, and two of their most mischievous leaders, Mahommed Ali, the editor of *The Comrade*, and his brother Shaukat Ali, were interned by Lord Hardinge under the provisions of the Defence of India Act. After that there was no reason to doubt the absolute failure of the hopes enter-

tained by Germany that the unfurling at her behest of the Prophet's flag at Constantinople and the proclamation of a *Jihad* or Holy War against the Allies would shake the staunch allegiance of Indian Mahomedans to the British Crown. The revolt of the Sherif of Mecca against the Sultan produced an unfavourable impression on Mahomedan opinion, but chiefly in its religious bearings, whilst the increasingly close co-operation of the Moslem League and the advanced Mahomedan politicians who control it with the Congress Extremists continued to be regarded with distrust by the bulk of the Mahomedans, and especially by the conservative land-owning classes and by the religious teachers of the community, to whom the orthodoxy of the "young" Mahomedan Indians was as suspect as that of the "young" Turks, who exploited Pan-Islamism for their own political purposes. A few very rare cases of desertion from Mahomedan regiments at the front, or of attempted mutiny in India itself, cannot for a moment weigh in the scale against such overwhelming proofs of unalterable loyalty as were given by the Mahomedan soldiers who form a large proportion of the Indian Army, in every field and not least against the Turks themselves, as well as by the rulers of the great Mahomedan Native States, Hyderabad, Bhopal, and others, and indeed by the vast majority of the 66 million

Mahomedans owing allegiance to the King-Emperor.

It was on and beyond the borders of India that the results of Turkey's entry into the war were at times, or threatened to be, far more serious. What German and Turkish agents and the roving bands they enrolled and the direct pressure of Turkish armies on the western frontier of Persia tried to achieve, or temporarily achieved, in the Shah's dominions has already been recounted. But these hostile activities were not confined to Persia. They spread from Persia into Afghanistan and directly or indirectly contributed not a little to the frequent disorders which we had to repress by force along a great part of the north-western frontier of India. Since the Afghan campaigns of 1878 and 1879 our relations with Afghanistan had always remained amicable, though they were at times rendered difficult by the traditional Asiatic rivalry between Russia and Great Britain. The Ameer Abdurrahman, who had ruled for 20 years with a rod of iron, and transformed Afghanistan from a feudal into a despotically centralized military State, died in 1901 and bequeathed to his eldest son Habiballah, who succeeded him, not only his unquestioned authority throughout Afghanistan, but also his policy of friendship towards the British Empire and the British rulers of India whom he had learnt to trust. The new Ameer remained faithful to that policy, and from the visit he paid to India in 1906 he brought back with him both the recognition of a royal title which flattered his amour-propre and a very shrewd appreciation of British power and of India's military resources. Moreover, whilst the Anglo-Russian Convention specifically guaranteed the position of Afghanistan and the rights of the Ameer, it destroyed the possibility, upon which Afghan rulers had always reckoned, of being able on occasion to play off their two formidable neighbours against one another. The Ameer never consented to acquiesce formally in the Convention, though Great Britain had undertaken to obtain his assent, but he knew what it meant and he tacitly accepted the consequences. The Government of India controlled under treaty the foreign relations of Afghanistan, and when war broke out in 1914 the Ameer was at once advised to maintain complete neutrality and to exert himself to preserve order on both his

Indian and Russian frontiers. To this he readily agreed. But when, after Turkey went to war, he was urged to take steps to arrest any religious effervescence amongst his turbulent tribes, his own position became one of considerable difficulty, as fanaticism is strong amongst Afghans and the country was gradually overrun with Germans and Turks, who made their way in through Persia and were reinforced by German and Austrian prisoners of war escaped from Russian Turkestan. The wildest rumours were spread abroad that the German Emperor had turned Mahomedan and that large Turco-German armies were on the march



[Official photograph.]

**IN PALESTINE: GURKHA RIFLEMAN  
FIRING A LEWIS GUN.**

to overthrow the British and to restore the supremacy of Islam in Asia. In the early summer of 1915 a large party of Germans and Turks, giving themselves out to be a Special Embassy from the Kaiser and the Sultan, crossed over from Khorassan into the province of Herat and were sent on by the Afghan Governor to Kabul, where the Ameer kept them at arm's length. Whilst treating these unwelcome guests with formal courtesy and hospitality, he renewed to the Viceroy his assurances of friendship and his desire to maintain neutrality. That a large proportion of his subjects and some of his most influential Sirdars were anxious to see Afghanistan espouse, as they called it, the cause of Islam there can be no doubt. His next brother, Nasrullah Khan, who



had always rallied round him all the elements of more or less latent disaffection and especially those of Mahomedan fanaticism, was believed to be at the head of the hostile faction, whilst a younger brother, Mahommed Umar Khan, who enjoyed over his elders the advantage of royal descent through his mother as well as through his father, sat on the fence



[Official photograph.]

**INDIAN RIFLE CORPS SIGNALLER IN PALESTINE.**

waiting for developments, though holding ostensibly with the Ameer rather than with Nasrullah. The bulk of the Afghan people, who ever look down with lustful eyes from their inhospitable mountains on to the rich and

fertile plains of Hindustan, thought their opportunity had come to harry and plunder them again as in the good old days of Indian anarchy. The Ameer's zeal for his religion had been suspect with a good many of his people since his journey to India, where he was known to have joined freemasonry at Lord Kitchener's instance, and, though there are many freemasons amongst Mahomedans in India and in other parts of the East, it still savours of infidelity with the Afghans. The Ameer also commonly wore European clothes, and he had adopted many European fashions and new-fangled inventions, such as motor-cars, electric light and even golf, which were not wholly atoned for by the regularity with which he performed his daily prayers and attended the mosque on Fridays. His manner of handling disaffection was less ruthless than was his father's, and he felt, perhaps rightly, that he must rely on the methods of Oriental statecraft rather than on those of Oriental despotism in order to hold his own against the combination of adverse forces that confronted him. He allowed anti-British sentiment to let off steam in the fiery articles of the only newspaper tolerated in Kabul, which, strangely enough for an organ of Mahomedan fanaticism, was edited by a Hindu seditionist who had taken refuge in Afghanistan, and to the arguments put forward sometimes in his own Council, urging him to throw in his lot with Turkey and



**CHANDNI CHAUK, DELHI: FRUIT AND TOY STALLS.**

Germany, he seems generally to have returned a soft answer, counselling prudence and delay, and reminding his hot-headed advisers that, unlike them, he had been in India and seen for himself the might of the British *raj*. At the same time he knew how to impress upon the Government of India the value of his support, and obtained from them in the autumn of 1915 an increase by two lakhs of his annual subsidy. The Russian retreat and the British reverses in Mesopotamia, followed by the fall of Kut, magnified, of course, tenfold by the hostile agencies established in Afghanistan, exposed the Ameer to renewed pressure from the forward party as well as from the frontier tribes on the Indian border, who looked to him to lead them against the infidel. But his temporising policy was not to be shaken. In due course the Turco-German "Embassy" received a significant hint that the climate of Kabul might prove too trying for them if their stay was prolonged, and they were politely sent about their business, only a certain number of Austrian prisoners of war being allowed to remain in Kabul in a sort of honourable internment. The resumption of our offensive in Mesopotamia and the occupation of Baghdad dealt a severe blow to the anti-British party to which it was doubtful whether the military collapse of Russia after the Revolution would afford a sufficient offset.

The Ameer's loyalty not only preserved the neutrality of Afghanistan, but contributed very largely to avert a general conflagration along the north-western frontier, the great mountainous no-man's-land which lies beyond the boundary of direct British administration and equally beyond effective reach of the Ameer's authority. The fierce but poverty-stricken tribes that inhabit this region are fanatical Mahomedans, but since the creation of a separate North-West Frontier Province by Lord Curzon they had been successfully bound over to keep the peace, though with occasional lapses, by a judicious admixture of force and persuasion in the shape of allowances dependent upon good behaviour. At first the war aroused very little excitement amongst the more lawless tribes, whilst a fine example of loyalty was set by the more remote but important chieftains of Khelat and Chitral and Hunza and Nagar, as well as by the great tribes of the Khyber and Swat and Tochi. Even at the beginning of 1915 the Waziris assured the Government of India that they could safely withdraw all their

troops, as the tribesmen themselves would guarantee the maintenance of peace and order. But when the news of Turkey's entry into the war slowly filtered into these distant regions



LIEUT.-COLONEL SIR GEORGE ROOS  
KEPPEL, G.C.I.E.,

Chief Commissioner and Agent to Governor-General, North-West Frontier Province, India, since 1908.

some of the most fanatical Mullahs, whose influence is always formidable in times of crisis, began to preach the Holy War. As far back as 1898 it was the echo of the Turkish victories over the Greeks in the preceding year that resounded in the general frontier rising which brought about the Tirah campaign. The outbreak of hostilities between the British and the Turks in alliance with a great European nation whose War Lord was alleged to have embraced Islam was a still more potent stimulus to their ignorant fanaticism. The Mohmands began to raid into the Peshawar district, first in November 1914, and then in January 1915, and in April, encouraged by letters falsely professing to proceed from the Ameer and proclaiming a Jihad, a *lashkar* about 6,000 strong, consisting partly of Afghans, entered British territory and had to be dispersed at Shabkadr by a strong force, which lost three British officers killed and one wounded besides some 60 other casualties. In January 1915, and again two months later, the Khostwalis tried to



raid in force into Tochi and were only dispersed after heavy fighting by the Banu movable column and part of the North Waziristan Militia. In August the Swatis attacked a British camp at Chakdara and the Bunerwalis, joined by some of the Hindustani fanatics, whose stronghold in Buner had become a regular Alsatia for Hindu seditionists from all parts of India as well as for disaffected Mahomedans, made repeated attempts to invade British territory by the Ambela Pass. The Mohmands too, in spite of the Ameer's warnings, resumed hostilities at the beginning of September at the instigation of the notorious Baba Mullah, who collected 10,000 followers, recruited from different clans. They were beaten back near Hafiz Khor on September 5, but they received considerable reinforcements from Afghan territory, and a succession of raids into the Peshawar district culminated in an attack in December on Charsada, where nearly the whole bazaar was burnt down. During the cold weather, however, the economic blockade of the Mohmand, Bunerwali and Upper Swat valleys and retaliatory measures taken against the tribesmen within British territories who were suspected of aiding and abetting the raiders, proved sufficiently effective to induce the refractory tribes to ask for terms and pay a heavy fine before the return of the hot weather in April 1916. Nevertheless, the turbulent spirit of the Mohmands had not yet been quelled, and by the autumn they had again collected a *lashkar* 6,000 strong, which was finally broken up on November 14, when aeroplanes were for the first time used by us in frontier warfare, to the terrified amazement of the tribesmen. The blockade continued to exhaust their powers of resistance, and they

finally made their submission in August 1917. Meanwhile a still more serious outbreak had taken place in the Mahsud country, and in March, April and May large bands attacked British detachments with no small measure of success, and on one occasion surprised and overwhelmed a British convoy with very slight losses to themselves. In June operations on a large scale were undertaken with several brigades advancing from Tank, in which aeroplanes again played a conspicuous part. The Mahsuds hastily retired, and when pursued into their own country they sued for an armistice and finally took the oath of submission on August 10, 1917. Peace was at length restored all along the frontier, but the whole of those two and a half years were a period of great anxiety for the Government of India, whose military resources had been drained to dispatch and maintain the large Indian forces sent to France and Mesopotamia and other theatres of war. Fortunately the outbreaks, which could in every case be traced to the fanatical preachings of individual Mullahs of great local influence and reputed sanctity, had remained more or less isolated movements, and the powerful Afridi tribe around the Khyber, without whose cooperation no frontier rising can acquire homogeneity, had never wavered in their loyalty. This result was largely due to the extraordinary personal influence with the Afridis of that distinguished Pathan, the Nawab Sir Abdul Qayyum, Indian Political Assistant to the Commissioner of the North-West Frontier Province, and to the sagacity and experience of Sir George Roos Keppel himself, who had long been successful Warden of the Marches from Peshawar.



## CHAPTER CCXXVI.

# THE CAPTURE OF JERUSALEM.

REVIEW OF PALESTINE OPERATIONS JULY-DECEMBER, 1917—GENERAL ALLENBY'S PLANS—TURKS' DEFENSIVE PREPARATIONS—MINOR OPERATIONS—BRITISH OFFENSIVE OPENED—BOMBARDMENT OF GAZA—BEERSHEBA CAPTURED—STIFF FIGHTING ON THE HEBRON ROAD—OUTER DEFENCES OF GAZA CAPTURED—TURKISH CENTRE SMASHED AT SHERIA—GAZA EVACUATED BY THE ENEMY—TURKISH ARMY IN RETREAT—YEOMANRY CHARGE AT HUJ—THROUGH THE LAND OF THE PHILISTINES—BATTLE OF EL MUGHAR—TURKISH FORCES CUT IN TWO—YEOMANRY CHARGE AT ABU SHUSHEH—JOPPA CAPTURED—ADVANCE INTO JUDEAN HILLS—ENVER AND FALKENHAYN AT JERUSALEM—GERMANS LEAVE THE CITY—NEBI SAMWIL RIDGE WON—HEAVY ENEMY COUNTER-ATTACKS—THE WELSH HORSE AT BETH HORON—BRITISH ADVANCE RESUMED—HEBRON AND BETHLEHEM OCCUPIED—NORTHERN DEFENCES OF JERUSALEM CAPTURED—FLIGHT OF THE TURKS TO JERICHO—SURRENDER OF THE HOLY CITY—GENERAL ALLENBY'S OFFICIAL ENTRY—FREEDOM FOR ALL FAITHS—TURCO-GERMAN ATTEMPTS TO DISCOUNT LOSS OF JERUSALEM—GRATITUDE OF THE ARABS—EFFECT ON THE JEWS—ATTITUDE OF THE VATICAN AND OF GERMAN CATHOLICS.

GENERAL ALLENBY opened the campaign which, in seven weeks, resulted in the surrender of Jerusalem by an attack on Beersheba on October 31, 1917. Since the failure of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force to capture Gaza in the spring of 1917 there had been little fighting on the Palestine border, but on both sides great preparations had been made for the coming contest.

The military situation in the autumn of 1917 in the outlying provinces of the Turkish Empire was not favourable to the Ottomans. They had lost Baghdad in March, 1917, and had since suffered serious reverses both on the Tigris and Euphrates; the Russian Army of the Caucasus, though inactive, still held Armenia, while the forces of the Grand Sherif of Mecca, who had proclaimed his independence in the summer of 1916, had advanced to the south-eastern borders of Syria. In these circumstances the Turks were compelled to defend Palestine to the utmost of their ability, and in the six months

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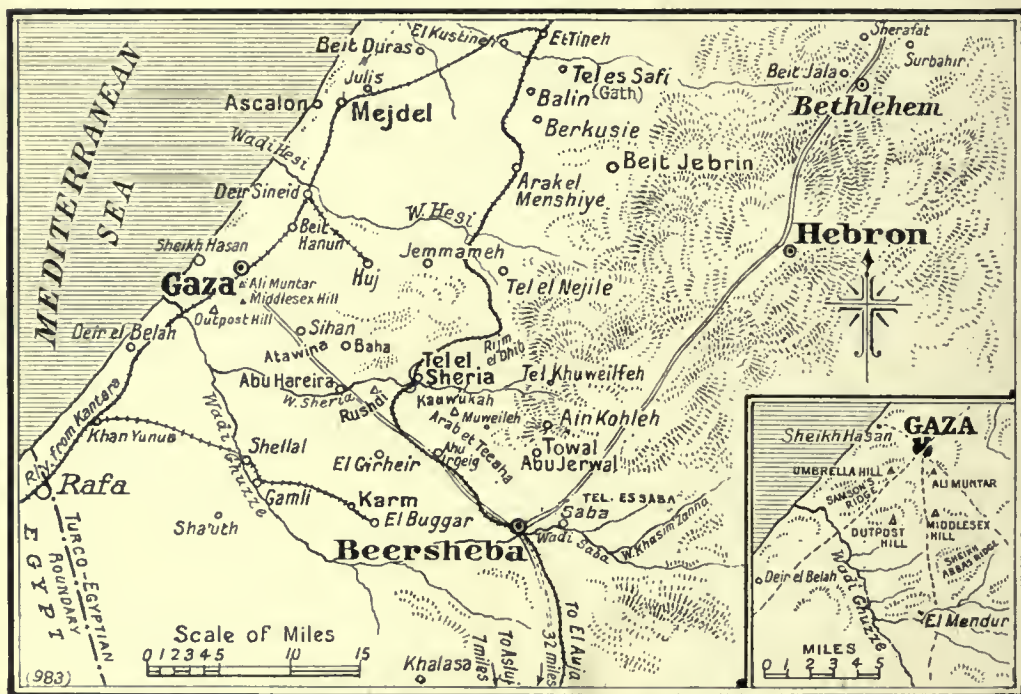
between the second battle of Gaza and the opening of General Allenby's offensive they had constructed most formidable defences on the Gaza-Beersheba front. Strategic railways were built, the garrison of Southern Palestine was largely reinforced and provided with powerful artillery; the air service was enlarged and rendered very efficient. In all these measures the Turks had the active help of the Germans, who were concerned for the preservation of their own interests in the Near East. General von Falkenhayn had been sent to Syria as military adviser of the Turks and from his headquarters he watched developments both on the Mesopotamia and Palestine fronts. If the Turks succeeded in holding the British at Gaza and Beersheba, von Falkenhayn was credited with the intention of endeavouring to recapture Baghdad. The Turks, however, failed to hold their lines in Palestine.

Beersheba was captured the same day it was attacked, and during the next few days the enemy line was crumpled up and the Turks



driven from their positions between Beersheba and the Mediterranean, Gaza itself being taken on November 7. The swiftness with which General Allenby followed up these first successes completely disorganized, for a time, the Turkish Army. The British made rapid progress across the Plain of Philistia, seized the junction of the Jerusalem-Damascus railways, cut the enemy forces in two, and on November 17 occupied Jaffa (Jöppa). The disorder into which the Turks had been thrown enabled General Allenby's troops to penetrate the gorges of the Judean Hills from the west with com-

The Turkish Army, which had now recovered its moral, took up very strong positions a few miles north and east of Jerusalem. The loss of Jerusalem, next to Mecca and Medina the most sacred of cities to Moslems, was a severe blow to Ottoman prestige, and a serious effort was made to recapture it. For this attempt the Turks were reinforced by a considerable part of two German divisions. A determined attack was made on the British lines on December 27. It failed, and the British in a counter-attack captured positions which rendered Jerusalem secure against any



SOUTHERN PALESTINE AND PHILISTIA.

parative ease, and on November 21 the Nebi Samwil ridge, five miles north-west of Jerusalem, was seized. On December 4 an advance was made from the south through the hill country, and Hebron was occupied on the 6th. There had meantime been severe fighting in the Nebi Samwil district, but as the force from the south got nearer Jerusalem the troops at Nebi Samwil advanced (December 8). The next morning the troops from the west gained positions astride the road running north to Shechem, and those from the south reached on the east the road to Jericho. The Turks had already fled, and Jerusalem, thus isolated, was surrendered (December 9) by its mayor. Two days later General Allenby, on foot, made his formal entry into the city.

surprise attack. Meantime the forces of the King of the Hedjaz (the Sherif of Mecca) had become increasingly active on the left flank of the Turks and by the beginning of February 1918 had established themselves in the neighbourhood of the Dead Sea. The capture of Jericho by General Allenby on February 21 practically completed the conquest of Southern Palestine.

General Allenby, when he took over the command of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force from Sir Archibald Murray (June 28, 1917), had instructions to report upon the conditions in which offensive operations might be undertaken in the autumn or winter. After visiting the front and consulting Sir Philip Chetwode, the commander of the Eastern Force, he submitted



*(H. Waller Barnett, photograph.)*

**GENERAL SIR EDMUND ALLENBY, G.C.M.G., K.C.B.,**  
 Commander-in-Chief Egyptian Expeditionary Force operating in Palestine.

proposals in the second week of July. They received the approval of the War Cabinet. His plan was to strike the main blow at the eastern end of the Turkish line and thus obtain an open flank against which to operate. General Allenby put on record that this plan was based on General Chetwode's "appreciation of the

situation and on the scheme which he put forward to me on my arrival in Egypt." And to General Chetwode's "strategical foresight and tactical skill," added the Commander-in-Chief, "the success of the campaign was largely due."

Much had to be done before the plan was ready to be executed; fortunately the period



of preparation included the summer months, when the heat is so great in the Sinai-Palestine borderlands that campaigning is usually avoided—though the Turks in 1916 had invaded Sinai in August, the very hottest season. For the purposes of the offensive two striking forces were formed out of the troops of the Eastern Force; one, which General Chetwode personally directed, was to operate at the eastern or Beersheba end of the front. The other, with Major-General E. S. Bulfin, C.B., in local command, was on the western or Gaza side. Major-General Sir H. Chauvel commanded the mounted troops, composed of Yeomanry, Australian Light Horse, New Zealand Mounted Rifles, and Indian cavalry. The infantry divisions chiefly employed were the 53rd (Welsh), which was with Chetwode, and the 54th (Lowland), with Bulfin. The Imperial Camel Corps was with the Beersheba force. Major-General L. J. Bols, C.B., D.S.O., was Chief of Staff to General Allenby and performed "brilliant work."\*

\* Other officers whom General Allenby specially mentioned were Major-General J. Adye, Deputy Adjutant General, Major-General Sir Walter Campbell, Deputy Quartermaster-General, and Brevet Lieut.-Colonel G. P. Dawnay, Brig.-General, General Staff. Chetwode, Bulfin and Chauvel all held the temporary rank of Lieut.-General.

The decision not to make the main attack at the Gaza end of the line was fully justified by the character of the Turkish defences. Gaza had been made into "a strong modern fortress, heavily entrenched and wired, offering every facility for protracted defence." Beyond the immediate environs of Gaza, following roughly the road to Beersheba, the Turks had constructed a series of works known as the Sihan group, the Atawina Ridge works, the Baha group, and the Hareira-Sheria group. By the end of October these works had been joined up, and formed a practically continuous line from the Mediterranean to a point south of Sheria. Then, after a gap of some  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles, were the defences covering Beersheba. Beyond Beersheba was a considerable desert area where the Turks had no troops. The forces they had still farther west, to the south of the Dead Sea and along the line of the Hedjaz railway, took no part in the campaign; they had enough to do to meet the attacks of the Hedjaz Arabs.

Including the gap between Sheria and Beersheba the Turkish front was about 30 miles long. The enemy's communications were good and any threatened point of his line could be easily reinforced. Beersheba was connected by railway with Sheria and the north, and



GAZA: A STRONG TRENCH WELL PROTECTED WITH CACTUS.



CAMEL AND CATERPILLAR IN THE DESERT.

another railway crossing the Plain of Philistia came to Beit Hanun, only five miles north of Gaza. A short branch line served Huj, a place nine miles north-west of Sheria and  $8\frac{1}{2}$  miles north-east of Gaza, where the Turks had a huge depôt. Roads fitted for motor traffic connected several of the defence systems. The Turks, too, had the great advantage of occupying fertile, well-watered land. With the British it was otherwise. The Egyptian Expeditionary Force was in the desert, or at best, near the Gaza end, "in the strip with verdure strown, which just divides the Desert from the Sown." Its front extended for 22 miles, from the sea south of Gaza, more or less along the line of the Wadi Ghuzze to Gamli, some 15 miles west of Beersheba, and 10 miles from the nearest point of the Turkish defences. Except in the small sector near Gaza, where only a mile or so separated the Turkish and British trenches, General Allenby was not able to get within effective striking distance of the enemy until his very elaborate preparations were complete. These included a supply of water sufficient for a week or more to the troops which were to operate in the desert.\*

\* The first attack on Gaza, when success was in sight, had to be abandoned through lack of water.

The difficulties to be overcome to maintain the Expeditionary Force in the desert were dealt with in the chapter on the first battles of Gaza (Vol. XIV., Chap. CCXVI.). These difficulties did not become less as time passed :

Practically the whole of the transport available in the Force\* (wrote General Allenby), including 30,000 pack camels, had to be allotted to one portion of the Eastern Force to enable it to be kept supplied with water, food, and ammunition at a distance of 15 to 20 miles in advance of railhead.

In consequence of the deep sand, and the steep banks of the wadis which scored the ground behind the British front, little use could be made of motor transport—there was not a good road in all the lines of communication. What could be done by extending the railways was done. From Khan Yunus a branch line had been built to Shellal. It was now carried on, as rapidly as material could be brought by the overburdened main line from Egypt, towards Karm—a place midway between Shellal and Beersheba. Another line was begun from Gamli to El Buggar, a spot somewhat nearer Beersheba than Karm.

While preparing for the offensive a number of minor operations were carried out.

On the night of July 20–21 a raid was made on the trenches south-west of Gaza, the Turks losing 102 in

\* That is, the whole army in Egypt.





BEERSHEBA.

killed and 17 in prisoners, besides a machine-gun and trench mortar. In another night raid later in July 20 Turks were killed. Again, on the night of August 8-9, British patrols had a lively bayonet fight with the enemy, whose losses were between 30 and 40, the British casualties being 22. Then, after several more raids, on August 30, the British line south-west of Gaza was advanced, with very slight loss, on a front of 800 yards, despite heavy artillery and machine-gun fire. And throughout this period of preparation the Turkish positions at Gaza were kept under fire; many direct hits on guns and emplacements being obtained.

On their part the Turks kept observation on the British lines mainly by aeroplane, but occasionally mounted patrols, chiefly from the Beersheba end of the front, were sent out, their object being to interfere with railway construction. On July 19 two regiments of cavalry advanced to El Buggar but were driven back to Beersheba; in September other cavalry raids were made by the Turks.

Towards the end of October arrangements for the offensive were completed. Every endeavour was made to induce the enemy to expect the chief attack at the western end of his line, and with this object a violent bombardment of the Gaza defences was begun on October 27 by the land batteries—in the matter of artillery the British were at length ahead of the Turks. On October 30 the French warship *Requin* and monitors and other ships of the British squadron under Rear-Admiral T. Jackson joined in the bombardment.

General Chetwode's force had meantime begun to make for its objectives. Its blow was to be struck against the left flank of the main Turkish position—that of Sheria-Hareira. But

before that position could be attacked in flank "the capture of Beersheba was a necessary preliminary, to secure the water supplies at that place and to give room for the deployment of the attacking force on the high ground north and north-west of Beersheba" (General Allenby). As in the days of Abraham and Isaac, Beersheba still had wells and water, but it was an outpost on the desert's verge, and beyond it, on the British side, was a parched and thirsty land.

Beersheba is built in a hollow in the hills, the Wadi es Saba, a tributary of the Wadi Ghuzze, running by its southern side, and it was protected on the west and south by works three to five miles distant. These works were in hilly country, were well made, heavily wired, adequately manned and provided with many field and machine guns. There were other defences immediately east of Beersheba, but on the south-east the Turks trusted to the desert for protection. They were prepared for a frontal assault, but they had not calculated upon what happened. General Chetwode attacked Beersheba not only from south and south-west, but his mounted troops made a wide flanking movement and attacked the place from the east. This flanking operation decided the fate of Beersheba.

The Bavarian officer, Kress von Krossenstein, who still commanded the Turkish Army in Southern Palestine—Djermal Pasha, the Commander-in-Chief in Syria, was then at Damascus—had not guessed General Allenby's

plans, but he was apprehensive about the extension of the British railway towards Sheria and Beersheba, and in the latter part of October the enemy cavalry were repeatedly sent out to reconnoitre. The Turkish cavalryman was no mean foe. "A fine horseman, a fine shot, especially at long ranges, his drill and discipline are perfect, and you have to get up very early in the morning to catch him out" (Captain Lord Apsley, M.C.). These cavalrymen now pushed reconnaissances 12 and 15 miles into the desert. Thus on October 23 a squadron of Gloucester Yeomanry, taking up an outpost line south-east of El Sha'uth just before dawn, encountered a strong enemy patrol and had a sharp skirmish. On another occasion a regiment of Turkish cavalry was pushed out to enable certain staff officers, who followed in motor cars, to reconnoitre from a high hill. As it happened, Yeomanry had been sent to seize the same hill. There was a lively little fight, the Turks being driven from the hill "before the generals at the top had more than five minutes to look around." Apart from diversions such as these the Turks, just before the British offensive opened, made one

reconnaissance in force, thus described by General Allenby:

On the morning of October 27 the Turks made a strong reconnaissance towards Karm from the direction of Kauwukah [Sheria sector], two regiments of cavalry and two or three thousand infantry, with [12] guns, being employed. They attacked a line of outposts near El Girhoir, held by some [London] Yeomanry, covering railway construction. One small post was rushed and cut up, but not before inflicting heavy loss on the enemy; another post, though surrounded, held out all day, and also caused the enemy heavy loss. The gallant resistance made by the Yeomanry enabled the 53rd (Welsh) Division to come up in time, and on their advance the Turks withdrew. [The British casualties were under 100.]

These enemy activities did not disarrange General Chetwode's movements. The attack on Beersheba had been fixed for October 31, and by the previous evening his troops were concentrated in positions of readiness. They were to make a night march, deploy and attack at dawn. There were two movements, that of the troops which were to make the frontal assault, and that of the mounted men who were to make the flanking movement. The first body consisted of two divisions, infantry and dismounted Yeomanry, with the Imperial Camel Corps and a cavalry regiment to guard



DJEMAL PASHA AT HIS HEADQUARTERS IN PALESTINE,  
With German officers in attendance.



the flanks. This force moved in an inner circle, and was transported by rail as far as possible. The mounted troops, Australian Light Horse, New Zealand Mounted Rifles and Yeomanry, started on the night of October 27 from their bases at Sha'uth and Shellal and rode south and east to Khalasa and Asluj, oases where the water supplies had been developed. Here they had a brief pause before the last stage of the desert ride.

The infantry marched during the night in accordance with the arranged programme,

guns themselves cleverly concealed. But the troops advanced with great spirit. Bombers sprang into the trenches through gaps in the wire, and where the wire had not been broken the men tore it down with their hands. Within an hour the fight was over and all the enemy positions south of the Wadi es Saba captured. Later in the day (7.30 p.m.) the enemy works north of the wadi were also seized. During this last stage a Lewis gun detachment charged and captured a Turkish field battery.

Meanwhile the mounted troops had played



ENGINEERS BORING FOR WATER.

every unit reaching its appointed place by the assigned hour. The action began at daybreak, and after a brief bombardment London Territorials stormed Hill 1070, on which were the enemy's advanced works. Among the 90 prisoners taken was a German machine-gun crew. Field guns then methodically bombarded the enemy's main works, partially destroying the wire entanglements. Clouds of dust raised by the Khanseen (the wind from the desert) from time to time compelled the British gunners to pause, and to this cause may be attributed the survival of part of the enemy's wire. At 12.15 p.m. the assault was ordered. In moving to their positions the troops, London Territorials and dismounted Yeomanry, suffered a good deal from the hostile artillery, the firing of the Turkish guns being very accurate and the

their part. They left Khalasa and Asluj in the evening of October 30 on their great ride, and by 5 a.m. on the 31st had reached their positions east of Beersheba, some high hills immediately east of the Wadi Khasim Zanna. The troops from Khalasa had covered 25 and those from Asluj 35 miles. "The column," said an officer with the Khalasa force, "was 15 miles long. Our wallets were full of corn for the horses. We rode through endless dust—a full moon, but the dust so thick you could not see five yards." No enemy was encountered, the wide sweep into the void served its purpose, and when the horsemen appeared on the hills overlooking Beersheba the surprise of the Turks was complete. The Yeomanry took up positions around Khasim Zanna, acting as the reserve force, while the Australians and New Zealanders went into

action. Between Khasim Zanna and Beersheba was an almost flat plain commanded by rising ground to the north and flanked by Tel es Saba, a hill some 1,000 feet high, beneath which lay a village of the same name. Saba hill and village, and the hills to the north, through which runs the road to Hebron, were garrisoned by the enemy, who also had trenches immediately east of Beersheba. General Chaytor, in command of the Anzac Division, sent a force of Australian Light Horse north to secure positions on the Hebron road. This force was engaged by Turkish cavalry throughout the day, but achieved its object and kept the enemy well in check. Another force, of Australians and New Zealanders, attacked, dismounted, Tel es Saba. The hill had been strongly fortified, and was held in considerable strength; moreover, it could only be approached from the south by crossing the steep banks of the Wadi es Saba. Here there was stiff fighting for several hours, but late in the afternoon the hill was captured.

Various attempts had been made by small parties of Australians and New Zealanders to cross the open plain and reach Beersheba. Hitherto they had not succeeded, but in a dismounted attack the village of Saba was taken, soon after the fall of the redoubt on the hill. Evening had fallen, the moon was again up and Beersheba was not yet taken. Some

anxiety began to be felt, and at 7.30 p.m. the Yeomanry in reserve at Khasim Zanna received orders to attack the place. They moved out, but the work assigned them was already done. Half an hour earlier the 4th Australian Light Horse had settled the matter. They had cleared some houses held by the enemy. Then mounting their horses they charged straight for the town. They galloped over two trenches, each 8 feet deep and 4 feet wide, using their fixed bayonets as lances against the Turks who filled them, and rode, cheering, into Beersheba, where the enemy soldiers still in the place promptly surrendered. A very strong position was thus taken with slight loss, and the Turkish detachment at Beersheba almost completely put out of action. Some 500 dead Turks were found on the battlefield and about 2,000—among them some Germans—were taken prisoners. The total British casualties were fewer than the number of prisoners. The Turks had, at the last moment, endeavoured to destroy their military stores, but they had not time to complete their task. The British captured 13 guns and a large quantity of corn, clothing, and equipment of all kinds. A direct hit from a heavy gun on the railway bridge over the wadi had prevented the removal of the rolling stock; a train was found standing in the station loaded with goods.



EARLY ARRIVALS AT BEERSHEBA STATION, NOVEMBER 1, 1917.



Beersheba was more famous than beautiful,\* had more mud huts than substantial buildings, but it was in Palestine. The British troops for nine months had been gazing at the Promised Land; now they had set foot in it. But if Beersheba was in general a poor place there was plenty of evidence that the troops had been well cared for; the Germans had seen to that. There were excellent dug-out quarters for man and beast, shell-proof except from direct overhead bombing. Though the Turks left in a hurry they found time to set many booby-traps—engines and trucks mined so that they blew up when moved, bridles hung on the walls attached to bombs, and so on. The famous wells “which our father Abraham digged” were there, and many others. They had all been mined, but the ever resourceful Engineers coped with that difficulty, and a pipe supply of water was found uninjured. Nevertheless, the water available was not so abundant as had been anticipated, while the transport arrangements proved unexpectedly difficult.

Complete success had attended the opening move of the campaign, but a brief pause had to be made before General Chetwode could launch his attack on the Sheria-Harcira position. In the interval, both to prevent Kress von Kressenstein sending reinforcements to Sheria and to draw the hostile reserves to the Gaza sector, it had been determined to make an assault on a section of the defences of that city in the early morning of November 2. The bombardment of Gaza had been going on continuously, and not only of Gaza but of the railway north of the town, and all military establishments which could be reached by the guns of warships.

The work of the Allied squadron attracted little attention at home, but it was extremely valuable, and was not performed without loss. On November 1 the enemy gunners obtained several hits on the French warship *Requin*, killing 9 and wounding 29 of her crew. The damage to the vessel was comparatively slight and the *Requin* continued in action. Two British ships were less fortunate. A destroyer and a small monitor were torpedoed and sunk by a German U-boat, 33 lives being lost.

The part of the Gaza defences which it had been decided to attack extended from a height

on the eastern side of Samson's Ridge known as Umbrella Hill (2,000 yards south-west of Gaza) to Sheikh Hasan, on the Mediterranean (2,500 yards north-west of the town). The front of the attack was about 6,000 yards, Sheikh Hasan, the most distant objective, being over 3,000 yards from the advanced British line. The intervening ground consisted of sand dunes, in places 150 feet high; the sand very deep and heavy going. Owing to the considerable distance between the British trenches and the Turkish positions the attack was made before daylight, and as Umbrella Hill flanked the enemy trenches farther west it was chosen as the first objective. In the evening of November 1 very heavy concentrated fire was poured for a short time upon Umbrella Hill. Then at 11 p.m. the hill was stormed by a part of the 52nd (Lowland) Division. Directly the Turks at Gaza learned that Umbrella Hill was lost they bombarded it and the British front line. Apparently they thought they had to deal with a local affair only, for after two hours the bombardment ceased, “in time,” said Sir E. Allenby, “to allow the main attack, which was timed for 3 a.m. (on Nov. 2) to form up without interference.” The attack was made by Scottish and East Anglian troops, and a composite force consisting of West Indian and Indian troops and detachments from the French and Italian contingents.\* They were helped by a number of Tanks, which, though they found some difficulty in getting over the heavy sand, proved of value. The Turk fought well but was defeated, the British gaining nearly all their objectives, including Sheikh Hasan. The enemy had suffered severely from the preliminary bombardment and his losses in the action were heavy. Some of his trenches were almost full of dead. Among the 450 prisoners were over 50 officers—the prisoners stated that one of their divisions lost 33 per cent. of its effectives and had to be replaced by a division from the general reserve. The British losses were also considerable but “not in any way disproportionate to the results obtained” (General Allenby). The Italian troops of the composite battalion had some warm fighting, and showed great gallantry.

The demonstration against Gaza had attained

\* The phrase from “Dan to Beersheba”—respectively the northern and southern limits of Palestine—is as old as the times of Samson (who was of the tribe of Dan).

\* These contingents were themselves composite, and included Regulars, Territorials, and Africans. Some of the French troops had been at Verdun, and had enjoyed a six months' rest at Beni Sela, a village near Khan Yunus. The district had a particular interest for the French, for here Napoleon in his Syrian campaign narrowly escaped capture.

its object. Nevertheless Kress von Kressenstein, fully alive to the danger which threatened his lines by the capture of Beersheba, at once employed all his immediately available reserves in a counter-stroke, seeking to draw a considerable body of British troops north of Beersheba; that is, into the exceedingly rough and hilly country, with very scanty water supplies, leading to Hebron. Had this scheme succeeded General Chetwode would have been left with

Sheria and occupied Abu Irgeig, while the 53rd (Welsh) Division and the Imperial Camel Corps moved due north of Beersheba—12 or 13 miles in excessive heat—and mounted troops, Yeomanry, Australians and New Zealanders, were sent along the Hebron road. The object of the movement north of Beersheba was to secure the right flank of the British during the Sheria offensive, but it fitted in with the enemy's plan. There was a good deal of fighting in the



A "TANK" AT THE GATES OF GAZA.

forces too weak to break the enemy's centre at Sheria-Harcira—"in which case Beersheba would only have been an incubus of a most inconvenient kind." At first circumstances seemed to favour the Turks. As already stated, the water and transport difficulties at Beersheba proved greater than had been anticipated, and the attack on the Sheria works, first planned for November 3 or 4, had to be put off for a day or two. Flank positions, necessary for this attack, were, however, seized. On November 1 Irish troops moved direct along the road to

hills on November 2 and 3; by the evening of the 3rd it was ascertained that the Turks were entrenched along the line Ain Kohleh-Tel el Khuweilfeh (*i.e.*, between Sheria and the Hebron road). The enemy forces in this sector were being increased, and on November 4 and 5 several determined attacks were made on the mounted troops. There were then on this front the 19th Turkish Division, the remains of the 27th Division (which had held Beersheba), part of the 16th Division, the majority of his cavalry and infantry ("depôt" troops) drawn from Hebron,





AN INDIAN RIFLE BATTALION ON THE PALESTINE FRONT.  
A Company in reserve.

All the Turkish attacks were broken, but the fighting was of a severe and apparently confused character. The country itself, though it had open and cultivated patches, was, as one officer aptly put it, more fitted for Bersaglieri than cavalry. For every hill top, almost, there was a struggle.

We had another scrap the other day (wrote a yeomanry officer); we took a hill and held it for two days under rather trying conditions. It was very hot, there being a south wind all the time, and we had no water for man the second day, or beast either day; also we had Turks on three sides, and were shot at and shelled from front and both flanks. On the evening of the second day we were attacked by about 1,800 cavalry and infantry, supported by their guns, but beat them off. My squadron did not come in for this—a squadron of Worcesters relieving us. A squadron of the Warwicks had to beat them [the Turks] off one place with the bayonet.

Another picture of this campaigning in the hills was given by a brother officer.

We had (he wrote) to gallop across a couple of miles of country under their machine guns, but with a wide extension you get very few men hit, and we got across with only one or two casualties. That afternoon we held an outpost line, and my squadron [of Gloucestershire Hussars] was sent on to take up a night line—it was a rather difficult, anxious job as I hadn't seen the country by daylight. Awful country, all rocks, and I soon got rid of my horse as I got "on the floor" twice, and finished the night on foot. Next morning we hoped we should be relieved, but had to hold the line all day. It was very difficult to keep touch with the units on my flank as mounted patrols could only move at a walk in the bad ground, and dreadful country to keep direction in. At 3.30 we were relieved [but] just as we were going off to Beersheba we were rushed back as the Turks had counter-attacked. It fizzled out after an hour, but we had two officers hit and a good many men. At 9 I was definitely relieved by New Zealanders. . . . After a 12-mile march we got to water; neither men nor horses had had a drop for 42 hours, and the horses had had loads on the whole time. I've been pretty thirsty

once or twice, but never like that. We had had a Khamseen blowing all day, and had had a hard day and night.

In one instance Turkish infantry, with bayonets fixed, advanced to attack a hill held by New Zealand Mounted Rifles, but were caught by machine-gun fire and dispersed after suffering some 300 casualties. The work of the men behind the front was equally strenuous, and if the water supply was scanty it was not for lack of effort on the part of the engineers. The difficulty was not so much the absence of water as its inaccessibility. The wells were fairly numerous but generally deep, and gear was lacking.

You cannot imagine what it is (said an officer writing home) when you start to try and water perhaps 5,000 horses (at one well 150 feet deep) that have had no water for 24 or 48 hours and the only gear you have is a canvas bucket at the end of a rope! The wells are good enough to supply the villages, but a Cavalry Division soon dries them up.

Mr. W. T. Massey, one of the two Press correspondents with the British force, writing on November 4 told how General Allenby, visiting the front line, saw Australian Engineers preparing a water supply. "Some men were working stripped to the waist, others were quite naked. The General was told that these soldiers had worked for 24 hours on end in order to get a good flow. He thanked them personally."

The spirit of these Australian Engineers was typical of the whole force, and in the fighting in the hills north of Beersheba the Welsh infantry and the Imperial Camel Corps had

borne a full share. The net result of the four days' contest was that the British had held what they had gained, but were threatened by a superior and highly mobile enemy. Kress von Kressenstein's manœuvre to entangle the British in the hill country between Beersheba and Hebron appeared to have succeeded.

General Allenby, however, had not swerved from his original intention. If the troops in the hills had not been able to make the progress at first hoped for, they formed a sufficient protection for the right flank to justify the attack on Sheria, and the Irishmen and London Territorials now at Abu Irgeig were ready on the left flank. The moment for striking the main blow had come.

It was decided to give battle on November 6. The principal enemy works were on a two-mile-long ridge known as Kauwukah, some 10 miles west of Beersheba, and immediately east of the railway to Sheria. Abu Irgeig was five miles south-east of Kauwukah. The plan of battle was for dismounted yeomanry to attack the extreme east of the Kauwukah works, and the London and Irish troops the south-east. On the right flank the 53rd Division was to attack

Tel el Khuweilfeh, 11 miles north-east of Beersheba, and, the enemy's resistance being broken, the mounted troops were to sweep westward behind Sheria. The battle proved to be the decisive action of the campaign. Before nightfall the enemy was beaten, Gaza had been rendered untenable and the whole Turkish line had to give way.

By dawn the dismounted yeomanry had taken up positions opposite the eastern end of Kauwukah and as soon as it was light they advanced to the attack. The enemy works, two deep trenches 3,000 yards apart, connected by a series of strong points, were stubbornly defended, but the yeomen stormed the first trenches with great dash and by one o'clock had possession of the second line also. Most of the British casualties, slight in comparison with those of the enemy, were sustained by the yeomanry in the early hours of the day. During the afternoon the same troops captured several detached works along the line of the railway and reached the Wadi es Sheria. While they were thus "making good" the London and Irish regiments brought forward their guns to wire-cutting range and bombarded



*Palestine official photograph.*

#### SPRING AT SOLOMON'S POOL.

The photograph shows a canvas trough for watering animals.



the south-eastern face of Kauwukah. Mr. Massey, who witnessed the battle, wrote :—

From a high hill I saw Kauwukah being torn by a tornado of high-explosive shells. The lower slopes showed traces of early grass, and this slight grateful colouring was unharmed by the gunfire, but the higher yellow slopes, which hid the Turks in the trench-scarred surface, were bruised and battered every few seconds. Behind our line miles deep were columns of transport and ammunition, raising dust in clouds of great height. The swift eddies of the wind lifted woolly puffs of sand and sent them whirling across ridge and flat, resembling waterspouts in tropical seas, an illusion which the mirage accentuated.

Soon after midday the Londoners and Irish went forward to the assault, which was completely successful. They followed this up by the capture of the Rushdi system, between Sheria and Hareira, and by 5 o'clock had occupied Sheria railway station. Troops sent farther to the left reached as far as Hareira redoubt, where the Turks, though isolated, still held out. Australian and New Zealand mounted troops held in reserve at Beersheba had meantime been sent west of the railway to pursue the large masses of the enemy retreating towards Huj.

Away in the hills north-west of Beersheba the 53rd Division had captured Tel el Khuweilfeh, but the sweeping movement behind Sheria which was to have followed could not be carried out. A vivid impression of what "capturing Khuweilfeh" meant was conveyed in a letter

written by Father Kavanagh, and published in *The Tablet*. The padre, who was a few weeks later mortally wounded, was invited by the colonel "to see the scrap, it's the chance of a lifetime." The troops then held a hill opposite Khuweilfeh.

I pushed to the top of our hill (wrote Father Kavanagh) and lay down in the firing line; then we crawled on our bellies to the sky-line, over which bullets were spattering at long range. "Now, lads," said the officer in command, "prepare for a move." And a moment after we all pelted over the top together, then down and down a steep and stony descent, and ten minutes later found ourselves lying panting and bewildered in a gully at the foot. The sergeant-major stood up and shouted, "I want six men to go forward; then another six." I ran with the third lot, and we rushed down that gully, then up another, and began to climb a most precipitous hill, banded every few yards with courses of alluvial rock, and just behind which the enemy were waiting. Presently an aeroplane swooped down on us, discharging a machine-gun, which knocked out several of our fellows. I got to the top and lay down amongst them behind the sky-line, over which bullets were pouring. Just before we got there the colonel was wounded, through the chest.

The Turks, who were in much superior strength, counter-attacked and drove the infantry from one hill, but the Welshmen, determined to avenge the heavy losses they had suffered in the second battle of Gaza, reattacked and again carried the hill. They next seized another height, which improved their position a good deal. This was the beginning of a contest which lasted all day.

The infantry, said a War Office report, in conjunction



BRITISH TRENCHES AND SAND-BAG DEFENCES BEFORE GAZA.



AMMUNITION CAMELS SHELTERING IN A WADI NEAR GAZA.

with mounted troops were heavily engaged in beating off repeated counter-attacks made by at least two hostile divisions\* with the object of cutting us off from our water supply at Beersheba, and thereby stopping our turning movement. Our troops, which included Welsh and English county regiments, behaved splendidly, and the Turkish casualties were enormous.

In this manner General Chetwode's right wing frustrated the strongest effort made by the Turks on November 6 and enabled the main attack to develop without interference. Its work on November 2-6 "paved the way," as General Allenby said, "for the success of the attack on Sheria." The troops concerned had "drawn in and exhausted" the Turkish reserves. As an example of the severity of the enemy losses, and of the valour with which they fought, General Chetwode reported that in front of one position alone the Welshmen buried 500 Turks.

The Hareira redoubt was taken very early on November 7, and Sheria itself was captured by London Territorials by a bayonet charge at 4 a.m. The Turks there had four field guns in action. A battalion commander at the head of a party of volunteers charged the foe, bayoneted the gunners and captured all the guns. A bridgehead was then formed over the Wadi Sheria. The Turks made several unsuccessful counter-attacks on the Londoners, who in the evening pushed forward their line to high ground a mile north of the town. During the

day the mounted troops, who now included Yeomanry, in moving on Huj and Jemmameh also met with strong opposition from rear-guards. The cause of this stubborn resistance was the decision taken by Kress von Kressenstein on the news of the fall of the Sheria works. The centre of his line was gone, irretrievably as he knew, and Gaza was in danger. He therefore resolved to draw back his whole army. The movements of the main force had to be masked as far as possible by rear-guards.

Gaza was evacuated on the night of November 6, and so skilfully that "though a certain amount of movement on the roads north of Gaza was observed by our airmen and fired on by our heavy artillery [there was] nothing indicating a general retirement." By this prompt retreat von Kress avoided a battle, for another attack on Gaza was the natural sequel to the Sheria battle, and an attack had been ordered for the night of November 6-7. The attack was to be from Outpost and Middlesex hills on the south and east to the sea on the west. Small garrisons had been left at Outpost and Middlesex hills by the Turks. They offered but slight opposition to the attacking force, West Country regiments and Indians, while by the coast East Anglian troops on the morning of November 7 found none to bar their way. Patrols pushed forward reported the enemy gone. Ali Muntar and the other defences were occupied, and the old capital of the Philistines, before which the British had been held up for nine months, was now won.

\* These were known as the Lightning and Tempest Divisions.



The troops as they marched over the battle-fields of March and April found many evidences of those combats—wreckage of all kinds, and many unburied bodies. In some instances, however, decent burial had been given by the Turks to fallen foes. The fate of many men who had been posted as “wounded and missing” was now made clear; among those who it was ascertained had been killed in the second battle of Gaza was Lieutenant C. J. Law, K.O.S.B., the second son of Mr. Bonar Law, the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Gaza had fallen, but from Beit Hanun, five miles north, and from the Atawina works to the east, Turkish artillery fired sullenly on the lost city, making a special mark of Ali Muntar, against which 12 hours earlier the British guns had been firing heavily. That the Turks would try to hold Atawina long enough to give time for their army to retreat was clear, and an effort was made to cut off the rearguards holding it and neighbouring trenches known as the Tank\* system. The effort failed, for once again the enemy slipped away—during the night of November 7. Many scattered parties of Turks and much booty were, however, captured, and by the morning of November 8 the whole of the original Turkish front was in possession of the British.

Unlike Beersheba, Gaza was an objective worth gaining in itself, or rather as the key of Syria, giving an open way into the Plain of Philistia.

Of the five chief cities of the Philistines (wrote a correspondent) Gaza alone, through all the ages, had retained its importance. This had been recognized by the Germans, who had established schools there, schools which they regarded as the most distant outpost of Teutonic *Kultur*. These schools had been closed, and life in the town was not pleasant. The townsfolk, mainly Arabs, were in no favour with the Turks. Early in March the mufti, a member of the venerated Hussein family, had been arrested, taken to Jerusalem, and hanged outside the Jaffa gate for alleged treason. Later most of the civilians were deported. Houses were ruthlessly plundered for the furnishing of dug-outs and the lining of trenches. Our troops found sandbags made of rich silks. And on evacuating Gaza the Turks did what further damage they could—in particular choking all the wells. When the British entered the town through the orchards, palm trees and cactus, which formed a deep fringe of green around it, there was disappointment that such a famous place presented so poor an appearance. But there was evidence of former greatness in the marble used to beautify modern buildings—columns and slabs taken from ancient temples and churches. Relics, too, of the Crusades were found. The west end of the town, an intricate maze of narrow, dirty streets, was promptly dubbed Bolgravia by the soldiers, all of

whom seemed to make a point of climbing Ali Muntar (“the watch tower”), to which, according to tradition, Samson carried the gates of the city.

Major (temporary Lieut.-Colonel) W. D. Kenny, Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, was appointed military governor of Gaza, and the clearing of the wells and the sanitation of the town was taken in hand. The extension of the main railway from Egypt, which then ended at Deir el Belah, some 10 miles south of Gaza, was also begun at once—one of the most urgent problems confronting the Expeditionary Force, as the area of operations extended north, was that of transport. The weather had broken in the Judean Hills and the roads were already much worn by the Turks in their retreat.

Whatever the difficulties, immediate advantage was taken of the enemy retreat. Hardly had Gaza been entered than Indian cavalry pressed towards Beit Hanun, which place, as the terminus of the Gaza railway, had been the headquarters of von Kress. The Turks held Beit Hanun all day on November 7, but at nightfall their rearguard withdrew. Already the enemy line of retreat was threatened, for Scottish troops were north of Beit Hanun. General Bulfin, to whose “determination in attack, and dash and drive in pursuit” was due, said General Allenby, “the swift advance to Jerusalem,” had sent these Scots, Highlanders and Glasgow men, north as soon as Gaza was in his hands. After an exhausting march through the sand dunes lining the coast they crossed the Wadi Hesi by 5 p.m.—towards dusk. A hayonet charge by the Glasgows secured some high ground north of the wadi; the enemy made several attempts to retake the position but could not dislodge the Scots. The enemy rearguards on the extreme right of the Turkish Army were thus doing their best to delay the British advance, and more to the centre the defenders of the Atawina and Tank positions were able, as already stated, to get away during the night of November 7.

But the rout of the enemy was soon complete. November 8 was a great day for the British. Both from the Gaza and Sheria sectors they struck hard at the Turks. A smart action was fought near Beit Hanun, where Indian Imperial Service Cavalry captured many prisoners and a heavy howitzer, and the Scottish infantry at the Wadi Hesi greatly distinguished themselves. Field and heavy artillery had been drawn through the ankle-

\* From one of the British tanks burnt out in the April battle. Its wreck stood on a sand dune right on the skyline.

deep sand from Gaza, and a ridge overlooking Deir Sincid was seized. Deir Sincid was the starting point of the short branch line to Huj, along it the Turks were bringing back guns and stores, and they made great efforts to stave off its capture. Four times the Turks drove the Scots off the ridge, and four times the Scots retook it. A fifth attack by the Turks failed and the Scots were left in possession of a position which commanded the railway.

On the Sheria sector November 8 was marked by equal, if not greater, success. On this

whelming odds at Katia and were not loath to have the chance of getting their revenge on the Turk. The charge, made by the advance party, ten troops of Worcesters and Warwicks, was, said General Allenby, "at once carried out in face of heavy gun and machine-gun and rifle fire with a gallantry and dash worthy of the best traditions of British cavalry." At the first sign of the approach of horsemen the enemy gunners, who were covering the retreat of their infantry, turned their fire on the yeomanry. These gunners were Austrians



CAPTURE OF A TURKISH HOWITZER BY YEOMANRY.

sector the chief honours fell to London Territorials and a yeomanry brigade. The Londoners, whose marching was wonderful, thrice drove back the enemy, and prisoners, guns, ammunition and stores fell into their hands. Meanwhile the yeomanry on their right had come up and the last position held by the Turk rearguards covering Huj was reached. The Turks, who had not had time to remove half their stores from Huj, were blowing up or setting on fire what they had to leave behind. The officer commanding the Londoners, reconnoitring the position, saw a considerable body of the enemy on the march about 2,500 yards away. He ordered the yeomanry to charge the retiring enemy. The yeomanry, consisting of Worcesters, Warwicks and Gloucesters, wished for nothing better. They remembered their gallant, but hopeless, stand against over-

and they stuck to their guns to the last. The yeomen, in open ranks, swept forward, raced down a slope, crossed a flat, took the final rise at a great pace and then made straight for the guns. There were twelve pieces, three 5.9 howitzers and nine field guns. The crews fired as fast as they could load, and, as the foe drew near, set their fuzes at zero so that the shells should burst at the mouth of the gun. But nothing stopped the yeomen and every one of the Austrians was sabred at his gun. Then riding on again the Warwicks and Worcesters captured three machine guns which had been firing upon them. These machine guns were at once turned on the retreating Turkish infantry, who were now too far off for pursuit. In this charge the yeomanry casualties were about 40, including two squadron leaders. Lieut.-Colonel Wiggin, D.S.O., who led the



charge, was wounded. Two squadrons of Gloucesters, which galloped up in support, arrived just as the engagement ended.

The battlefield, wrote one of the officers, was exactly like what one has always pictured it would look like—men and horses lying all around; one horse was lying across the trail of a gun. I shall always regret my bad luck not being in it; it was a most splendid and gallant show. Their casualties are heavy. I put the squadron on to pick up wounded, and dug two big graves with my men and Turk prisoners, a horrible job.

Huj and Jemmameh were captured and the mounted troops established contact with the forces advancing from Gaza. The evidence

had not been serious, but to guard against surprises the Imperial Camel Corps was sent to a position (Tel el Nejile) where it would be on the flank of any further counter-stroke from the hills. The British business was for the time with the plain.

November 9, 10 and 11 were days of very great activity, much hardship, many minor enterprises, but no big actions. The enemy, meantime, had come to a halt, and had strung out his forces, or, as General Allenby said, "all the remainder of the Turkish Army which



GAZA.

showed that the Turkish Army had been thrown into considerable disorganization, and orders were therefore issued to the cavalry on November 9 directing them "to press the enemy relentlessly." The objective given was the point where the railway from Beersheba going north to Damascus crossed the railway to Jerusalem. With this junction seized the Turks' Jerusalem Army would be cut off from that under von Kress. The one direction whence there might be a threat to the British was from the hill country north of Beersheba, where the 53rd Division still held Khuweilfeh. On November 8 the enemy force there—4,000 to 5,000 strong—had withdrawn towards Hebron, but it returned on the 9th, and on the 10th made a demonstration, not against Beersheba, but towards Arak el Menshiye, a place north-east of Huj. The demonstration proved futile and the Hebron Turks again retired. This threat to the British right flank

could be induced to fight"—estimated at not more than 20,000 rifles—in an effort to stop the British before they could reach the junction station of the Beersheba-Jerusalem railways, to which came his main supplies from the north. The new Turkish front extended, some 20 miles, in a semi-circle from the village of El Kubeibeh—south-west of Ramleh—on the north, by El Mughar, some five miles west of the railway junction, and then south-east to about Beit Jebrin. From Beit Jebrin the line was loosely continued to Hebron. This line, as far as Beit Jebrin, General Allenby arranged to attack on November 13.

In bringing the British forces up to the new Turkish line the problem had become one of supply rather than manœuvre, the provision of water and forage being particularly difficult. Some of the horses were without water for 84 hours; the troops also suffered much from thirst, but they were men "whom no danger



RUINS OF ASCALON.

or hardship could daunt," and they pressed toward the mark, overrunning in their course the Land of the Philistines.

The advance was made by the 52nd Division, Indian, and other troops along the coast, cavalry screens going ahead; by the Londoners and Yeomanry more to the centre, and by Australian and other mounted troops on the right. The Welshmen (53rd Division) remained at Khuweilfeh on guard along the Hebron road. The Scottish troops, who, always ahead of the railway, had marched the whole weary way across the desert from the Suez Canal, performed marvels. In four days and nights they made three bayonet charges and advanced 25 miles. The day after their capture of the railway by Deir Sineid (on November 8) in their march north they passed parallel to Ascalon, which once famous city of the Philistines and later the chief port of Palestine is now desolate—though its magnificent ruins testify to its former greatness. But it is inhabited and was held by a small body of Turks. As the Scots could not tarry, eight or nine mounted men, an officer and some grooms, dashed off, made a brave show, and received the submission of the enemy. Later in the day infantry and guns moved into Ascalon, examining with interest the ruin wrought by Saladin and Bibars and remembering, perhaps, that here Richard the Lion Hearted made his last conquest. Meantime a small party of horsemen had galloped on to Mejdal, on the railway some miles inland, secured it and prevented the Turks there from blowing up a big ammunition dump. The Scots came up to the Wadi

Sukerier on November 10, near Beit Duras, and found Australian Light Horse ahead. The Sukerier, one of the rivers transverse to the British line of advance, has steep banks, and the Turks were showing some disposition to make a stand by it. A charge by Glasgow men cleared the high ground north of Beit Duras and the Turks gave way. The mounted troops then pushed on to Ashdod (Esdud), where in the time of the Judges the Ark of the Covenant had been brought into the temple of Dagon. The crossing of the Sukerier at Jisr Esdud was forced on the 11th, and by the morning of November 12 the 52nd Division and the other troops of the British left wing were in touch with the new line which the enemy was hastily strengthening.

The Londoners by November 12 had also come within striking distance of the enemy. Some infantry, moving in support, covered 29 miles in one day on one bottle of water. On the edge of the mountains of Judea, on the right of the infantry, Yeomanry pushed forward to Gath—they seem to have made no difficulty in identifying the city of Goliath with the ruins at Tel es Safi—where the Gloucesters were unexpectedly attacked by 2,000 to 3,000 Turks who had been brought by rail from the Ramleh junction station to hold up the enemy as long as possible. With odds of 10 to 1 against them the Gloucesters held out until the infantry were able to take over the line. The advance was delayed but a few hours. A little farther east the Australian Light Horse did very good work and took up a wide front. Their advanced troops were also





THE APPROACHES TO JERUSALEM.

counter attacked on November 12, and driven back a short distance, but the enemy did not press farther forward.

For five days the British, in an area covering 600 square miles, had been pursuing the Turks. From Beersheba and from Gaza the enemy had removed nearly all the civilians, but in their flight they left behind many of the inhabitants of the other towns and villages: as many able-bodied men as they could they pressed into their service. The natives everywhere welcomed the British troops, and that the great majority were glad to be rid of Ottoman rule there was no doubt.

It is an extraordinary sight (wrote an officer) following up a defeated army. The amount of stuff the Turks left behind was marvellous—many thousands of rounds of ammunition, guns, carts, railway material, everything. Near Gath alone we got £3,000 worth of engineers' stores, besides any quantity of gun ammunition. The men love collecting the loot and wearing Turkish clothes, etc. Dead bullocks and horses were everywhere. It was only lack of water for our tired horses that stopped us. Many died, many had to be evacuated to mobile veterinary stations. . . . Our horses are nearly done, men hungry and tired, but cheerful as usual; half rations yesterday, none to-day. . . . Open rolling country, rather hot, flies had round the villages. The Turks burn as much of their stuff as they can.

Such were some of the incidents of the pursuit. In the new battle for possession of

the vital railway junction, the chief attack was to be in the plain south-west of Ramleh. At dawn on the 12th cavalry pushed considerably north of the Sukereir; Burkah was also seized and the right flank of the Turks was almost turned. The enemy's effort to guard this flank led to stiff fighting. On the British side the troops engaged included the Lowlanders (the 52nd Division), West of England Regiments, Indians (horse and foot) and a brigade of Berks, Bucks and Dorset Yeomanry.

Two Edinburgh and two Rifle Battalions (wrote Mr. Massey) attacked Burkah, an extremely difficult position prepared beforehand, consisting of two lines of perfectly sited trenches. The first had to be attacked up a glacis, then 1,000 yards of absolutely flat ground to another glacis. The Riflemen made a stirring advance, swept the Turks out of the first line, and then, supported by most accurate artillery fire, carried the second. The Edinburgh troops were counter-attacked on "Brown Hill." They were driven off, but came back, supported by Gurkhas, and retook the hill. The Turks left a large number of dead.

The attempt to prevent the British taking up advantageous ground thus ended in failure and on November 13 the general attack on the Turkish position was made. The British were now some 35 miles north of their railhead, and the Gaza railway, though now in their hands, was of little immediate use; it was of a narrow gauge, and had been badly damaged

by the fire of the British warships during the previous weeks.\* Yet supplies and ammunition and guns, including two heavy batteries, were brought up in time.

The country over which the attack took place (wrote General Allenby) is open and rolling, dotted with small villages surrounded by mud walls, with plantations of trees outside the walls. The most prominent feature is the line of heights on which are the villages of Katrah [199 feet] and El Mughar [236 feet], standing out above the low flat ground which separates them from the rising ground to the west, on which stands the village of Boshshit, about 2,000 yards distant. This Katrah-El Mughar line forms a very strong position, and it was here that the enemy made his most determined resistance against the turning movement directed

side of El Mughar. With the Lowlanders in front and the Yeomen on their right flank the Turks surrendered. Both El Mughar and Katrah were won. "A most dashing charge," was General Allenby's verdict on the Yeomen's exploit, and the whole operation was, he said, "a fine feat of arms." The Turks had fought hard; they left 400 dead at Katrah alone, while between them the Lowlanders and Yeomanry took 1,100 prisoners, 3 field and 16 machine guns.

Farther south there had been a fierce struggle near the village of Yasur.



CAMEL TEAM DRAWING A CABLE-LAYING CHARIOT.

against his right flank [which rested on the Mediterranean].

El Mughar and Katrah were attacked by the 52nd Division and Yeomanry. The Lowlanders got on to the ridge upon which, divided by the Wadi Surar, the villages lie. The Turks, entrenched behind thick hedges of cactus and among clumps of cypress trees, were dislodged, but twice regained the ridge. A third attack was made and the Scots got close to the enemy trenches. When the fight was at its hottest West of England infantry made an opportune thrust at the Turks' left, and a charge by the Berks, Bucks and Dorset Yeomanry Brigade settled the issue. For two miles, the whole time under heavy fire, they galloped across the open plain, then breasted a ridge, dismounted and attacked the enemy trenches on the northern

\* Nevertheless some help was derived from this line. "We caught three of the Turkish railway engines," said a member of the force, "and it was rather amusing getting them going and turning them to our own use."

The Turks here had dug trenches and gun pits on a small eminence. Territorials, part of a Scottish battalion (which had gained distinction in the fight of November 2 at Gaza), rushed the mound in the face of murderous machine-gun fire. The Turks in a strong counter-charge drove back their opponents. The Scots reformed, and again attacked. With bayonet and clubbed rifle they won the position. Sixty of the enemy lay dead on the ground, several with their skulls smashed.

On the right—eastern—flank of the British the fighting had not been so severe, and after the loss of El Mughar the enemy resistance weakened on the whole line. By the evening the Turks were in general retreat, part of the beaten force going north and part east towards Jerusalem. The British line extended from Et Tineh on the east by Katrah and Mughar to Yebnah and the sea. Yebnah, the Jabneel of Joshua, had been taken by the Yeomanry before their attack on Mughar. Et Tineh had been captured by Australians. Situated at the junction of the Gaza and Beersheba railways,



and only a few miles south of the junction of the Beersheba and Jerusalem railways, it contained large depôts of ammunition and other stores. These at the last moment the Turks themselves began to rifle. The looters were disturbed by an armoured motor car which dashed up with its machine guns busy; over 200 Turks were killed or wounded and many prisoners made.



[Russell.

**CAPTAIN NEIL PRIMROSE, M.C., M.P.,**  
He had held the appointments of Under-Secretary to Foreign Office (1915), Military Secretary to the Ministry of Munitions (1916), and Chief Whip (1916-17).

The Turkish army was being split up, but one more effort was made by von Kress to keep control of the railway connecting Jerusalem with the north. Infantry sent forward to "Junction Station," as the British called it, met with some opposition and were held up for the night. Early on November 14, however, it was found that the Turks had vanished. The station was occupied\* and a solid wedge of troops thrown in cut in two the enemy army. The eastern or Jerusalem part was isolated from the portion in the coast sector. Only on a line considerably farther north could the two fragments unite, and to effect that union would involve, so it seemed, the abandonment of Jerusalem. A definite stage in the advance had been reached and General Allenby thus summarized the results attained:—

In 15 days our force had advanced 60 miles on its right and about 40 on its left. It had driven a Turkish Army of nine infantry Divisions and one Cavalry Division out of a position in which it had been entrenched for six months, and had pursued it, giving battle whenever it attempted to stand, and inflicting on it losses amounting probably to nearly two-thirds of the enemy's original effectives. Over 9,000 prisoners,

\* The Flying Corps in bombing raids on this junction had obtained some 60 direct hits.

about 80 guns, more than 100 machine guns, and very large quantities of ammunition and other stores had been captured.\*

From this point Allenby's chief concern was Jerusalem. First, however, it was necessary to clear up the situation on his left flank, the flank resting upon the Mediterranean, and to this end the occupation of the country up to Joppa (Jaffa) was essential. The Turkish forces which had gone north soon showed that they were not negligible. They had retreated but five miles and enemy guns were shelling their lost Junction Station. During November 14, however, the mounted troops, followed hard by the infantry, pressed towards Ramleh and Lydda. Ekron (Akir) the last of the five chief cities of the Philistines was gathered in and the Jewish colony at New Akir found uninjured. Most progress was made by the New Zealanders, who advanced west of the Ramleh line to Ayun Kara, only six miles south of Joppa. Upon them the Turks made a strong counter-attack. "Running very quickly behind a somewhat strong gun fire, the Turks got to within 15 yards of our line, attacking with bombs and rifles, when the whole line of Auckland troops, with some Wellington Mounted Rifles, rushed forward with the bayonet. The Turks broke and fled, leaving over 400 dead as a result of the bayonet charge alone." (Mr. Massey.)

On the next day, November 15, there was another—the fourth—of those brilliant charges by mounted troops which marked the campaign. Covering the main road from Ramleh to Jerusalem, and flanking the advance of the British to Ramleh, a ridge, 756 ft. high, stands up prominently out of the low foot hills. This is the site of the ancient Gezer, once a royal city of the Canaanites and given to the King of Egypt as a dowry to his daughter on her marriage to Solomon. Near the ruins, in the village of Abu Shusheh, a Turkish rearguard had established itself. Infantry attacked the ridge from the west, while the Berks, Bucks and Dorset Yeomanry moved to the south. At first the Turks fought stoutly; but seeing the movement of the yeomanry endeavoured to retire. It was too late. Sweeping over the level ground at a great pace the yeomen galloped up the ridge and got among the Turks with the sabre. The rout of the enemy was

\* By December 9 the guns captured, apart from machine guns, had increased to over 100, and more than 20,000,000 rounds of rifle ammunition and 250,000 rounds of gun ammunition had been seized. Over 20 aeroplanes had been destroyed by British airmen or burnt by the enemy to avoid capture.

complete. Four hundred and thirty-one dead Turks were counted on the ground, and 360 prisoners and one gun were taken. Thus twice in two days the Berks, Bucks and Dorset Yeomanry had charged mounted and on each occasion had won their objectives. They suffered losses, among the killed

The capture of Abu Shushah marked the end, for a few days, of the Turkish resistance in the coast region. Ramleh, which had been the main enemy headquarters, was occupied on the afternoon of November 15, and Lydda, the reputed birthplace and burial place of St. George, the Patron Saint of England,



IN PALESTINE: BRINGING IN A CAPTURED GERMAN AEROPLANE.

being Captain Neil Primrose, M.C., M.P. (Royal Bucks Hussars), younger son of Lord Rosebery. Mr. Primrose was one of the most brilliant of the younger generation of politicians, and thrice during the war had held important offices in the Ministry. But preferring his military duties he had, after service in France, gone to Egypt early in 1917. He was buried in the garden of the French convent at Ramleh.\*

\* Major E. A. de Rothschild, a brother officer in the Bucks Yeomanry and a cousin of Mr. Neil Primrose, was mortally wounded and died on November 17.

before the night fell. At Lydda 300 Turks surrendered and at both towns were large quantities of abandoned material. The remains of five aeroplanes were discovered. Neither town had suffered greatly and the inhabitants showed much hospitality to the victors. The advance from Lydda to Joppa met with no resistance. Australians and New Zealanders rode quietly into the seaport of Jerusalem on the evening of November 16. Of the genuineness of the welcome given the British by the



townsfolk there was no doubt. Within a few days several of the Jewish inhabitants who had been forcibly deported the previous March and had hidden in the neighbourhood returned to the town. None of the buildings of Joppa had been injured, but the magnificent orchards around it had been thinned, and some entirely destroyed, by the cutting down of the famous orange trees for fuel.

General Allenby pushed a few miles north of Joppa across the Plain of Sharon to get a

Jerusalem, it gave a new shock to the Turkish High Command.

Until it happened, the Turkish Headquarters staff, and their German advisers, had not believed that the British could break through the Gaza-Beersheba defences and the rout of their army created the utmost alarm. Immediately it happened councils of war were held in Jerusalem to devise, if possible, means for its defence. Both Turks and Germans knew the loss of prestige which would follow its abandonment. Enver Pasha, hastening from



JOPPA, WITH AN ITALIAN CRUISER IN THE ROADSTEAD.

defensible front for his left flank on the southern bank of the Auja river and was then free to concentrate his efforts against Jerusalem, and secure his centre from possible incursions from the hills of Judea and Samaria. For the advance on Jerusalem it was necessary to pause till railway communications were more forward; meantime at Ascalon, Joppa and other places along the coast—when weather permitted—stores were landed, warships guarding against submarine attacks. To make secure the position in the centre it was, however, necessary to act at once, and accordingly on the day after the occupation of Joppa yeomanry were sent from Ramleh into the Judean hills. Though this was in reality a defensive measure and did not indicate an immediate attack on

the Imperial Headquarters at Constantinople, reached Jerusalem on November 12 and went on to Hebron, but he departed “as suddenly and silently as he had come.”\* The tyrannical Djemal, the organizer of massacres, who two months before had been the Kaiser’s guest at Berlin, started from Damascus, by the Hedjaz railway. The train in which he travelled was blown up (November 11) by the Arabs and Djemal had a narrow escape, members of his staff being killed. Djemal returned north, whence he issued orders for the forcible deportation, which meant death, of 300 Armenian families from Jerusalem.

\* This account of events in Jerusalem during the last days of Turkish rule is based in part on an article in *The Times* of February 4, 1918.

A greater figure arrived. General von Falkenhayn came from Aleppo to see if he could reorganize the Turkish Army. He was in the city during the battle at El Mughar and stayed till November 16, when he departed by road for Shechem. The Turks were left to their own devices—with the assurance, however, that reinforcements would be sent. Ali Faud Pasha, the commander of the force in the Jerusalem district, and Izzet Bey, the governor of the city, determined that they would not abandon the town without a struggle, and the defence they put up shamed the Germans. They (the Germans) had been the first to give the signal to evacuate Jerusalem. When the news reached Jerusalem on November 9 that the British were at Huj they began to leave.

The Germans and Austrians were even now (said the correspondent of *The Times*) preparing to evacuate the Holy City. During the next few days lame or exhausted Turks, wounded and stragglers, whom the German motor-lorry drivers refused to pick up, and Turkish officers shaken into truthfulness by the extent of their defeat, brought news of the victory. Turkish officials at once began to leave the city with their families. The German depôts were hurriedly emptied of unessential supplies, such as sugar, which were sold for a song. Munitions and essential stores were then sent north to Shechem, or east to Jericho. From the high towers of the city and from the Mount of Olives one could see a great double wall of dust along every road each day, and on a clear day one could see lorries, carts, and pack animals streaming up and down. Owners of the few horse carriages left asked for and obtained £10 a seat from fugitives who were making for Shechem.

Ali Faud, relieved of the presence of Falkenhayn, further purged the city. The Latin, Greek, Armenian and Coptic patriarchs and Jewish notables suspected of Zionism were sent off to Shechem (November 19). The inhabitants of Jerusalem were warned that street fighting was to be expected and that in it they would have to aid the soldiery. The city was to be defended to the last. Moreover, Ali Faud strung out a thin line of troops through the hills to regain touch with the dismembered part of the army north of Joppa. By the railway through Central Palestine and by the Shechem road reinforcements, including field guns and many machine guns, were poured down from the north by Falkenhayn and Djemal, and the new troops were some of the finest in the Turkish Army. Thus the beaten host was reinvigorated, and on November 21 the Yeomanry which had advanced into the hills of Judea received a distinct check. Hope of saving Jerusalem revived.

As already stated this first advance into the

mountains was intended primarily to protect the British forces in the plain from precisely such a danger as developed—the bringing up of enemy reinforcements and a flank attack from the east. At the same time the advance brought the British close to Jerusalem. Palestine is a



GENERAL VON FALKENHAYN,  
German Military Adviser of the Turks.

small country, and from Ramleh, at the foot of the hills, to Jerusalem is but 24 miles in a direct line. To get to Jerusalem only two main roads were available to the British—that from the south from Beersheba through Hebron and that from the west from Joppa *via* Ramleh. Strategic reasons compelled General Allenby to attack Jerusalem from the west; an advance by Hebron being intended in the later stages of the campaign. The Turks had the use of other roads, one east to Jericho and the Hedjaz Railway, a second going north to Shechem (Nablus). Since they had lost command of the Jerusalem railway it was by the Shechem road that they kept up communication with Northern Syria. Hence the first objective of the British advance into the mountains was to get a hold on that road.

To penetrate the mountains was no easy task. Some of the difficulties are indicated in the following passage of General Allenby's dispatch:—

The west side of the Judæan range consists of a series



of spurs running east and west, and separated from one another by narrow valleys. These spurs are steep, bare, and stony for the most part, and in places precipitous. Between the foot of the spur of the main range and the coastal plain is the low range known as the Shephelah.

On our intended line of advance only one good road, the main Jaffa-Jerusalem road, traversed the hills from east to west. For nearly four miles, between Bab el Wad [the Gate of the Pass] and Saris, this road passes through a narrow defile, and it had been damaged by the Turks in several places. The other roads were mere tracks on the side of the hill or up the stony beds of the wadis. . . . Throughout these hills the water supply was scanty without development.

Up the side tracks north of the main road mounted Yeomanry began to move on November 17, the given objective being Beeroth (in Arabic El Bireh=the wells), a town on the Shechem road nine miles north of Jerusalem. The advance was begun so soon after the defeat of the Turks at Mughar that the disorganized enemy bands first met did not offer great opposition. The hills themselves were greater obstacles. After a short distance it was found that the tracks were impossible for any vehicle on wheels, and a little later the horses had to be sent back—it was a desolate region, fitted perhaps for goats, but not for cavalry. "I cannot see," said one man, "why the people in the Bible made such a rattle about the country."

By the evening of the 18th one party of Yeomanry had reached Beth Horon the Lower (in Arabic, Beit ur el Tahta). They were traversing country which had been a battleground for thirty centuries; it was at Beth Horon that Joshua in the fight with the five kings of the Amorites uttered the famous invocation: "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon." Striking north from this spot, on the 20th the Yeomanry were only four miles from the Shechem road when, near Beitunia, they met with strong opposition. Next day, however, they succeeded in pushing forward another two miles. After heavy rain the weather had become bright and cold.

On November 19, two days after the Yeomanry had entered the mountains, General Bulfin sent the 52nd Division, London Territorials, West Country Regiments, and other infantry from Ramleh, along the main Joppa-Jerusalem road, Australian mounted troops moving on their right flank. Latron and Amnas (Emnaus\*) were taken without difficulty, the critical part of the advance came when the

troops entered the narrow defile by the Bab el Wad, the picturesque pass well known to travellers by road to Jerusalem. The steep sides of the pass are crowned by rocky heights clad with wild olive and other trees. Here the Turks had strong, well organized rearguards, but the gallantry of the Somerset, Wiltshire and Gurkha regiments—to whom was given the honour of the attack—prevailed, and by the evening they had cleared the defile and the British were at Saris. Having thus got through the most dangerous part of the road the march was continued on the 20th to Kuryet el Enab (only six miles from Jerusalem), which was cleared of the enemy by a bayonet charge.

From this point a modification in what was the obvious line of advance—straight forward—was made. It was the desire of the British to avoid any damage to the sacred sites of Palestine and "in order to avoid any fighting in the close vicinity of the Holy City" the main body of the infantry were turned north towards Bireh. Somerset and other West Country regiments, climbing a path so steep that no wheeled traffic was possible, came under shell fire, but secured (November 21) a footing on the ridge, nearly 3,000 ft. high, on which stands Nebi Samwil, a tomb mosque, supposed to mark the burial place of the prophet Samuel, and held in special veneration by Moslems.\* The mosque itself, a transformed Crusaders' church, fell to the British. The British had carefully avoided injuring the mosque, but the Turks, with their indifference to Islam, shelled it as soon as it passed from their hands. From Nebi Samwil Jerusalem, five miles away to the south-east, was clearly visible. While the main force secured this commanding position the troops left at Kuryet el Enab captured Kustil ridge, two and a half miles farther east.

The position on the evening of November 21 was thus apparently very favourable to the British. Infantry held Nebi Samwil and Kustil and Yeomanry were but two miles west of the Shechem road at Bireh. The next two days showed, however, that this was the limit of their advance for the time. On the 22nd the Yeomanry were heavily attacked by the Turks (whose reinforcements had arrived) and were compelled, after bitter fighting, to fall back three miles, to Beth Horon Upper (Beit ur

\* A War Office *communiqué* described Nebi Samwil as "the ancient Mizpah," but it is not the Mizpah of the covenant "the Lord watch between me and thee." Mizpah is a common name in Palestine, denoting a watch tower or observation post.

\* Nt. the Emnaus where Christ "talked with the disciples on the way."

el Foka). On the same day the Turks made two strong assaults on the British positions on Nebi Samwil. They were repulsed, and on November 23 and 24 determined and gallant attacks were made on the Turkish positions west of the Shechem road. But both attacks failed. The enemy was able to support his infantry by artillery fire from guns mounted on the hills, while, said General Allenby, "our artillery, from lack of roads, could not be brought up to give adequate support to our infantry."

and new roads, along which heavy and field artillery were hauled, built. Ammunition and supplies were brought up and the water supply greatly developed. Naturally Ali Faud Pasha did not let the British complete their preparations without interruption. The whole period was one of severe local fighting in which the Turks were constantly on the offensive—and during this fortnight the citizens of Jerusalem, who had thought their deliverance at hand, gave themselves up to despair.



CAMEL AMBULANCES.

In these circumstances orders were given to consolidate the positions gained and prepare for relief.

Summing up the results of this first advance into the mountains General Allenby wrote :—

Though these troops had failed to reach their final objectives, they had achieved invaluable results. The narrow passes from the plain to the plateau of the Judæan range have seldom been forced, and have been fatal to many invading armies. Had the attempt not been made at once, or had it been pressed with less determination, the enemy would have had time to reorganize his defences in the passes lower down, and the conquest of the plateau would then have been slow, costly, and precarious. As it was, positions had been won from which the final attack could be prepared and delivered with good prospects of success.

It was 10 days before all reliefs were completed and another four days before the advance could be resumed. In that fortnight the Engineers performed miracles. Existing roads and tracks were improved out of knowledge,

From November 27 to November 30 the Turks delivered a series of attacks directed against the left flank of the British position from Beth Horon Upper to the Nebi Samwil ridge and El Burj, a position south-west of Nebi Samwil. There was particularly heavy fighting between El Burj and Beth Horon Upper, but the Yeomanry (Shropshire, Cheshire and Welsh Regiments) and Scottish Lowland troops successfully resisted all attacks and inflicted severe losses on the enemy. At Beth Horon Upper one company took 300 prisoners. At El Burj on November 30 a battalion attacked the British position and was repulsed. Then in a counter-charge Australian Light Horse virtually destroyed the battalion, taking 200 prisoners, and killing a much larger number.

All the efforts of the enemy to recapture the Nebi Samwil ridge failed before the unshakable



resistance of London Territorials, who had relieved the West Country troops. Their attacks cost the Turks very dearly. "We took 750 prisoners between November 27 and 30, and the enemy's losses in killed and wounded were undoubtedly heavy."\*

One incident of this fortnight's defensive fighting was specially noteworthy. At Beth Horon Upper the opposing lines were very close, the Turks holding the village, which is perched on a steep conical hill. A dismounted company of Welsh Horse was ordered to take the village. Working their way behind they got, in the dusk of evening, to the top of the hill from the Turkish side:—

In the village (wrote Mr. Massey) they found 500 Turks with a German officer. The enemy laid down their arms, and when the Yeomen got into the tiny village square they saw them standing to. The German officer began running about, shouting "Start fighting." Some of the enemy picked up their rifles and began fighting and others followed. They were too late. The Yeomen, seeing the Turks had not surrendered, fired into the mass, and for five minutes there was a desperate battle in the small enclosure and the narrow streets leading therefrom, the range seldom exceeding 10 yards. The German officer was bayoneted and killed, as were many Turks. The remainder then gave in. They outnumbered our force by four to one.

The Yeomanry officer decided not to hold the village, but to escort the prisoners to the British lines. The enemy in the failing light took this large party to be the British attacking the hill, and shelled them. In the confusion some Turks got away, but the Yeomen brought in eight officers and 99 men, more than twice the number of our force.

Ali Faud Pasha, aided by his reinforcements from Northern Syria, had done his best to keep the British from Jerusalem, and, as Sir Philip Chetwode said, "certain Turkish divisions, as always, fought like tigers." The enemy offensive in no way, however, affected the positions taken up by the British on November 22, nor did it impede the progress of General Allenby's preparations. These completed, the Commander-in-Chief fixed December 8 for the attack on Jerusalem. There was to be, if possible, no fighting close to the city and no injury to any of its buildings. General Allenby's plan was to

push his troops on the Nebi Samwil-Beth Horon line north-east astride the Jerusalem-Shechem road, while other troops coming from the south were to strike east between Jerusalem and Jericho. If this plan succeeded the Holy City would be cut off from help. The plan did succeed, but the Turkish forces withdrew before the net round Jerusalem was complete.

The Jerusalem operations proper began on December 4. Since their famous fight at Khuweilfeh on November 11 the 53rd (Welsh) Division had not budged from their position some 11 miles north of Beersheba. Now they were employed for the turning movement against Jerusalem from the south. With some Home County troops and a cavalry regiment they moved from their camp on December 4 northward. The region into which they moved was eminently suitable for defence, but the Welsh troops found that the Turks had withdrawn, and on December 6, without opposition, they entered Hebron, the city of Abraham, and David's capital before he conquered Jerusalem. By the evening of the 6th the head of the column was 10 miles north of Hebron. It was scheduled to reach Bethlehem on the 7th and the southern outskirts of Jerusalem by dawn on the 8th, and so careful was General Allenby that nothing should be done to injure any sacred site that the column was instructed that no troops were to enter the city. On December 7, however, the weather broke, and for three days rain was almost continuous. The hills were covered with mist, the roads rendered almost impassable. In these circumstances the progress of the column was delayed, and on the morning of the 8th it was still some distance south of Jerusalem. The delay was not altogether due to the weather, but to the determination not to injure the place where Christ was born. Bethlehem had been chosen by the Turks as their advanced southern line and they had posted their guns in such a position that counter-battery work would have endangered the village; consequently the British were shelled without being allowed to reply. But in the end they drove back the enemy, and found the village, sacred by so many associations, uninjured.

Despite rain, mud, mist and intense cold, and the delay to the southern column (which now constituted Allenby's right flank) the attack on the enemy positions guarding the Shechem (Nablus) road was delivered on the 8th as

\* As became good strategists the Turks did not confine their offensive to the hill country, but demonstrated against the British left by Joppa. On November 25 the British advanced posts north of the Auja were driven across the river, and in the succeeding days the Turks assailed the front protecting Joppa. In an attack on the night of November 29 an enemy party 150 strong penetrated the outpost line north-east of the port, but next morning the whole hostile detachment was surrounded and captured by Australian Light Horse. This was not the only retaliatory move of the British; 40 men from an East County Regiment attacked a post on the Auja held by over 100 Turks, killed 50, and brought back prisoners.



JERUSALEM FROM THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.

arranged. It was a day calculated to try the stoutest troops. Observation from the air was quite impossible, and some of the roads had become such quagmires that the guns could not be brought up. The Turks, too, had placed their best troops in the field, organized storming companies, equipped with the best German skill. And these Turks put up so stout a resistance that all the troops and officials left in Jerusalem were able to get away—not northward to Shechem, but eastward to Jericho.

The day's fighting is thus described by General Allenby:—

The troops moved into positions of assembly by night, and, assaulting at dawn on the 8th, soon carried their first objectives. They then pressed steadily forward. The mere physical difficulty of climbing the steep and rocky hillsides and crossing the deep valleys would have sufficed to render progress slow, and the opposition encountered was considerable. Artillery support was soon difficult, owing to the length of the advance and the difficulty of moving guns forward. But by about noon London troops had already advanced over two miles, and were swinging north-east to gain the Nablus-Jerusalem road; while the Yeomanry had



captured the Beit Iksa spur, and were preparing for a further advance.

As the right column [that from Hebron] had been delayed . . . it was necessary for the London troops to throw back their right and form a defensive flank facing east towards Jerusalem, from the western outskirts of which considerable rifle and artillery fire was being experienced.



[Swaine.]

**MAJOR-GENERAL SIR L. J. BOLS, K.C.M.G.,**  
Chief of Staff to General Sir Edmund Allenby.

This delayed the advance, and early in the afternoon it was decided to consolidate the line gained and resume the advance next day, when the right column would be in a position to exert its pressure. By nightfall our line ran from Nebi Samwil to the east of Beit Iksa, through Lifta to a point about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles west of Jerusalem, whence it was thrown back facing east. All the enemy's prepared defences west and north-west of Jerusalem had been captured, and our troops were within a short distance of the Nablus-Jerusalem road.

The London troops and Yeomanry had displayed great endurance in difficult conditions. The London troops especially, after a night march in heavy rain to reach their positions of deployment, had made an advance of three to four miles in difficult hills in the face of stubborn opposition.

During the day about 300 prisoners were taken and many Turks killed. Our own casualties were light.

In Jerusalem it was a day of great tension—the inhabitants and the Turks filled with alternate and contrary hopes and fears.

Towards dusk (says the correspondent of *The Times* already quoted) the British troops were reported to have passed Lifta, and to be within sight of the city. On this news being received a sudden panic fell on the Turks west and south-west of the town, and at five in the afternoon civilians were surprised to see a Turkish transport column galloping furiously citywards along the Jaffa road. In passing they alarmed all units within sight or hearing, and the wearied infantry arose and fled, bootless, and without rifles, never pausing to think or to fight. Some were flogged from behind by officers and were compelled to pick up their arms; others staggered on through the mud, augmenting the confusion of the retreat.

After four centuries of conquest the Turk was ridding the land of his presence in the bitterness of defeat, and a great enthusiasm arose among the Jews. "The Turks are running," they called; "the day of deliverance is come." The nightmare was fast passing away, but the Turk still lingered. In the evening he fired his guns continuously.

About midnight the governor, Izzet Bey, went personally to the telegraph office, discharged the staff, and himself smashed the instruments with a hammer. At 2 a.m. on Sunday (December 9) tired Turks began to troop through the Jaffa gate from the west and south-west, and anxious watchers, peering out through the windows of the grand new hotel to learn the meaning of the tramping, were cheered by the sullen remark of an officer, "Gitnaya mejbooruz" (We've got to go), and from two till seven that morning the Turks streamed through and out of the city, which echoed for the last time their shuffling tramp.

Thus when early on December 9 the British advance was resumed the London troops and Yeomanry, driving back weak rearguards, had no difficulty in securing the Sheehem road. They occupied strong ground astride the road four miles north of the city. Meantime Welsh and Cheshire troops swinging north-east from the Bethlehem direction got across the Jericho road, a little while after the main Turkish force had passed in its flight eastward. Some companies had been left on the Mount of Olives to cover the enemy retreat and these shelled the British. But their guns were silenced and they were driven from the Mount by Welsh troops. That was the end of the fighting.

Izzet Bey, the last civil official to leave Jerusalem, had left behind a letter of surrender, "which the mayor, as the sun rose, set forth to deliver to the British commander, accompanied by a few frightened policemen holding two tremulous white flags. He walked towards the Lifta Hill, and met the first armed deliverers on a spot which may be marked in the future with a white stone as the site of an historic episode." It was the 2072nd anniversary of the day on which Judas Maccabeus had recaptured the Temple from the Selusids.

The King rightly interpreted the general feeling when, on receiving news that Jerusalem had been captured, without injury to any of the Holy Places, he declared that "he joined with his people throughout the British Empire in welcoming the joyous tidings of this memorable feat of British Arms." For his service General Allenby was awarded the G.C.M.G.—a specially appropriate honour for the soldier who had hoisted the Union Jack over the tomb of St. George—and rewards were bestowed on his chief lieutenants.\* Particular care was taken, however, to demonstrate that the campaign was not directed against Islam, but for the liberation of all the peoples of Palestine—Christians, Jews and Moslems alike—from the tyranny of the

\* Generals Bulfin and Chetwode received the K.C.B., General Bols the K.C.M.G.

Osmanlis, and that Franco and Italy fully associated themselves in this policy. Borton Pasha, a high British official in the Egyptian service, was at once appointed military governor, order restored in the city and the safety of the sacred sites secured.

General Allenby made his official entry into Jerusalem on Tuesday, December 11. This historic ceremony was marked by studied simplicity; in violent contrast to the theatrical entry of the Emperor William into the city

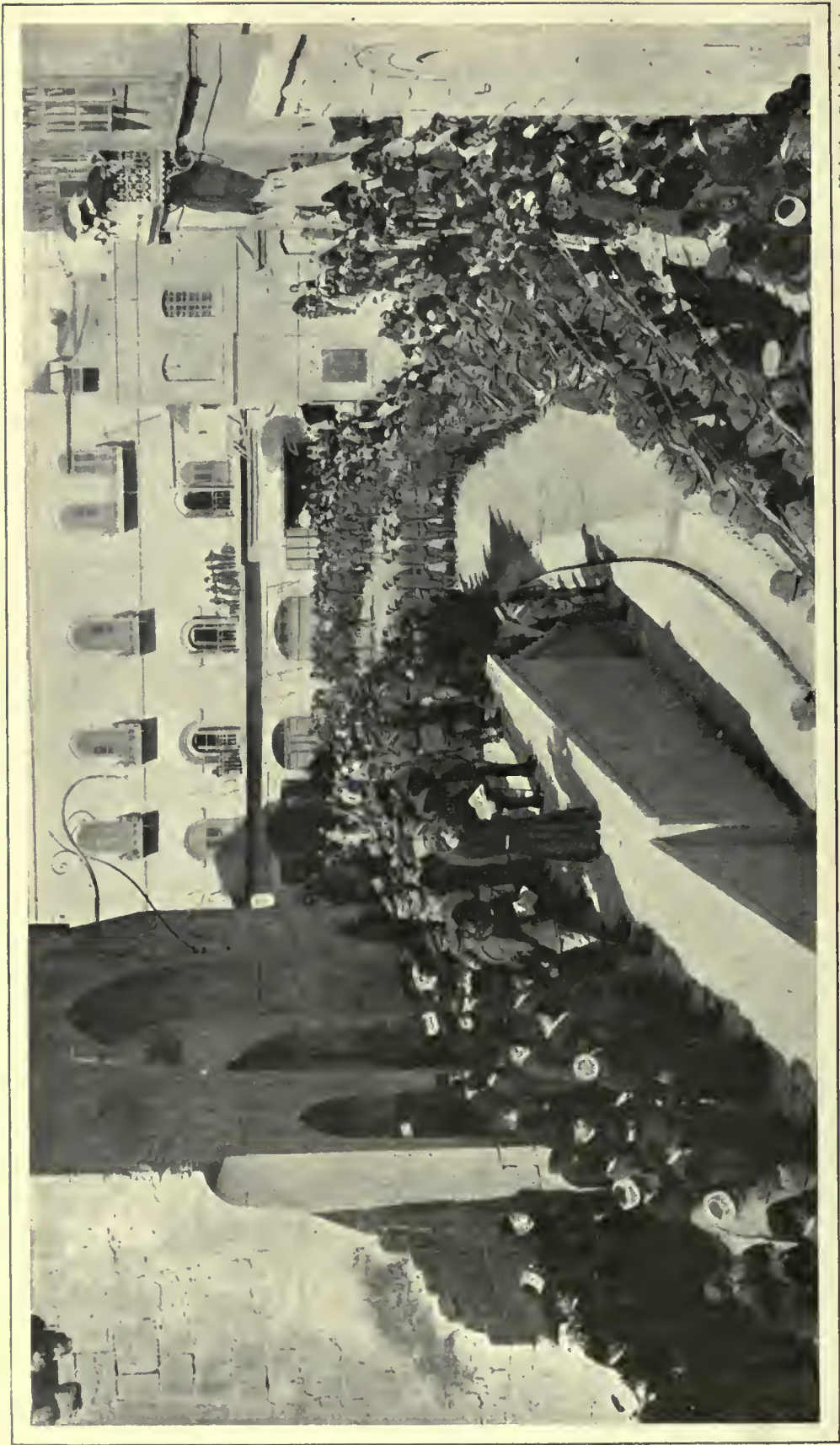
(which he had not conquered) 19 years previously. The procession was wholly on foot. A little before noon a guard of 100 men was drawn up on either side of the Jaffa gate, whose iron doors are rarely opened. Every man of this guard had been carefully chosen—they



[Palestine v. J. v. p. 100. a. p. h.]

THE ENTRY OF GENERAL ALLENBY INTO JERUSALEM BY THE JAFFA GATE.





[Palestine official photograph.]

JERUSALEM: THE READING OF THE PROCLAMATION BY AN INTERPRETER ON THE STEPS OF THE CITADEL AT THE FOOT OF THE TOWER OF DAVID.

represented England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Australia, New Zealand, India, France, and Italy. At midday came General Allenby, accompanied by a few members of his staff and by Col. Piot, head of the French Political Mission, the commanders of the French and Italian detachments and by the military attachés of France, Italy, and the United States. The small company was met by Borton Pasha, and passing under the Jaffa gate turned to the right into the Armenian quarter—the ancient Zion—and halted at the Citadel, built on the site of David's palace. On the steps of the Citadel, by the base of the Tower of David, the procession halted and a proclamation addressed "To the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Blessed and the people dwelling in the vicinity" was read in Arabic, Hebrew, English, French, Italian, Greek, and Russian. It announced the establishment of martial law, but "lest any of you should be alarmed by reason of your experience at the hands of the enemy . . . every person should pursue his lawful business without fear of interruption." The proclamation proceeded:

Furthermore, since your City is regarded with affection by the adherents of three of the great religions of mankind, and its soil has been consecrated by the prayers and pilgrimages of multitudes of devout people of these three religions for many centuries, therefore do I make known to you that every sacred building, monument, Holy spot, shrine, traditional site, endowment, pious bequest, or customary place of prayer, of whatsoever form of the three religions, will be maintained and protected according to the existing customs and beliefs of those to whose faiths they are sacred.

This charter of freedom for all Faiths having been read, the company walked up Zion Street to the barrack square, where General Allenby received the heads of the civil communities and other notables and deputies of the deported leaders of the various Christian confessions. The mayor and the mufti, the sheikhs in charge of the mosques of Omar and Aska, representatives of the Jewish committees and of the Anglican, Latin, Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Armenian, Syrian and Coptic Churches, and the Abyssinian Bishop were all presented, and finally the Spanish Consul, who, as almost the only neutral diplomatic personage in Jerusalem, had charge of the interests of most of the belligerents. The presentations over, General Allenby returned to the Jaffa gate. Not until he was outside the walls did he mount his horse. The simplicity and sincerity which had marked the whole ceremony created a deep impression on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, an impression

heightened by the measures enforced for the protection of the Holy Sites. While other Christian and Jewish sacred sites were placed under guards belonging to those faiths, the hereditary Moslem custodians of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre were asked to take up their accustomed duties "in remembrance of the magnanimous act of the Caliph Omar, who protected that Church."

Thus Jerusalem passed from under the military domination of the Germans and the Turks. And having lost the Holy City by arms, they immediately set on foot a campaign of words, to deprive the liberators, if possible, of the moral results of their achievement.

"Jerusalem has been evacuated," the German wireless announced on December 12. "The most important reason for the decision to evacuate it voluntarily was the fact that no nation in the world which believes in God could wish its sacred soil to be the scene of bloody battles. The keeping of a town which is worthless from a military point of view was of no importance in comparison with this consideration."

Notwithstanding their protestation, the enemy, as has been shown, had done their best to "dismantle" Jerusalem from the religious point of view by deporting the Patriarchs of the several Christian confessions, as well as selected notables from the Christian and Jewish communities. Without incurring the odium of destroying the sacred edifices, they believed that they could in this way paralyse the religious life that centred in them and interrupt the maintenance of the several rites.

This action on the part of the Turco-German military authorities was supplemented by propaganda in the German Press. A "Catholic Theologian" in the *Cologne Gazette* developed the thesis that the earthly Jerusalem had no "religious value" for Christians, and implied that the heavenly Jerusalem—"which no vile Englishman could conquer"—was still within Germany's *Machtsphäre*. Herr Naumann, the gifted author of "Mitteleuropa," took a sentimental line. "The real Jerusalem," he argued, "the place where Jesus died, the place whence proceeded the Holy Spirit," had been preserved in the sympathetic atmosphere of Turkish rule. But now Jerusalem was to be included in the modern, technical, commercial, capitalist, English-international system, and "under



English guidance would be improved in the Western sense."

The instinctive perception that the Turco-German régime was not destined to return was an interesting symptom in the case of a historian of Herr Naumann's intuitive power; but from the beginning of the British occupation his characterization of the change that had occurred was belied by the course of events in Jerusalem itself. Ottoman rule in Jerusalem was just four centuries old; Germany did not begin to cast her shadow there till the Kaiser's visit in 1898; both were passing incidents in the city's political history, and in her religious history they had not counted at all.

The Turks ruled Jerusalem politically by the right of the sword. They had no religious footing there except through their adherence to Islam, which they shared with the majority of the native Arabic-speaking population. But under the reign of the Committee of Union and Progress, and especially during the military dictatorship of Djemal Pasha since the beginning of the war, they had repudiated the religious bond in favour of a violent-handed nationalism, and employed their political power to assail their Arab co-religionists with a racial war. As at Damascus and Beirut, so in

Palestine, Djemal singled out his victims among the Arab leaders, and it is easy to understand their relief at the removal of the Turkish menace.

The Moslem custodians of the Holy Places likewise expressed their satisfaction with General Allenby's dispositions, and the safety of the Mosque of Omar was at once assured by the detailment of a guard of Indian Moslems from the 123rd Outram's Rifles. The departure of the self-styled "Turanian" Turks thus made no interruption in the Moslem tradition of 13 centuries, and the gratitude of the Arab nation was promptly expressed on December 15 by a joint Moslem-Christian delegation from the Syrian and Palestinian colonies in Great Britain to the War Cabinet. This delegation expressed, in its address, "the hope and assurance that His Majesty's armies and the French and Italian contingents would continue their victorious march for the deliverance of the populations they were freeing from the despotism of Turkish rule"; and the King of the Hedjaz, the acknowledged representative of the Arab *risorgimento*, declared his appreciation of "the care and solicitude shown to the Holy Places," and ascribed the victory to the justice of the British cause.



*Investive official photograph.*

THE SCENE ON THE STEPS OF THE CITADEL AT THE FOOT OF THE TOWER OF DAVID.

The officer holding a paper in his hands is reading the Proclamation in English.



[Official photograph

#### GENERAL ALLENBY RECEIVES THE CITY NOTABLES IN THE BARRACK SQUARE.

The liberation of Jerusalem meant still more to the Jews, for while it is only the third in sanctity of the Moslem Holy Places, it is the peculiar shrine of Judaism in the sense in which Mecca and Medina are of Islam. The British advance freed not only the most sacred places of ancient Jewry, but the site marked out for the future Jewish university, and also about 20 out of the 40 and more agricultural colonies founded by Jewish immigrants in Palestine during the last generation.

This Jewish colonizing movement has been described in Chapter CCXVII. The British advance over the territory in which the more southerly colonies are situated was so rapid that the Turks had no time to lay them waste. Buildings, plantations and public works were found practically intact; only the live-stock and, unhappily, a large proportion of the able-bodied male population had been commandeered. These colonies offered an invaluable nucleus for the process of reconstruction, and before many weeks had passed a Zionist Commission, headed by the President of the English Zionist Federation, Doctor Weizmann, was dispatched to Palestine with the authorization of the British Government. Their task was to reconstruct the ruins, not of three years, but of eighteen and a half centuries, for Jewry had lain in ruins in Palestine since Titus destroyed Jeru-

salem in the year 70 A.D. For the first time since that catastrophe, conditions in Palestine had become favourable for the rebuilding of Jewish society there.

The Germans realized how this beneficent effect of the British success would influence Jewish sympathies all over the world, and were anxious to make some counter-move—little prospect though they had of reversing facts by propaganda. But the susceptibilities of their Turkish allies were grievously in the way. The avowed war aims of the Committee of Union and Progress were the integrity, centralization, and "Turkification" of the Ottoman Empire. They could not forgive the Germans for having left them militarily in the lurch, and their anger grew as they watched the German Government appropriating for itself vast territories in Europe at the expense of Russia. Talaat was demanding German military aid, and until that was forthcoming he did not see why he should disavow his party's war aims in order to enhance Germany's popularity with the Jews. It was, therefore, not surprising that when Talaat was induced to grant an interview on the subject of Zionism to the correspondent of the *Vossische Zeitung* at Constantinople, his statements should not prove felicitous from the German point of view. In this interview Talaat dismissed Mr. Balfour's letter as "an imposture," enlarged



(somewhat tactlessly, considering the recent Djemal *régime*) on past favours shown to Jews by Turks, talked of the limited capacity of Palestine for colonization, insisted that all Jewish colonists must become naturalized Ottoman subjects, and repeated several times that Jews could be given no special privileges over and above those enjoyed by other Ottoman citizens—an ominous charter of rights, since it exposed Jews under Turkish dominion to the same fate as Arabs, Greeks and Armenians.

Talaat's statement was criticized severely by the Jewish Press, which pointed out that the good faith of the British Government was guaranteed by the offers of territory for Jewish colonization at El Arish and in East Africa long before the war, as well as by the prompt assent, after the deliverance of Jerusalem, to the dispatch of a Zionist Commission. Turco-German propaganda was equally unsuccessful in trying to create trouble between England and France. The French interests in Syria were admitted by the whole world (except, of course, by the Turks and Germans themselves), and it was no secret that France had at one time regarded Palestine as falling within the Syrian sphere. But it was a naïve supposition that the Allies had embarked on the Palestinian campaign without having arrived at a common political programme. On February 9 a Zionist representative, M. Sokoloff, was officially informed at Paris by M. Pichon that "the understanding between the French and British Governments was complete concerning the question of the establishment of the Jews in Palestine." The simple announcement of an obvious fact was sufficient to bring enemy propaganda in this direction to an end.

The significance of the liberation of Jerusalem for Turks and Germans, Arabs and Jews, has now been described, but the survey would not be complete without some account of its reception by the Roman Catholic Church. Throughout the war the Vatican preserved scrupulous neutrality as a political power, but only the Pope's enemies accused him of being indifferent towards the moral issues which the War raised, or towards events in which his Church was affected as a religious and an international society. The transference of the Christian sanctuaries at Jerusalem from an

exclusively Moslem rule to a *régime* in which none of the religions to which Jerusalem was holy was to have political precedence over another, was naturally a cause of satisfaction to His Holiness as the religious head of the Roman Catholic Church, and on December 13 the Cardinal Vicar accordingly published a proclamation announcing a thanksgiving service in the Basilica of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme for the Sunday following. The official organ of the Vatican, the *Osservatore Romano*, commented that "the entry of the British troops into Jerusalem had been received with satisfaction by all, and especially by Catholics," and added that "the conceptions of liberty and fair-mindedness which inspire the acts of England" created confidence that the rights and interests of the Catholic Church would be respected in Palestine under the change of *régime*.

The *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten* chose to represent the Vatican's attitude as inconsistent with political neutrality, and the German "Catholic Theologian," whose article in the *Cologne Gazette* has been referred to above, roundly declared that "for us German Catholics the possession and fate of Jerusalem are a purely political question . . . and in this political question—let it be said aloud—we German Catholics, as a matter of course, stand absolutely on the side of our country. We represent German interests." This theologian at Cologne, like his "Turanian" allies at Constantinople, was ready, in his intemperate nationalism, to sacrifice the unity of the religious society to which he belonged. His point of view, however, was not shared by the majority of Catholics in Central Europe, and especially in Austria-Hungary. It was rumoured that the Pope was definitely opposed to any attempt to recover Jerusalem for the Turks on the part of the Central Powers, and that pressure was brought to bear on the Governments by Catholic influence to obey his wishes. Such rumours are by their nature incapable of verification, but whether or not this one was correct, there is little doubt that it found a ready reception in the irritated minds of the Committee of Union and Progress. It was, indeed, not improbable that the liberation of Jerusalem had led to the first serious rift between Berlin, Vienna and Constantinople.



## CHAPTER CCXXVII.

# FROM THE BATTLE OF MESSINES TO THE THIRD BATTLE OF YPRES.

THE FIGHTING IN JUNE AND JULY, 1917—SITUATION BEFORE VERDUN—GERMAN CONCENTRATION—ATTACK ON JUNE 28—SLIGHT GERMAN GAINS—FRENCH ATTACK, JULY 17—MORONVILLIERS: GENERAL GOURAUD IN COMMAND—FRENCH ATTACK IN MT. CORNILLET SECTOR, JUNE 21—FURTHER OPERATIONS UNDER GOURAUD—THE CRAONNE-REIMS AREA—ANALYSIS OF THE FIGHTING—KAISER AND CROWN PRINCE—THE BRITISH FRONT—PREPARATIONS FOR THIRD BATTLE OF YPRES—GENERAL ALLENBY LEAVES FOR PALESTINE—HAIG'S DEMONSTRATIONS—BRITISH OPERATIONS NEAR LENS—JULY 8: GERMAN SUCCESS ON THE YSER.

THE Battle of Messines, described in Chapter CCXXIV., was the last act in the manœuvres preliminary to the offensive in Flanders, undertaken by the British Fifth and Second Armies combined with the French First Army, which began on July 31, 1917. But while the final preparations for this new attack were being completed the Battles of Vimy-Arras, Craonne-Reims and Moronvilliers were renewed on a smaller scale. Beyond the extremities of the zone in question the Germans were able to inflict a slight reverse on the British in front of Nieuport and temporarily to recover some of the ground lost by the Crown Prince at the conclusion of the Battle of Verdun.

This chapter will deal with these various encounters, viz., in the Verdun region, the actions on the Moronvilliers and Chemin des Dames ridges, the combats south and north of the Scarpe in the regions of Lens and Ypres, and the struggle round Lombartzyde on the coast of the North Sea between Nieuport and Ostend.

The German success north of Verdun preceded the great French victory gained by General Guillaumat on August 20 north of Verdun, Vol. XV.—Part 188

while the desperate struggles on and west of the Chemin des Dames ridge were preliminary to the decisive Battle of Malmaison won by General Maistre on October 23. The remainder of the operations to be described were fraught with no important consequences. The French did not descend the northern slopes of the Moronvilliers hills, nor did the British advance eastward from the Scarpe or the Vimy heights. Neither did the enemy attempt to follow up the advantage he had gained at Lombartzyde nor seek to push farther forward in the Verdun region.

Before these various encounters are described the reader should be reminded that, after the failure of General Nivelle, in April 1917, to burst his way through the German lines into the plain of Laon, there had been a radical change in the strategy of the Allies. The French reverted to the plan of limited objectives, and their offensive on the right and centre was no longer of so aggressive a character, while the original plan of Sir Douglas Haig, which had been for a time suspended to enable him to support the French, was now reverted to. The main British effort was henceforth to be directed north of the Lys, and it was to be



supported by a French Army in Flanders. For Generals Pétain and Foch, who took over the direction of the French forces at the end of April, had decided, in view of the losses suffered at the Battles of Craonne-Reims and Moronvilliers, that this course was better suited to the situation. The rapid dissolution of the Russian Army—even the Russian contingent which had fought at Craonne-Reims had become disaffected—induced them to adopt this more modest part, and they determined, therefore, to await the arrival of the American forces before committing themselves to operations on a great scale. They were content to finish off, as it were, the Battles of Craonne-Reims and Moronvilliers, and, but for the German offensive west of the Meuse and north of Verdun on June 29, it may well be doubted whether they would have embarked in 1917 in any considerable battle in Lorraine. That Pétain and Foch had read the European situation rightly was shown by the complete failure of Brussiloff and Korniloff in July to galvanize the Russian Army into action against Germans and Austro-Hungarians, and also by the unexpected collapse in November of a part of the Italian Army in the Julian Alps. On the German side also there was for a time a distinct tendency to adhere to

defensive tactics which were dictated by the defeats of Arras-Vimy, Craonne-Reims, Moronvilliers and, above all, Messines.

In Chapter CLXVI. the concluding phase of the First Battle of Verdun was described. At the opening of that gigantic struggle the French line had run from just south of Boureilles, on the eastern edge of the Argonne forest land, north-eastwards between the Bois de Montfaucon and the Bois de Malancourt to Forges and the glen from Forges descending to the Meuse. On the west side of the river it covered the Cheppy and Avocourt Woods, the villages of Malancourt and Béthincourt to their east, Hill 304, which rises midway between those villages to their south, the Mort Homme (Hill 295) between Hill 304 and the Meuse, and Regnéville on the left bank of the river. The Bois de Forges, north of Forges, was in the possession of the enemy. From Forges to Verdun as the crow flies is a distance of some nine miles.

Crossing the Meuse, which, unlike the Lys, is a fairly wide river, the French line proceeded almost due eastwards between Consenvoye and Brabant-sur-Meuse over the heights of the Meuse to Ornes on their eastern slopes. From



WRECKED GERMAN GUNS AT CRAONNE.



HILL 304 FROM ESNES.

Ornes it struck down south-eastwards below the Twins of Ornes—a name given to two hills a little higher than the Mort Homme—into the wooded and water-patched plain of the Woevre, passing just west of Etain and Buzy. It then ran sharply back to the Meuse Heights; going round east of Fresnes and descending those heights to the southern environs of Les Eparges. Thence it descended south-south-eastwards to the Meuse, which it crossed north-west of St. Mihiel. Curving west of St. Mihiel, it recrossed both the Meuse and the Meuse Heights and again entered the Woevre. From St. Mihiel to Verdun is a distance of some 20 miles, from Verdun to the furthest French outpost in the Woevre was 14 miles or so.

Verdun, traversed by the Meuse, is in a hollow. The Heights of the Meuse, a cultivated and wooded plateau rather than a range of hills, on an average some 500 feet above the stream and five or six miles broad, are the natural defences of Verdun on the east and north. Low hills on the left bank of the Meuse lie between Hill 304 and Verdun. South of Hill 304 and of the Avocourt and Cheppy Woods is the great Forêt de Hesse, extending from the Argonne to within a few miles of the city.

It will be recollected that at the Battle of Verdun the Germans forced the French to withdraw from the plain of the Woevre to the Meuse Heights, and that they fought their way southwards along those heights to the south of Fort Vaux, reaching a point less than five miles from Verdun itself. On the west bank

of the Meuse, however, though the French had been obliged to evacuate Forges, Béthincourt, Malancourt and Regnéville, they had retained the southern slopes of Mort Homme and Hill 304 and the village of Avocourt, and their line thence to the Argonne passed between the Avocourt-Cheppy Woods and the Hesse forest. The south-eastern end of the Avocourt Wood, with the celebrated Avocourt Redoubt, remained in their possession.

On the left (west) bank of the Meuse the situation had become stationary by June 1916; on the right bank the stationary stage of the battle had not been reached till December 17. On October 24, General Mangin had recaptured the Village and Fort of Douaumont, north of Fort Vaux, and on November 1 the Germans retired from the latter fort. The village of Vaux, north of it, was retaken on the 5th. Some days later, on December 15-17, Mangin completely defeated the Germans north of Fort Douaumont, taking 11,300 prisoners and recapturing Vacherauville on the Meuse, the Poivre Hill, Louvemont, Bezonvaux and Harcourt with part of the Bois des Caurières.

It will be noticed that the French, despite their victories in October and December, had on neither side of the Meuse recovered the line originally organized by General Sarrail during and after the Battle of the Marne. The enemy from Fresnes northwards to Bezonvaux were at or close to the eastern slopes of the Heights of the Meuse and, north of the line Bezonvaux-Vacherauville, they were firmly entrenched on them. From Vacherauville to Verdun is but some five miles. Considering, too, that the

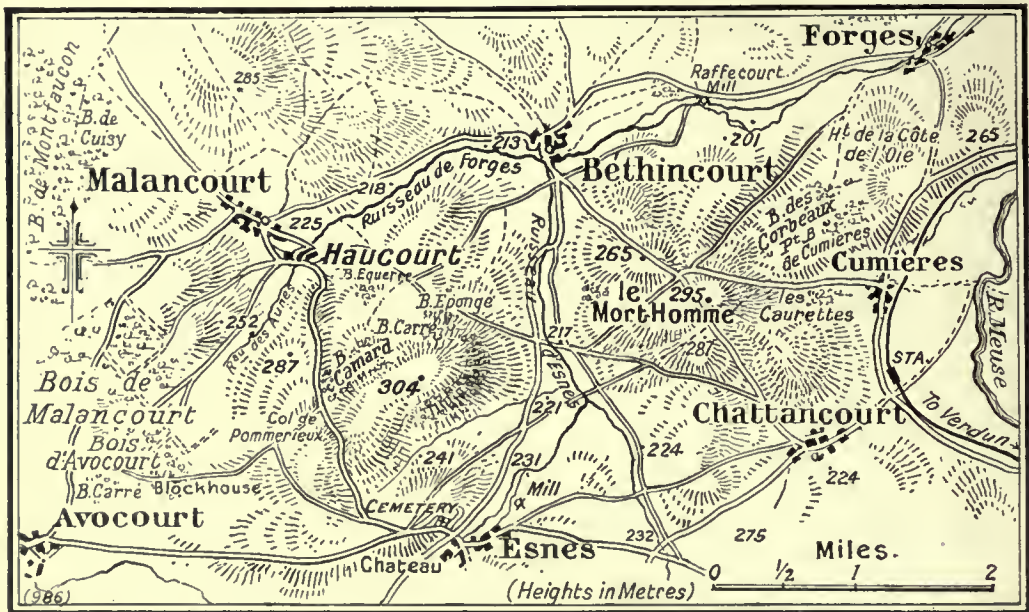


Germans south of Verdun in the St. Mihiel salient were on the west bank of the Meuse, the position from the French standpoint was still unsatisfactory.

Under these circumstances, General Pétain and General Guillaumat, the Commander of the French 2nd Army entrusted with the defence of Verdun, could not but view with apprehension any renewed activity of the enemy west and east of the Meuse in the Verdun district. On June 15, 1917, a German detachment advanced to reconnoitre the French lines near Hill 304, and the same day another party of the enemy

(June 9), the abdication of King Constantine on June 12, and the safe arrival in France on June 26 of the first American contingent, rendered it desirable for the Crown Prince to wipe out the memories of his failures by a victorious offensive which was to be executed by General von Gallwitz.

Accordingly some 500 guns were secretly concentrated opposite the French lines. Those lines ran from the south-eastern end of the Avocourt Wood, in which our Allies still held some strong points, by the western and southern slopes of Hill 304, across a valley to the southern



THE DEFENCES OF THE MORT HOMME AND HILL 304.

was detected approaching the trenches of our Allies in the Bois des Chevaliers on the Heights of the Meuse. Both reconnaissances were promptly dispersed by the fire of the French guns. Four days later, on the 19th, the Germans vainly attempted to rush some small posts near the Calonne trench, south-west of Les Eparges, the southern pivot of the Verdun salient. On the 25th, the enemy attacked on a minor scale, from the St. Mihiel salient.

The movements in the Bois des Chevaliers, near Les Eparges, and in the St. Mihiel salient were feints to conceal the real objective of the German Crown Prince, which was on the west of the Meuse between the Avocourt Wood and the Mort Homme. The political crisis in Germany, which ended on July 14 with the substitution of Herr Michaelis for Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg as Chancellor, the depression caused in Germany by the Battle of Messines

slopes of Mort Homme. Between Avocourt Wood and Hill 304 there was a slight depression, forming a saddle known as the Col de Pommerieux. Over it ran the Malancourt-Verdun road to the ruined village of Esnes. From Esnes another road proceeded northwards along the valley between Hill 304 and the Mort Homme to Béthincourt, which village was connected by a cross road with Malancourt. If the Germans gained the Col de Pommerieux and the supporting trenches behind it they would secure extensive views of the French position in front of Esnes, and they would be able to attack from the rear the French on the western and southern slopes of Hill 304. The German 10th Reserve Division was held in readiness for the operation, and some of the French trenches on the slopes of Hill 304 were facsimiled, shock troops being carefully trained in the appropriate methods for storming such obstacles.



[Manuel.

**GENERAL GUILLAUMAT,**  
Commanded the French Second Army at  
Verdun, 1917.

This last precaution, as it happened, prevented the attack from being a complete surprise to our Allies. A French airman circling behind the enemy's lines on a photographing expedition, perceived copies of French trenches, recognized that the trenches copied were some of these on Hill 304, and promptly informed General Guillaumat of his discovery.

In the afternoon of June 28, 1917, the Crown Prince launched his attack. It was preceded by a short but violent bombardment from the 500 German guns. Most of the shells fired were of a heavy calibre. The front assaulted was bisected by the Malancourt-Esnes road and was some 2,200 yards in length. At 6.30 p.m. shock troops followed the German barrage and effected a lodgment on the Col de Pommérieux, penetrating as far as the supporting trenches behind the first line. But a blockhouse in the region of Avocourt Wood and other strong points were not so easily carried. The garrison of the blockhouse beat off no fewer than 10 assaults and, after 12 hours of uninterrupted fighting, only retired when a formal order to retreat reached them. Every survivor of the company was wounded; many were badly burned, but not a single prisoner was left in the enemy's hands.

On the west of Hill 304 the French artillery had, meanwhile, been pounding the enemy who

had gained a footing in the French front line. At 3.45 a.m. on June 29 an attack by the Germans east of Hill 304 was repulsed, but about the same time—according to the enemy's *communiqué*—a Württemberg regiment in the Avocourt Wood stormed 300 yards of trenches. In the afternoon the French counter-attacked west of Hill 304 and recovered some trenches, while the Germans assaulted the French lines on a front of 1½ miles between the eastern slopes of Hill 304 and the western slopes of Mort Homme.

A squadron of 40 dismounted Breton Dragoons, holding a narrow salient protruding into the German trench-system on the east side of Hill 304, put up a heroic and successful resistance. Their works had escaped serious damage during the bombardment preceding the attack, but their communication trenches had been blotted out, and they were practically isolated. When the Germans charged, the lieutenant commanding them was carried away in the rush and killed or captured. The command devolved on a non-commissioned officer of 24 years of age, who had been fighting since



**GENERAL VON GALLWITZ,**  
Conducted the German offensives against  
Verdun, 1917.



August 1914 The doom of him and his troopers seemed certain. The French trenches on the left were swarming with the enemy, and in the gradually waning light three squads of pioneers armed with flame-throwers, the squads twenty paces apart, were perceived advancing to the attack. Behind the pioneers, through the intervals, were seen three groups of bombers, and behind these was a continuous line of men with rifles and spades. Bringing up the rear a fourth line of soldiers with supplementary supplies of grenades and also sandbags made its appearance. Two companies of the finest German shock troops were being thrown at 40 French cavalymen.

No sooner was the formidable and orderly mass of the enemy seen than the Bretons opened on it with their automatic rifles. Visibly thinning, it continued, however, to advance as if on parade. When the pioneers were 50 yards from the salient they discharged from the machines they carried dense clouds of a dirty, poisonous smoke, which immediately hid them and their comrades in the rear from view. Fortunately the French barbed-wire entanglements were still intact, and the Dragoons, firing over or through them into the smoke, killed or wounded the bombers striving to

burst their way to the trenches. The pioneers were mostly killed or wounded, and, the smoke dissipating, a litter of corpses was seen round the entanglements. Pioneers, bombers, riflemen were in full retreat.

The frontal attack had failed. The German leader now marched his men round to the end of the French trench and tried to work up it. This manœuvre had been noticed by the non-commissioned officer of Dragoons. At each traverse of the trench he posted two bombers and three men to supply them with grenades. For hours in the darkness a terrible struggle ensued. At the first traverse three Dragoons were put *hors de combat*, but their two companions, though wounded, managed to hold it. Beyond, the Germans broke into the trench and fought their way along it for some two hundred yards. The remnants of the little band of heroes retreated into the head of a communication trench, where they prepared to sell their lives dearly. Suddenly the non-commissioned officer observed that the enemy was slackening his efforts. He rallied his men and ordered a counter-attack. The trench was recovered and the two Dragoons at the first traverse were rescued. Half of the Bretons were killed or wounded, but none had been cap-



[French official photograph.]

GENERAL GUILLAUMAT INSTRUCTING HIS OFFICERS BEFORE THE  
ATTACK ON HILL 304.



SUPPORTS ON THE CHEMIN-DES-DAMES AWAITING THE ORDER TO ATTACK.

Stretcher bearers also are seen in readiness.

tured; they had taken four prisoners and put out of action large numbers of the enemy.

At most other points the Germans were repulsed, but on the western slopes of Mort Homme they gained slightly. For their small successes in the combats of the 28th and 29th they had had to pay a heavy price. Some companies of the 10th Reserve Division had been reduced to 50 or 60 men.

On the 30th the Germans made several ineffective efforts to debouch from the captured posts on the western slopes of the Mort Homme, where one point was lost and recovered five times by the French. It was finally abandoned by both parties, the entrenchments and refuges having been swept away or filled in by the bombardment. An attempt of the enemy to storm the Avocourt Redoubt was broken up by the fire of the French guns. Towards 2.30 a.m. on July 3, the Germans fruitlessly assaulted the south-eastern corner of Avocourt Wood on a front of about 500 yards, and the next day three successive attacks, accompanied by gusts of liquid fire, against the French trenches south-west of Hill 304, were repulsed. On July 6 the French batteries searched thoroughly the enemy's defences north and west of that eminence; on the right bank of the Meuse there were patrol encounters on the northern edge of the Poivre Hill towards Louvemont.

The French had been temporarily thrown on the defensive west of the river. During the

night of July 7-8 General Guillaumat began the series of brilliant offensives which by the end of August almost restored the French front north of Verdun to what it had been on February 21, 1916. After a brief bombardment his troops captured a strongly-organized salient west of the Mort Homme and two others south-west of Hill 304. German counter-attacks were beaten off on the 8th and 9th, and the French guns dispersed bodies of the enemy endeavouring to surprise advanced posts on the Meuse Heights.

This was a preliminary step to a more important operation. General Guillaumat had ordered General Lebocq to retake the whole of the position wrested from the French on June 28 between the Avocourt Wood and Hill 304. Under the almost daily bombardment the German 10th Reserve Division had lost half its effectives. The 48th Division, which had arrived from Russia, was so demoralized that only parts of it could be employed to replace the shattered elements of the 10th Reserve Division. The 29th Division, which had suffered severely at the Battle of Moronvilliers and was resting behind the lines near Tahure, was now brought east of the Argonne. With certain units of the 48th, the 29th was in process of relieving the 10th Reserve Division when, on July 17, Lebocq struck his blow. Bad weather had thrice delayed it.

Lebocq's preparations for the forward movement left nothing to be desired. General Guillaumat had given him a sufficiency of





A FRENCH ATTACK ON THE CHEMIN-DES-DAMES.

aeroplanes to secure local command of the air. This was attained 36 hours before the attack was launched. Unhampered by enemy machines, the French aviators were able to direct, with almost mathematical precision, the fire of the numerous guns detailed for the operation. Parapets and entanglements disappeared under the rain of shells; battery after battery of the Germans ceased to fire—the pieces had been dismounted or the gunners killed by the gas from asphyxiating shells. So perfect was the long-distance bombardment that the roads leading back from the German lines became impassable. A battalion sent forward from Vilosne-sur-Meuse through Malancourt took 24 hours to traverse a couple of miles. The convoys were brought to a standstill, reserves annihilated or dispersed.

The 51st and 87th French regiments, recruited respectively in the St. Quentin and Beauvais districts, supported by a couple of battalions of the 97th Division and a battalion of the 73rd commanded by Colonel Rozier, were the infantry employed in the combat against those elements of the German 10th Reserve Division, and 29th and 48th Divisions, which happened to be in position at dawn on July 17.

At 6.15 a.m. the infantry went "over the top," issuing on the left from the Avocourt Wood and on the right from the salients recovered on July 7-8. A feeble attempt at a barrage was made by the German guns, but only one machine-gun fired at the troops advancing from the Avocourt Wood. Its detachment was destroyed before they had fired 20 rounds. Save for a handful of snipers, here and there scurrying away, the ground in front of the French seemed scarcely to be occupied. In half an hour all the objectives were reached and the Col de Pommerieux was once again in French hands. Passing over the crest, our Allies pushed down the northern face, gaining a perfect view of the Bois de Malancourt and the northern slopes of Hill 304. The whole of the first German line had been captured, and, shortly afterwards, the second line, where more resistance was encountered, was taken. In depth the French had progressed some 700 yards, and their front now ran from the south-eastern corner of the Avocourt Wood well north of the Col de Pommerieux through the little Bois Camard to the western slopes of Hill 304. In the afternoon several counter-attacks were repulsed with heavy losses to the Germans.

The French casualties were insignificant; one company, for instance, lost but a couple of men. On the other hand, the Germans left behind them 520 prisoners, including eight officers.

Enemy counter-attacks the next day were complete failures, as was an attempt east of the Meuse to surprise the Calonne trench near Les Eparges. On the 19th the enemy tried by a sudden attack to enter the French lines in the Douaumont region. During the night

1916. The Crown Prince had not succeeded in dislodging the French from the whole of the Avocourt Wood, or from the Col de Poinmerieux and the western slopes of Hill 304, or from the western and southern slopes of the Mort Homme. On the heights of the Meuse he had regained none of the positions lost by him in the battles of October and December of the previous year.

His failure at Verdun was uncompensated



GENERAL LEBOCQ, COL. ROZIER, AND A GROUP OF FIGHTERS FROM AVOCOURT WOOD.

of July 20-21, and on July 22, German raids against the Bois des Chevaliers were repulsed, and another raid near the Bois Bouchot was beaten off. On July 28, after an intense bombardment, the enemy again attacked between the Avocourt Wood and Hill 304. His infantry, met by accurate and intense shell-fire, scattered, leaving behind them heaps of dead and wounded. About the same time an attempted attack at the foot of the heights of the Meuse east of Verdun in the Moulainville region, resulted in a sanguinary check for the Germans. )

At the end of July 1917, the situation at Verdun on both banks of the Meuse remained what it had been at the end of December

by any successes in June or July at Moronvilliers or north of the Aisne. In spite of violent counter-attacks made by the Germans, our Allies continued to hold and also slightly to enlarge the positions gained by them at the Battles of Moronvilliers and Craonne-Reims described in Chapters CCX. and CCIX.

On June 9 General Anthoine handed over the command of the 4th Army on the Moronvilliers Heights to General Gouraud, "the lion of the Argonne," and set out for Flanders, where he was followed by the French 1st Army in the middle of the month. Two days later (June 11) the Germans reconnoitred towards the French lines at Mt Cor-



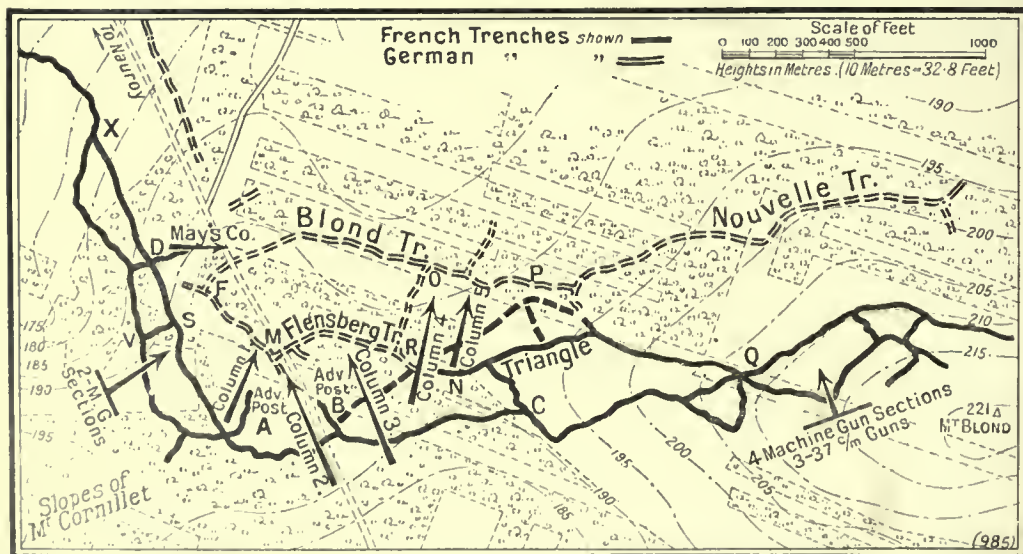
nillet and Mt. Blond. They were easily repulsed and some prisoners taken. This demonstration of the enemy showed, however, to General Gouraud that his positions between the two hills needed to be improved. The Germans, though driven from the summits of Mt. Cornillet and Mt. Blond, still retained the Flensburg Trench on the intermediate saddle, and, behind it, a trench which, under the names of Blonde Trench and Nouvelle Trench, ran eastwards from the western end of the Flensburg Trench across the road to Nauroy and along the northern slopes of the saddle and Mt. Blond. As the French during the Battle of Morenvilliers had pushed down the northern face of Mt. Cornillet in the direction of Nauroy, they were able to turn from the west both trenches, which, if not captured, would have afforded an excellent starting point for a German offensive designed to penetrate the French lines on the crest. While the enemy maintained himself on the saddle, he had, moreover, good views of most of the southern slopes of the Morenvilliers Hills, and the preparations for any advance down them into the low ground to the north could be observed by him.

To break through and turn the Flensburg and Blonde Trenches became, therefore, a matter of great importance to General Gouraud. The General of the 132nd Division, entrusted with the defence of the Mt. Cornillet sector, consulted with his staff and examined the aerial photographs of the two trenches. Lieutenant d'Hauteville and Sergeants Portat and

Pellerin of the Grenadiers were ordered to make a detailed reconnaissance. On the evening of June 19 and the early morning of the next day this was successfully accomplished. The obstacles that would be encountered were precisely located and a plan of attack prepared. It was approved by the Colonel of the 166th Infantry Regiment, which was to furnish the bulk of the troops engaged, and by the General of the Division. Though the numbers engaged were small the plan is worth detailed notice, because it allows the reader to see what careful preparations had to be made before even a small forward movement was attempted.

The detachment told off for the operation consisted of 48 bombers accustomed to the use of rifle grenades, of 24 soldiers armed with automatic rifles, and of 16 bombers of the 132nd Division. Supporting them were to be five sections of the 166th Regiment and 20 men carrying reserve bombs to assist in holding the ground when captured. With these were to march 10 pioneers whose business was to construct communication trenches between the new and old front. Out of the above elements, numbering about 360 all told, five columns of assault were formed. Their objectives will be gathered from the accompanying plan.

The first, under Sergeant Borel, moving west of the road to Nauroy from the sap-head A, was to break in to the western end of the Flensburg Trench and to capture the strong point F. The second column, under Sergeant Langeron, advancing from the sap-head B,



OPERATIONS OF JUNE 21 BETWEEN MONT CORNILLET AND MONT BLOND.

just east of the Nauroy road, was to carry the redoubt at M. Automatic rifle-fire from B was to be directed simultaneously on the portion of the Flensburg Trench from M to R, at which latter point a communication trench ran back to the Blonde Trench. The column of Langeron had orders not to attack until the third column had entered the Flensburg Trench. This, the third column, under 2nd Lieutenant Léger, as soon as the column on its right had secured the redoubt at R was to storm the Flensburg Trench between M and R. The fourth column, commanded by 2nd Lieutenant Aligne, was to storm the eastern end of the Flensburg Trench, the above mentioned redoubt, and the communication trench going northward to the Blonde Trench at O. The Léger and Aligne



**CARRYING SOUP TO A FRONT TRENCH AND DODGING SHELLS ON THE WAY.**

detachments were directed by Lieutenant d'Hauteville and were to attack under cover of a fusillade from automatic rifles directed against the communication trench and the section of the Blonde Trench east of O as far as P. When Léger's column had carried the redoubt at R and entered the communication trench, the fifth column, under 2nd Lieutenant Mangin, on its right was to make for the Blonde Trench between O and P.



**GENERAL GOURAUD,**  
Took over the command of the French Fourth Army, June 1917.

The operation was to commence with Aligne's 4th column, storming the R redoubt. When he had done so, Léger was to burst into the Flensburg Trench west of it, and immediately afterwards Langeron and Borel were to attack the M redoubt and the remainder of the trench as far as its junction with the western end of the Blonde Trench, which was at the same time to be assaulted by Mangin between O and P. Four sections of machine-guns and three "37" guns posted on the north-west slopes of Mt. Blond were to assist the infantry by firing on the communication trench, the Blonde Trench between O and P and the wooded ground to its north. Two sections of machine-guns stationed on the eastern face of Mt. Cornillet were simultaneously to open on the same points so that the Germans should be under a cross fire. Beyond the point where the western ends of the Flensburg and Blonde Trenches met, a section of Antoine May's company of the 366th Regiment, which had sapped eastward almost to the Nauroy road, was directed subsequently to cross that road and, in conjunction with the bombers, if they had succeeded in storming the redoubt at F, to enter from the north the Blonde Trench. Lower down the northern slopes of Mt. Cornillet, some bombers of the 166th Regiment had orders to keep the Flensburg Trench under fire with their rifle bombs;



when it was taken, they were to turn their attention to the Blonde Trench. It was further arranged that rockets were to signal back to the guns behind the French trenches when they were to place a barrage of shells behind the Blonde Trench and on the Trench Nouvelle, its continuation eastwards north of Mt. Blond.

As originally intended the action was to have begun at 9 p.m. on June 20, but it was postponed till 3.50 a.m. on June 21. Just before dawn it would be easier for the hand-bombers to get close to the enemy's works and, after the sun rose, the movements of the enemy who would inevitably counter-attack could be better observed. At 9 p.m., too, the darkness would



GRENADE-THROWERS.

prevent the machine-guns on Mt. Cornillet and Mt. Blond and the "37" guns on Mt. Blond from firing with accuracy at their objectives.

There was another reason for the postponement. The Germans, anticipating an attack, had barraged, all through the 20th, the southern slopes of Mt. Cornillet and Mt. Blond, and at 9 p.m. the number of bombs available was discovered to be insufficient for a prolonged combat. Some idea of the vital part played by munition-workers in the new warfare may be

gathered from the fact that in this small affair about 10,000 rifle and hand bombs were used by the French.

During the night, thanks to the courage and activity of the reserve battalion of the 166th Regiment, the stock of grenades was finally brought up to the amount considered necessary. In the evening the bombers and the soldiers



OBSERVATION POST IN AN ADVANCED TRENCH.

with automatic rifles were assembled in a subterranean chamber. Some hours earlier the Germans with bombs had attacked the barrier erected by the French in the trench leading to redoubt R, on the capture of which by Aligne's column depended the success of the operation. Grenadiers of the 166th Regiment had been ceaselessly fighting at the traverse. They were now relieved by a party of the bombers who were to take part in the attack. At 9 p.m., the hour originally fixed for the advance, the enemy again assaulted at this point but were beaten off with incendiary bombs. The rest of the French bombers at 1 a.m. on June 21, left their underground shelter and were distributed, according to the plan already described, in five columns—Borel on the extreme left, then Langeron's, Léger's, Aligne's, with Mangin's on the extreme right, nearest Mt. Blond.

The important Flensburg salient was defended by a German battalion shaken by the previous fighting. Realizing that the French were about to attack, the German Commander sent up two fresh companies into the threatened area, and the enemy's artillery covered the ground in front of the Flensburg Trench, and the French first line and communication trenches, with shells from their "150" and

"105" guns. At 3 a.m. on June 21 the Germans violently assaulted the barrier in the trench opposite the redoubt R. The heads of Léger's and Aligne's detachments kept them at bay, but Aligne himself and two non-commissioned officers were burned seriously by the phosphorus of the incendiary missiles flung at them. Without waiting till the time fixed for the assault arrived, Aligne at 3.30 a.m., with his and Léger's columns, assaulted the Flensburg Trench. The Germans were driven from the barrier; the R redoubt was carried. Léger's column then installed itself between the strong points of R and M. From the former Aligne proceeded down the communication trench towards the Blonde Trench. Meanwhile Mangin on his right, in spite of two counter-attacks delivered from the Nouvelle Trench, had entered the Blonde Trench. About 4 a.m. Mangin's and Aligne's columns joined hands at O, where the communication trench entered the Blonde Trench.

On the left of Aligne's, Léger's column, exposed to a hail of machine-gun fire from the M redoubt, was in difficulties. Grenades ran out and fresh supplies could not be brought up across the crater-pitted ground by the men charged with that duty. Fortunately Lieutenant d'Hauteville, who was directing the movements of Aligne's and Léger's columns, succeeded in substituting for them other soldiers,

and Léger's men were provided with the sorely needed ammunition. At this moment Aligne appeared on the scene, took command of the detachment and flung it at the M redoubt, which—with its environs—was being bombed from both sides of the road to Nauroy by the heads of Langeron's and Borel's columns. The gunners of two machine-guns near it had been already put out of action with grenades.

The Blonde Trench between P and O having been secured by Mangin, redoubt R and the communication trench by Aligne, and Léger's column, now under Aligne, being close to the M redoubt, the order was given to Langeron and Borel to charge. The two detachments carried everything before them. Seized by a panic the Germans abandoned the rest of the Flensburg Trench, together with the redoubt. The fugitives, caught by the fire of the machine-guns and "37" guns of Mt. Blond, and of the machine-guns on the eastern slopes of Mt. Cornillet, endeavoured to escape through the barrage of French shells. Only a few succeeded in clearing the Blonde Trench and reaching the Nauroy Wood. Here and there groups still resisted, but these were speedily disposed of. In the course of these isolated combats the gallant Aligne was shot in the chest.

The enemy's losses amounted to several hundreds, and among the booty were six machine-guns. A section of French machine-



IN AN UNDERGROUND CHAMBER.



guns promptly arrived at M and was later shifted to F redoubt, the point of contact on the west of the Flensburg and Blonde Trenches. Communication trenches were rapidly made by the pioneers between the old French lines and the Flensburg Trench. A counter-attack at 3 p.m. by the two German companies held in reserve was severely repulsed.

On June 22, about 9 p.m., the enemy sought to revenge his discomfiture of the day before by assaulting 400 yards of trenches on the crest of and east of the Téton, the most easterly of the northern hills forming the Moronvilliers *massif*. After a severe artillery preparation his infantry entered the French outpost positions but were at once expelled from them.

Desultory fighting on the heights continued during the next fortnight. On July 5, the French repulsed an attack west of Mt. Cornillet and on the 6th reduced a small salient to its east and another on Mt. Haut. Four attempts to recapture these points by the enemy failed.

The action on June 21 had deprived the Germans of all posts for direct observation of the southern face of the Moronvilliers Heights, with the exception of those on the saddle between Mt. Blond and Mt. Haut, and one on the western side of Mt. Haut a few yards from the French lines. From the east, by means of a periscope, he could obtain occasional and precarious glimpses of the French movements. Expecting that General Gouraud would try, sooner or later, to clear him out of these points, the German Commander concentrated in the Moronvilliers region the 19th Hanoverian Division, and the 7th and 23rd Reserve Divisions. The number of German guns was greatly augmented, and the 19th Hanoverian Division elaborately rehearsed an attack on the heights from Mt. Cornillet to Mt. Haut, the two other Divisions preparing to assault the Casque and the Téton and also to work their way through the wooded district towards Mt. Sans Noin and Auberive. As the Germans had not been thrust down to the northern foot of the hills, and they were in many places not 20 yards from the French trenches, the project of recovering the crest line seemed a reasonable one.

Unhappily for the German leader, his intentions were divined by General Gouraud. On July 12, the French artillery began a systematic, wide, and deep bombardment of the enemy's positions. For two days shells rained on the spots where the three German divisions were

trying to hide, and also on the trenches which Gouraud had decided to capture. The Germans doubtless suspected which these were, but the breadth of the bombardment, which might have been the prelude to an effort to pierce the whole of the enemy's front, forced them to extend their own barrage, and waste large quantities of ammunition.

As it happened the objectives of Gouraud were strictly limited. He proposed to expel the Germans from their elaborately protected observatories on the saddle between Mt. Blond and Mt. Haut, and simultaneously to extend the French lines on the Téton, the hill nearest to the road running from Nuroy through Moronvilliers to the Suippe at St. Martin l'Heureux. The attacks were to be delivered on fronts of 800 yards and 600 yards respectively, and were not in either case to be pressed farther than 300 yards from the starting points. These distances may seem insignificant on the map, but represented in reality, considering the obstacles to be overcome, undertakings of considerable difficulty.

July 14, the anniversary of the taking of the Bastille in 1789, the National Fête Day, was the date chosen by Gouraud for his attacks. In Paris it had been marked by the assembly of detachments from most of the regiments of the French Army which had particularly distinguished themselves in the war. These marched through the densely thronged streets to the Place de la Nation. The enthusiasm of the crowds who saw them defile added to the impressive nature of the spectacle. To see the men who had done so much for France raised a spirit among both troops and spectators which presaged well for further efforts in the struggle for liberty.

A week before, on the night of July 6-7, a daring feat by the French aviators had also aroused enthusiasm. While 83 French aeroplanes were bombing Treves, Coblenz, and Ludwigshafen, losing only two machines in the enterprise, Sergeant Gallois, a hardware merchant before the war, had flown up the valley of the Moselle past Metz and Treves, struck the Rhine at Coblenz, and, steering by compass and moon, circled over Essen at a height of 6,000 feet. There, in a sky alive with bursting shells, he had dropped 10 bombs on brilliantly lighted munition works. Repeatedly fired at on his return journey, he had escaped without injury, and safely reached the

aerodrome from which he had started. This achievement was a happy augury of future aerial attacks against the country which had set the example of attacking open towns of no military importance.

On the greyish-white, crater-pitted slopes of the Moronvilliers Heights, on which a few black stumps alone now indicated where woods and

copses had once stood, the great attack was about to begin. At 4.30 p.m. a side wind began to blow, so fiercely that *The Times* correspondent in rear could scarcely hear the firing of the guns and explosions of the shells. Yet hundreds of French and German pieces were in action, and the crest line seemed one long line of volcanic eruptions. At 7.30 p.m. Gouraud's



DEFENDING A POSITION ON THE CHEMIN-DES-DAMES AGAINST A GERMAN COUNTER-ATTACK.



men went over the top and directly afterwards rockets, bursting into many coloured stars, ascended from the German trenches, summoning up supports to the threatened parts. Far over to the east the Téton was a mass of smoke pierced by flashes of flame.

In about six minutes the French infantry had secured their objectives on the Téton and the saddle between Mt. Blond and Mt. Haut, and, some 20 minutes later, seven sausage balloons appeared to the north of the

crests. It was visible evidence that the two operations were successful. Nearly 400 prisoners had been captured.

The enemy promptly counter-attacked, and throughout the night his troops endeavoured to regain the lost ground. Two waves were mown down, and one only succeeded in reaching the French lines. At the Téton the Germans were beaten back, but, by sheer weight of numbers, they managed to retake the position on the saddle. The French again charged



THE NATIONAL FÊTE IN PARIS, JULY 14, 1917: SALUTING THE WOUNDED.



A GERMAN "BLOCKHAUS" ON THE CREST OF THE TÊTON.

and recovered possession of the disputed trenches. On the 17th the enemy, suffering very heavy losses, regained a footing at certain points north of the Téton.

Five days afterwards, in the night of July 22-23, he transferred his attentions to the French trenches north-west of Mt. Cornillet. His successive waves of attack were completely repulsed. On the evening of the 25th, after an intense bombardment, the Germans again attacked; this time Mt. Haut was their objective. The struggle lasted till dawn; but the enemy made no progress. Five successive assaults on the 26th and a surprise attack east of Auberive by the Germans met with a like fate.

By the last days of July, General Gouraud had virtually completed the work begun by General Anthoine on April 17, 1917. Between the Germans and the great plain of Châlons stood a new fortress on the Meronvilliers Heights, the guns of which raked the western end of the enemy's fortified zone stretching from the east bank of the Suippe at Vaudesincourt to the Argonne. Neither at Verdun nor at Meronvilliers had the German Crown Prince succeeded in reducing the heavy balance against him.

On the battle-field of Craonne-Reims during June and July he was still more unfortunate. A series of violent offensives procure<sup>d</sup> no appreciable results and their failure shook the

*moral* of the German troops and prepared the way for General Maistre's great victory in the following October.

The ineffective counter-attacks of the Germans on the Chemin-des-Dames plateau have been narrated up to June 3. From that date onward to June 20 little occurred worth recording. An almost continuous bombardment from the guns on both sides was, however, occasionally varied by infantry combats. On June 20 the Germans endeavoured to penetrate the western end of the French positions, which now extended to the Ailette north of Vauxaillon. Here the opposed lines crossed Mont-des-Singes a mile east of Vauxaillon and, passing south near Moisy Farm, turned east just before the ruins of the mill were reached. At the north end of Mont-des-Singes, which rises rapidly from the environs of Vauxaillon, the two trenches nearly approached each other, and the French had dug a trench to the summit of the hill and established a post on it. Thence they had the command of view over the valley of the Ailette, and over the ravine through which ran the railway from Soissons to Laon. After very violent artillery preparation, regiments of the 78th Prussian Division, which three weeks before had been withdrawn from the eastern front, advanced at dawn on a mile and a half front between the Ailette and the Laffaux mill. On the Mont-des-Singes they were preceded



by shock-troops in shirt sleeves armed with grenades. They captured the post on the hill and their comrades following them descended the slopes and got behind the first French line, which was abandoned by our Allies. The shock-troops, having accomplished their tasks, retired. Within 50 minutes the French counter-attacked, and recovered all the trenches on the right. On the left, owing to the steepness of the hill, they were less successful. The Germans, holding the trench along the edge of the height, were able to drop their bombs on the heads of their assailants. In the afternoon the French advanced from the right, and for an hour and a half a bombing combat proceeded. The Germans stood on the parapet to meet their opponents but had to give ground. Night, however, fell with the enemy still on the edge of the Mont-des-Singes. During the night the German guns put up a terrific barrage of gas shells. The next morning our Allies recaptured almost the whole of the position. About the same time they assaulted the enemy who had established himself the previous day at places in the Moisy Farm sector. The Germans were driven out of most of the trench captured; all that they retained was a salient north-east of the farm.

On June 22, Saxon troops east of Fort

Malmaison tried to advance on the Hog's Back itself, on a front of a mile and a quarter between the Royère Farm and the Epine de Chevrégnny. In the centre they stormed a salient; elsewhere they were heavily repulsed.

On the night of the 22nd-23rd the fighting went on in the Vauxaillon and Royère Farm sectors, the Germans extending the front of their attack from the east of the Chevrégnny spur to the Froidmont Farm. The assaulting waves melted under the French fire and no progress was made by them. East of the Hog's Back, beyond Craonne in the Chevreux region, and south of the Aisne to the east of the Cavaliers de Courey, north-north-west of Reims, other attempts of the enemy also failed. On the 24th the French recaptured the greater part of the salient still occupied by the Germans north-east of Moisy Farm.

It was now the turn of the French to take the offensive. Our Allies in the battle of Craonne-Reims had secured most of the summit of the Hog's Back from the Chevrégnny spur to the California plateau above Craonne. In this sector from Courteçon, which remained in the enemy's hands, the second position of the Germans was not upon the Hog's Back but ran backwards to the Ailette, which it crossed, to Chamouille, where it turned east-



CHAVONNE, AT THE FOOT OF THE CHEMIN-DES-DAMES RANGE.



ON THE MONT DES SINGES: THE FRENCH COUNTER-ATTACK ON THE CREST.

wards parallel with the Chemin-des-Dames plateau by Neuville, Chermizy, Bouconville, connecting up with the defensive system of the enemy in the low ground north-east of Craonne. The valley of the Ailette was thus divided into two compartments, one west, the other to the east, of the line Courteçon-Chamouille. Approach to the valley in the eastern sector was difficult because the Germans still retained Cerny and Ailles on the northern slopes of the Hog's Back. The spur of La Bovelle which juts out between Cerny and Ailles had, however, been gained by the French, but on June 16 they had been dispossessed of the spur to the north-west of Hurtebise Farm, called the "Hurtebise Finger." This spur was an important tactical point on the ridge, since it was its highest point (about 650 feet) and commanded the Vauclerc plateau to the east. If the French were dislodged from that plateau, it was hardly probable that they would be able to retain the Casenates and California plateaux beyond, for those plateaux could easily be attacked from the north through the still densely wooded Forêt de Vauclerc.

Unless, then, the French were prepared to sacrifice the gains made by them in the first week of May, it was imperative that they should once more eject the enemy from the "Hurtebise Finger." The task was peculiarly difficult because beneath it was an immense cavern, the Dragon's Cave, consisting of a string of limestone grottoes. At the

Battle of the Aisne it had been occupied by the French, but early in 1915 the Germans by a lucky shot had closed the only entrance to the south and captured in it two companies. The northern part was, in June 1917, garrisoned by the Germans, who had built a loopholed wall across the middle directly under the trenches overhead on the spur. The cavern was 300 yards long, 100 yards wide, and at one place 60 feet high. The southern part was damp and inconvenient for the French who had forced their way into it. From the roof to the surface of the spur and wall within their lines the Germans had made a number of shafts up and down which machine-guns could be hauled. Near the northern entrance were the beds of the garrison, a hospital, and a small cemetery. With what the British mines had accomplished at Messines still fresh in their memories, the French could not afford to be content with merely capturing the summit of the spur; for the Germans could have accumulated high-explosives in the cave and blown them sky-high.

The operation, therefore, consisted of a fight below and a fight above ground. Hard by the monument to commemorate Napoleon's victory at Craonne in 1814 was a machine-gun emplacement of the Germans. It was so near to the French trenches that it was impossible to smash it with explosive shells, the back action of which would have taken effect on the French trenches. Liquid fire,





FRENCH SOLDIERS EXAMINING THE PROPERTY OF DEAD GERMANS  
IN A CAPTURED FARM.

the French Commander decided, should be employed to put the machine-guns out of action. Before the attack the heavy guns shelled the roof and the entrances to the cavern. Holes were thus made in the roof, and its main northern entrance was blocked up.

On June 25, after a short but violent artillery preparation, detachments of Gaucher's Division on the summit advanced in three bodies at 6.2 p.m. The liquid fire from the flame-projectors just failed to reach the machine-gunners. These, however, stifled by the smoke and blistered by the heat, took refuge in the cavern only to find it filled with poison gas. On the right 80 men who had volunteered for the dangerous work passed in two groups through the enemy's trenches and established a couple of posts on the edge of the spur commanding a wide view of the valley of the Ailette, a mile and a half to the north. Three companies in the centre carried the first three German lines, but the troops on the left after gaining their objectives were so heavily counter-attacked that four hours later they retired, leaving the centre and the right exposed to a flank fire. The moment was a critical one. Officers rallied the men, and

with a wild cheer they again rushed forward and drove the enemy over the crest of the spur. The "Hurtebise Finger" had once more passed into the possession of the French.

Some 150 half-dazed Germans were discovered in the Dragon's Cave. The total loss to the enemy amounted to close on 1,000 killed, wounded, and prisoners. Chasseurs and troopers of Nevers, Macon, and the Vosges had the credit of this eminently successful operation.

During the night of June 28-29 the enemy again took the offensive. An intensive bombardment west of the Hurtebise region preceded the charge of a Westphalian regiment in the Cerny region. North-east of Cerny the Westphalians penetrated the French lines, but were speedily ejected. They renewed their attacks on the morning of the 29th with some slight success. At nightfall the struggle was renewed on the summit of the La Bovelle spur. Supported by flame-throwers they dug themselves in in a salient south of La Bovelle Farm which had been completely flattened out by the bombardment. On July 1 a Lippe battalion east of Cerny on a front of 550 yards traversed by the Ailles-Paissy road, occupied the site of a line of French trenches. Attempt-

ing to advance farther they were severely hammered by our Ally's batteries. Great havoc was wrought in their ranks and they were brought to a standstill. Towards evening the French counter-attacked and recovered their original line. The ground was covered with German corpses

Simultaneously with the offensive between Cerny and Ailles, on June 29, several Bavarian battalions, preceded by shock-troops, attacked in the plain at the foot of the eastern end of

the Hog's Back. They endeavoured time after time to carry a salient south-east of Corbény on both sides of the Laon-Reims road. The waves of assault caught by the French bar-rages failed to reach the trenches at any point.

There was also fighting the same day north-west of Reims of a desultory character, and on the 30th between Reims and the Moronvilliers-*massif* the Germans ineffectually attacked east of Fort de la Pompelle and north and north-east of Prunay.



ENTRANCE TO THE DRAGON'S CAVE.



On July 2, at 6.30 p.m., the Germans delivered another series of violent attacks east of Cerny, on both sides of the Paissy-Ailles road. The fight swayed to and fro throughout the night of the 2nd-3rd and ended with the complete defeat of the enemy.

Undeterred by the series of reverses suffered by him north of the Aisne since April 16, the Crown Prince, at 7.30 p.m. on July 3, delivered battle on a front of some 12 miles from a point on the plateau dominated by Fort de Malmaison to the Chevreux Woods, just below the crest above Craonne. General von Böhm was, as before, the German local commander. In von Böhm's intention the battle was to be a surprise, and only half an hour was allowed for the artillery to play on the French trenches. The infantry, preceded by shock-troops, this time with knapsacks on their backs, an indication that victory was expected, advanced from their cover at 8 p.m. The main efforts were made east of Froidmont Farm, west and south-east of Cerny, round Ailles and on the Casemates and California plateaux. Von Böhm's design was to dislodge the French from the whole of the summit of the Hog's Back and to drive them back along the spurs or down the valleys leading to the Aisne.

Five or six divisions, totaling about 50,000 to 60,000 men, were employed in the attack. One of these had just arrived from the Russian front, a fact revealed to the French leader by a deserter. This caused him to anticipate an immediate assault and to take the necessary precautions for meeting it. He himself was in the front line to encourage his men; one of his colonels of artillery the day before went to the trenches to regulate the fire of the guns when the battle opened. Consequently Von Böhm's surprise did not succeed. A minute or so after the German hurricane bombardment began it was answered by an even more violent tornado of shells from the French guns. The barrage and counter-battery work of our ally's artillery was a masterpiece, and in the region of Cerny and on the California plateau the waves of Germans were almost literally annihilated. At a few points they managed to penetrate, but they were speedily bombed or bayoneted. Four battalions which had emerged from the Forest of Vaclere and had gained three small salients were driven out almost immediately by the Bretons on the Casemates plateau. An enemy group held ready in a trench with fixed bayonets did not dare to emerge from their cover and

were killed or wounded by French grenadiers, who flung down 700 bombs at them. At 10 p.m. the fighting died down. Piles of corpses and numbers of mutilated but living men, some of them boys of 19, lay before the French parapets. The next day, July 4, Von Böhm's guns again opened, but his infantry was not sent forward. The French, on the other hand, carried a salient east of Cerny, strongly held by the enemy.

For the next few days the weather was stormy and the Hog's Back became coated with a thick layer of glutinous mud. This assisted the French wherever they held the northern crest of the ridge, as the slopes descending to the Ailette, up which the Germans had to come, became slippery and impassable.

Von Böhm under the circumstances determined to strike his next blow on the wider Malmaison plateau. From the ruins of the fort and from those of the water-tower of Les Bovettes to its east the Germans had excellent views towards the Aisne Valley. Between the fort and the water-tower was a mound called the Panthéon, after the long-disappeared farm of that name. Manure and rubbish heaps and the foundations of buildings alone showed where the farm had once been. The French lines here formed a salient, and Von Böhm decided to carry it as a preliminary to clearing the French off the whole of the Malmaison height. To mystify his enemy, he arranged that just before the assault on the Panthéon a feint should be made north and east of Laffaux Mill towards Mennejean Farm by storm-troops from Nassau and Westphalian battalions. On a two-mile front between the Panthéon and the environs of Froidmont Farm he concentrated the Lower Saxon, Thuringian, Rhineland and Westphalian storm-troops borrowed from a neighbouring army, and a dozen or so battalions of fresh men. These were provided with light trench-mortars, machine-guns, entrenching tools, barbed wire and everything needed to organize a position against counter-attacks. The frightful losses incurred in the last battle from the French guns in the half-hour which preceded the attack led him to order the infantry to advance the moment the German artillery opened fire.

On the night of July 7 all was ready and at 3.45 a.m. on Sunday, July 8, the main attack was launched. A few minutes earlier the fighting had begun north and east of Laffaux Mill.

At the Panthéon the French garrison was

composed of chasseurs. In the dim light they perceived small columns of storm-troops moving forward by the Epaulette, Panthéon and Ecouvillon communication trenches. Behind them surged a thick wave of infantry. To left and right, lines of Germans, marching shoulder

and shot 10 of them. Bombers in his wake killed or wounded the incursionists and the trench was recovered. At 9 a.m. a second attack was delivered; the Germans, however, were scarcely able to reach the barbed wire. In the afternoon, at 4 p.m., the enemy, heavily



[From a German photograph.]

#### GERMAN SHOCK-TROOPS PREPARING TO STORM A POSITION.

to shoulder, moved to encircle the salient. These masses, though thinned by the French shells, flung themselves on the outnumbered chasseurs, who with bombs and bayonets put up a fierce resistance. On the right two French machine-guns enfiladed the enemy. One jammed but the other continued firing until the Germans beat a retreat. On the left their comrades managed to enter the Méeche trench. A chasseur with an automatic rifle ran forward

reinforced, once more renewed his assaults. Three were repulsed, but the fourth seemed about to succeed. The chasseurs had run out of bombs and their rifles were choked with mud. Punching, kicking and knifing their assailants, they just managed to hold the position. Night fell, supplies of bombs arrived, and, when at 10 p.m. the enemy again advanced he was met with showers of grenades which, bursting, blew holes in his solid masses. The wearied chas-





GERMAN OBSERVATION-POST OF CONCRETE, OVERTURNED BY FRENCH ARTILLERY.

seurs remained masters of the blood-stained position. They had lost heavily, but not so heavily as the foe they had defeated.

Meanwhile between the ruins of Les Bouvettes and the Chevreigny spur the enemy had been a little more fortunate. He had secured a section of the French trenches, but only for a few hours. On Monday, July 9, our Allies counter-attacked with admirable dash, and recovered 1,600 yards of them. Against his great casualties von Böhm could set nothing but the gain of a trifling scrap of ground.

On July 19, when the German counter-offensive in the East, which eventually ended in the defeat and dissolution of the Russian armies, commenced, the Crown Prince again set von Böhm's army in motion. The 5th Division of the Prussian Guards were flung in thick waves against the French position between Hurtebise Farm and the north-east of Craonne. Von Böhm hoped by storming the Vaulere, Casemates and California plateaux, that the French on the centre of the Hog's Back, with their left threatened by the enemy round Fort de la Malmaison, would be forced to retire on the Aisne, and a great victory could then be claimed by the Germans. Alarmed at the preparations being made by Sir Douglas Haig and General Anthoine in

Flanders, the German Higher Command did not hesitate to sacrifice divisions in the Craonne region, trusting that a success there might reduce Pétain and Haig to the defensive during the autumn.

For six continuous days the battle, which began on the 19th, raged in its very circumscribed area. On a front of just over three miles 300 or more German guns were concentrated, and all the other pieces within range from the valley of the Ailette eastwards across the Laon-Reims road to Berrioux and thence southwards through Juvincourt to the Aisne east of Berry-au-Bac were turned upon the narrow plateaux, *i.e.*, upon a space of less than a square mile. Seldom had the endurance of the French been so severely tested. The Casemates and California plateaux were only some 500 yards broad. The troops on them had to fight in whirlwinds of rocks, shrapnel and shell-fragments. The situation of the Germans was no better. The French heavy and field artillery deluged the northern slopes with high-explosive and shrapnel. Barriers of bursting shells outside the battle-field showed where the French and German gunners were mutually trying to put out of action the batteries opposed to them. Overhead the aeroplanes moved in conflict amid showers of anti-aircraft shells.

On the 19th about noon five regiments of the Prussian Guard, preceded by shock-troops, mounted bravely through the French barrage and, after frightful losses, reached the crest of the Hog's Back. They were hurled backwards from the Vauclerc, Casemates and California plateaux, but Brandenburgers managed to cling to 700 yards of French trench between the two last-mentioned table-lands. At 8.30 p.m. the assaults were renewed by the Guards and Brandenburgers, and the struggle continued till an advanced hour of the night. The French defended themselves with magnificent valour. When day broke the situation was unchanged, but the northern slopes and the crests were covered with the dead and dying. On the 20th and 21st the Germans between Fort de la Malmaison and the Hurtebise Farm attacked, north of Braye, south-west and south-east of Cerny, and south of Ailles. At the first of these points they were speedily repulsed, and south-west of Cerny the assault, supported by flame-throwers, failed. South-east of Cerny, however, the enemy twice penetrated the French first trench on a front of 300 yards. On each occasion a vigorous counter-attack sent him flying. South of Ailles two assaults were repulsed by bombing.

Sunday, July 22, saw a renewal of the battle for the Vauclerc, Casemates, and California plateaux. The Prussian 5th Reserve Division and the 15th Bavarian Division had been brought up to support the Guards. At 4 a.m. a furious bombardment opened, and an hour later the Guards, with the Prussian troops on their left and Bavarians on their right, mounted to the assault. The atmosphere that day was remarkably clear, and the French artillery wrought terrible execution among the clearly defined masses struggling upwards. Between Hurtebise Farm and the Casemates plateau the German waves were literally torn to pieces as soon as they left their cover. On the Casemates and California plateaux the French flung back the enemy with bayonet and grenade; but still charge succeeded charge through the long summer's day, and well into the night. The enemy was finally expelled from the Casemates, though on the California plateau he secured a footing in the northern trench. All attempts, however, to enter the French support trenches, were bloodily repulsed, some of the Prussian regiments losing half their effectives.

The next day (Monday, July 23) there was a lull in the infantry fighting, but the bombard-



[French official photograph.]

ENTRANCE TO A GERMAN SUBTERRANEAN STRONGHOLD.





A FRENCH RAID ON THE CHEMIN-DES-DAMES: "OVER THE TOP."

ment of the plateaux continued with unabated violence. The bare top of the ridge was swept by a continuous tempest of heavy shells from both sides. On the morning of the 24th Touraine and Marne-et-Loire troops were sent forward and, in spite of the desperate resistance made by the Germans, recaptured all the lost ground on the California plateau with the exception of a small and completely wrecked work, and ejected the enemy from the Casemates plateau and its environs. Several counter-attacks were repulsed on that and the next day, when at 5 a.m. an ineffective assault on the California plateau failed. The six days' battle for the Vauclerc, Casemates, and California plateaux had resulted in a decisive victory for our Allies.

While this battle was ending the enemy again turned his attention to the section of the Hog's Back between the Vauclerc plateau and Fort de la Malmaison. On the 23rd he twice

ineffectually attacked north-west of Bray. The next morning he advanced between Cerny and Ailles only to be repulsed. At 7 p.m. on the 25th a whole division was launched in successive waves between Ailles and the eastern environs of Hurtebise Farm, while another division supported the attack.

During the night and the next day, the 26th, the struggle continued. Round Hurtebise Farm the enemy was mowed down by the French guns, but south of Ailles some progress was made by the Westphalian regiments. On the night of the 27th-28th the Germans attacked on the entire Bray-Chevregny spur front and in the Hurtebise region. They were everywhere beaten back with heavy losses. At nightfall on July 28 they vainly assaulted the French position west of Hurtebise Farm on a front of 650 yards. The next day at dawn our Allies counter-attacked between the west of Ailles and Hurtebise Farm. At all



A FRENCH RAID: THE RAIDERS PASS THE WIRE ENTANGLEMENTS.  
A wounded man is seen returning to the trenches.

points they made progress. In the afternoon at 3 p.m. another German assault in the Hurtebise region was frustrated by the French artillery and infantry fire.

So far then from having reversed the decision of the Battle of Craonne-Reims, the Crown Prince and General von Böhme in June and July 1917 had suffered on the Chemin-des-Dames ridge a succession of bloody defeats, costing them, perhaps, 100,000 men killed, wounded, and captured. That no successes of the least importance had been gained north of the Aisne was evidenced by the following telegram sent on July 27 by the Kaiser to Hindenburg:

From the battlefields of Galicia, where my troops, in their unrelenting advance, have won fresh laurels, I recall with a grateful heart the unforgettable deeds of my armies in the West in repelling the enemy with tenacious perseverance. Above all, I think of my brave troops in Flanders, who have for weeks been the target of the most violent artillery fire, and who dauntlessly await future assaults. My confidence, like that of the Fatherland, whose frontiers they are defending against a world of enemies, is in them. May God be with us.

Had the Crown Prince been winning it is unlikely that his father would have forgotten to bracket his victory with those undoubtedly gained against the Russians. On June 21 when reviewing troops on the Western Front he said:

I express to the troops gathered here my fullest appreciation of their conduct and my firm confidence that they, as hitherto, and wherever they may be employed, will, trusting in God, do their duty and succeed in gaining the peace for the Fatherland which we need for its further development.

The Kaiser concluded:

I am especially delighted to be able once more to congratulate my well-tryed Dragoon Regiment of Bayreuth of Hohenfriedberg fame. When in the late summer of 1916 I sent the Borecke squadron to Rumania I gave it on the way my order to maintain at all costs the old tradition wherever it might be, and to gain fresh laurels if possible. The regiment fulfilled the expectations of its Supreme War Lord, and accomplished deeds which will please Old Fritz up there in the Elysian Fields. May it remain so. We shall not loose our hold until a happy peace is gained.\*

That Frederick the Great would have been equally pleased with the butchery of the Prussian Guards on the slopes of the Vauclere, Casemates, and California plateaux seems hardly probable.

It is now necessary to recount the proceedings

\* The Battle of Hohenfriedberg was fought on June 4, 1745. Ten squadrons of the Bayreuth Dragoons (1,500 men) charged through a gap in the Prussian line and drove back the wavering Austrian infantry with great loss.

on the left wing of the Allies in the period between the Battle of Messines and the opening of the Third Battle of Ypres.

King George and Queen Mary paid the soldiers a visit in the early part of July, and were received with great enthusiasm. There can be no doubt that such visits did a great deal to hearten up the troops. Before they arrived



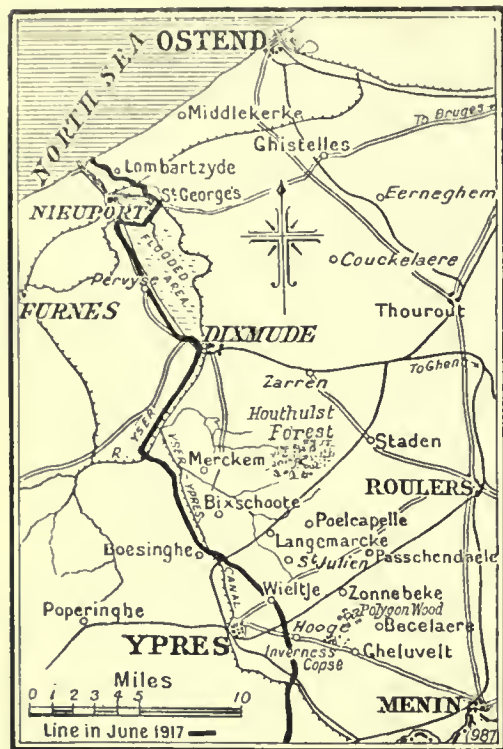
[Official photograph.]

#### THE KING'S VISIT TO FRANCE. Bidding farewell to General Pétain.

General Allenby had handed over the Third Army to Sir Julian Byng and set out for Palestine to take command of the Expeditionary Force destined at the end of the year to capture Jerusalem. It may here be not out of place to recall to the reader the services and career of this distinguished officer.

General Sir Edmund Henry Hynman Allenby was born in 1861 and was gazetted as a lieutenant to the Inniskilling Dragoons in May 1882, in which he passed all his regimental





THE ALLIED LINE IN JUNE 1917.

service until he reached the rank of major. Proceeding with his regiment to South Africa he first saw active service in the Bechuanaland Expedition of 1884-5 under Sir Charles Warren. Promoted captain on January 10, 1888, he assisted at the suppression of the rising in Zululand. From March 1889 to March 1893 he was adjutant of his regiment. In May 1897 he became a major.

The South African War, when he commanded his regiment from April 1900 to January 1901 gave Allenby a wider opportunity of showing that he was a daring and resourceful officer. In the latter month he was given the command of a column, and distinguished himself in the operations round Colesberg. When Roberts dispatched French to relieve Kimberley, Allenby accompanied the latter. He was present at the Battle of Paardeberg and at the actions of Poplar Grove, Dreifontein, Karee Siding and Sand River. After Pretoria was captured he was with the army which drove Kruger into Portuguese territory. Under Kitchener, who had replaced Roberts, Allenby was constantly employed, serving with French and Babington against De la Rey in the last days of 1900. In November of that year he had been given the brevet rank of lieutenant-colonel. The next year (1901) French assigned to him one of the

columns operating in the Eastern Transvaal (January to April). In June he was transferred to the Western Transvaal. During September he and his column were railed to Dundee in Natal to help oppose Botha. After Botha's retreat from Natal, Allenby's column, consisting of 480 Scots Greys, 550 Carabiniers, and "O" Battery R.H.A., four guns, one pom-pom (E Sect.), was sent to Standerton and placed under General Bruce Hamilton. Allenby took a prominent part in the campaign (March-April 1902) against Botha just previous to the conclusion of peace. By the end of the war he had been three times mentioned in dispatches, was made a brevet colonel and received the Companionship of the Bath. Although the fighting was not of a very serious character, still the varied experience in South Africa was of great value in training for the command of still larger forces in his next campaign.

On August 2, 1902, Allenby received the substantive rank of lieutenant-colonel on being posted to the 5th Lancers, which he commanded till 1905, when he became a substantive colonel in the army and was given (as Brigadier-general) the 4th Cavalry Brigade in the Eastern District. In April 1910 he was made Inspector of Cavalry, having been promoted to Major-general in September 1909.

When the war broke out in 1914 he went to France with the cavalry and became an Army Corps Commander in October. He was then made a temporary Lieutenant-general and received the substantive rank on January 1, 1916. In 1915 he was made a K.C.B., and he was subsequently given the command of the Third Army, and in 1917 selected for the command of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force.

On June 10 Sir Hubert Gough's Fifth Army, the left wing of which had been engaged in the combats round Bullecourt described in Chapter CCXXIII., came into line on the left of the Second Army, occupying the trenches from Observatory Ridge to Boesinghe. It was destined to play an important part in the Third Battle of Ypres. Simultaneously with the transfer of Gough's forces from the devastated region to Flanders, the Fourth Army, commanded by Sir Henry Rawlinson, moved northwards, its place west and north-west of St. Quentin being taken by the French, and the Third Army, still commanded by Allenby, extended its right wing in the direction of Cambrai. Ten days later (June 20) the British

relieved the French between St. Georges and the North Sea, and on June 15 General Anthoine with the French First Army replaced the Belgians holding the line from Boesinghe, the extreme left of Gough's Fifth Army, and Nord-schoote, south of Dixmude, on the Yperlee Canal.

To mask as far as possible the complicated movements connected with the shifting of these hundreds of thousands of troops, Sir Douglas Haig, while the preparations for his great offensive at Ypres were being finished, maintained an offensive attitude at various points between Ypres and St. Quentin. On June 12, in the

north-east to south-west across and south of the canal before Hollebeko. German counter-attacks on the 15th for the recovery of the earthwork and these trenches broke down.

The enemy in these combats had lost over 150 prisoners, one howitzer, four field guns, and seven machine-guns.

Simultaneously we continued to press the Germans in the salient between St. Yves and the Lys. South-east of Arras, at about 7.30 a.m. on the morning of the 14th, Scottish and Eastern County troops, without a preliminary bombardment, attacked on a front of some



FRENCH TROOPS ENCAMPED PENDING A CHANGE OF SECTOR.

morning, our line was slightly advanced south of Lens astride the Souchez River, 17 prisoners and three machine-guns being captured, and a counter-attack of the Germans delivered after dark was repulsed. In the night of the 12th-13th we raided the enemy's front north-west of St. Quentin at Le Verguier, south-east of Bullecourt, at Lagnicourt, in the La Bassée salient and north-east of Neuve Chapelle. On the night of the 14th the small oval earthwork on the north bank of the Ypres-Comines canal, which had resisted the efforts of the Londoners at the Battle of Messines, was at last reduced, together with certain trenches running from

three-quarters of a mile and carried the high-ground east of Monchy-le-Preux, known as Infantry Hill, capturing 175 Bavarians, two officers, and a couple of machine-guns. The survivors of the German garrison fled down the communication trenches to the Vert and Sart Woods. At night and during the morning of the 15th the German positions were raided east of Loos and north-west of Bullecourt, where a strong point was captured and retained. Early on the morning of the 18th shock-troops dislodged the Scottish and Eastern Counties men from parts on the edge of Infantry Hill, the summit of which, however, remained in the possession of the British.



The sultry weather was now broken by a series of violent thunderstorms, accompanied by gales of wind which uprooted trees and overturned wagons, thus interfering with Sir Douglas Haig's preparations for the Ypres offensive.

During the next few days there was little to report. We raided on the night of the 18th-19th the German lines south-east of Le Verguier and in the neighbourhood of the Bapaume-Cambrai chaussée and gained some ground south of the Cojeul and north of the Souchez rivers. We also recovered the posts lost on the edge of Infantry Hill. The Germans four times counter-attacked ineffectually in the Souchez region. Raids of the enemy east of Epéhy and at Guillemont Farm hard by, were repulsed on the night of the 21st-22nd; ours south-east of Quéant and in the Neuve Chapelle and Armentières regions were successful. The next evening Portuguese troops\* south of

\* The Portuguese troops have been dealt with to a large extent in Chapter CXLVI. Their presence on the battlefields of France was a gallant proof of Portugal's adherence to her old ally, England, and recalled the days of the Peninsular War, when Portuguese troops had fought so well in Wellington's Army. Their uniform was cut in the English fashion, but the colour was a modification of the French "bleu d'horizon," resembling the French grey of the old Indian Light Cavalry regiments.

Armentières killed or captured the whole of a German patrol; the enemy's positions north of Gavrelle were entered and a successful operation near Warneton was carried out by us. On



GERMAN OFFICERS TESTING A MACHINE-GUN AT OSTEND.

the morning of the 24th parties of the enemy approaching our trenches south-east of Armentières and south-east of Gavrelle were caught by our guns



[Official photograph.]

ON THE CANAL NEAR BOESINGHE.



*Official photograph.*

**BOESINGHE: ARTILLERY PASSING AN OLD COMMUNICATION TRENCH.**

The night of the 24th-25th and the day of June 25th were distinguished by a number of minor operations on our part between Hooge and Epéhy. Below the Messines ridge the British established posts on the Warneton road, almost a mile above the village immediately in front of the Warneton line. The anxiety of the Germans in this quarter was evidenced by the fires of destruction burning in Comines. East of Vermelles a raiding party captured two mine-throwers, and remained some two hours in the German line, bombing dug-outs and communication trenches. Near Rœux on the banks of the Scarpe five Germans were captured, while south of the Scarpe our raids near Bullecourt and Epéhy gave useful results. Close to the canal side at Vendhuile the garrison of a redoubt was annihilated.

It was, however, on the outskirts of Lens that the most successful action was fought. A stroke at Lens was, perhaps, the movement best calculated to mystify Prince Rupprecht as to the region selected for the coming Anglo-French offensive. General Horne's troops were already north, west, and south of Lens, and it might well be expected that the British would endeavour to eject the Germans out of that important mining centre before they

attempted to make a further advance north of the Lys.

To protect Lens the enemy had been busy blowing up the roads on its south side in the Avion area, and he had flooded the flat land between Lens and Avion south of the Souchez river. A lake half a mile broad and a mile long had been formed, out of which rose the ruins of the industrial suburb known as Cité St. Antoine. The immense railway yards there were under water. Almost every building in the Cité du Moulin, the western suburb of Lens, had been levelled to the ground to give the garrison of the city a good field of fire. Similar levelling had been done at other points, and Lens now was but the husk of a city.

To the west of Lens rose a hillock, Hill 65, the key to the defences on that side. It was strongly fortified above and below ground, and the dug-outs and trenches were held by detachments of the Prussian 56th Division, recruited in the Rhineland. On Sunday, June 24, in the evening our heavy guns deluged this eminence with huge shells. After two hours' bombardment South Midland troops went "over the top," and, meeting with little or no opposition, seized Hill 65. In vain the





[Canadian War Records.]

GERMAN CONCRETE EMBLEMENTS IN LENS SMASHED BY  
CANADIAN ARTILLERY.

Rhinelanders were incited to counter-attack. They were promised, if they were successful, to be at once relieved, but their *moral* had been shaken by weeks of shell-induced tension, and they could not be prevailed upon to do so.

The loss of Hill 65 obliged the enemy to withdraw a considerable distance south of the Souchez. Soon after 7 a.m. on the 25th, in the wake of a violent barrage, our troops stormed the brewery on the Arras-Lens road, and to the southward pushed up along the railway line. Before noon they were less than half a mile south of Avion. During the 26th La Coulotte, a village on the Arras-Lens highway due west of Avion between the Souchez and Avion, was occupied by the British. Thus the enemy's positions astride the river on a front of two miles and to an average depth of a thousand yards had been secured. Meantime, south of the Scarpe at midnight on Monday, June 25, some 500 yards of trenches on the west bank of the Sensée, in front of Fontaine-lez-Croisilles, had been captured by the Durhams after a heavy bombardment and gas barrage. A battalion of Westphalians counter-attacked while the North Countrymen were digging themselves in. The Durhams had no time to seize their rifles, but with uplifted spades felled the Westphalians, most of whom were lads of 18 or 19, inflicting terrible wounds. Storm troops were brought up to the support of the cowed Westphalians, but the Durhams shot them down. Later a third

counter-attack was repulsed by shell-fire. West of Oppy on the evening of the 26th we raided successfully, and on the morning of the 27th we beat off a German party south of Rœux on the marshy banks of the Scarpe.

The operations west and south of Lens caused Prince Rupprecht to imagine that Sir Douglas Haig set great store on immediately capturing the city. In the German *communiqué* of June 27 it was stated that the British were "attacking the Lens salient." On June 28 General Horne in the evening made elaborate demonstrations to give the impression that this was so. On a 12-mile front, from Hulluch to Gavrelle, gas, smoke and thermit were discharged and a number of small raids were made, together with real attacks on a two and a-half mile front astride the Souchez and on a 2,000 yards' front opposite Oppy. Further to mystify the enemy the war correspondents after the event were permitted to state that there were "four simultaneous but disjointed minor operations," a statement scarcely likely to take in the masters of the art of deliberate falsehood; but nevertheless the following passage from the German *communiqué* of the 29th seems to prove that Prince Rupprecht was completely deceived by General Horne's demonstration.

In the salient west and south-west of Loos, which had long since been abandoned by us as a battle-ground, an attack by strong English forces was launched early in the morning along the road to Arras. It proved to be a thrust in the void.

In the evening, after drumfire, several divisions

attacked between Hulluch and Méricourt, and from Fresnoy to Gavrelle. Near Hulluch, as well as between Loos and the road to Lens and Liévin, the enemy were driven back by our fire, and as a result of our counter-thrust. West of Loos, after violent fighting with our advanced troops, a new enemy attack was not carried out. Near Avion a first assault was launched with extraordinary energy, but failed completely. The enemy attacked here again after bringing up reinforcements. This attack also was frustrated by our fire and counter-thrust. Between Fresnoy and Gavrelle the enemy fed with a continual stream of fresh troops his storming waves, which at first collapsed with heavy losses under our artillery activity.

After fierce close-quarter battles, the British established themselves between Oppy and the windmill of Gavrelle in our foremost lines.

Our troops fought admirably. The enemy suffered bloody losses against our well-organized defence and in the hand-to-hand fighting.

The bombardment began soon after 7 p.m. and was crushing in its effect. A thousand guns suddenly opened and the earth trembled with their reverberations, while a crown of bursting shells was formed round Lens. Directly afterwards heaven's thunder mingled with that of the guns. The day had been threatening and the sky was overcast. A violent thunderstorm, accompanied by tropical rain, burst, and the jagged lightning

illuminated the scene. Through storm, smoke and gas the British advanced. North of Lens, in the Loos region, English troops stormed certain trenches in the Cité St. Laurent area. Here the men of the Prussian 8th Division fought stubbornly and, as the attack was not intended by General Horne to be pressed home, it soon ended.

Astride the Souchez river the advance was no feint. Early in the morning the Canadians, south of the river, had pushed forward on the Arras-Lens road as far as the hamlet of Eleudit Leauvette, below that point had entered the southern fringe of Avion, and farther south had occupied a trench defended by detachments of the 5th Prussian Grenadiers beyond the railway. Above Leauvette the Germans had destroyed the bridge across the Souchez. With English troops, including South Midlands, north of the river, the Canadians in the drenching rain resumed their forward movement. The South Midlands punished severely units of the 11th Reserve Division, which had relieved the 56th Division and were endeavouring to reach the Cité du Moulin. As for the Canadians



[Canadian War Records.]

#### HIDDEN TREASURE RECOVERED AT SOUCHEZ.

The Mayor and Aldermen of Souchez are carrying away money which had been buried when the inhabitants fled before the Germans.



THE TIMES HISTORY OF THE WAR.



A NIGHT RAID BY SCOTTISH TROOPS ON THE WESTERN FRONT.

they burst into Avion and bombed and bayoneted the Germans in the southern and western streets. On their right the pit-heads of Fosse 4 and 4 Bis de Liévin defended by machine-guns held them up. They swung to the left of these and established themselves on a diagonal line striking north-west and south-east through the wrecked houses of Avion. But the pit-heads at dawn were still untaken. Some prisoners and 12 machine-guns had been secured; on a front of four miles we had advanced in depth a mile.

Simultaneously English troops from the East Midland (among them the Royal Warwicks) and Northern counties had attacked the trenches west and south of Oppy. They were held by the 5th Bavarian Regiment, which offered a stubborn resistance. Nevertheless, all were carried and 240 prisoners taken.

On June 30 heavy rain fell, but in the night north of Souchez a further advance was made on a front of half a mile west and south-west of Lens. During July raids similar to those in June were made by the British between Ypres and St. Quentin, and the Germans attempted several times to penetrate our lines. In most of the combats we maintained the upper hand. For example, in the small hours of July 23 the Canadians on a front of about 600 yards south of Avion reached the high embankment of the Avion-Méricourt railway and attacked the dug-outs in it. As the enemy had been employing gas shells on the previous afternoon the Canadians wore gas masks. After bombing the dug-outs and capturing 60 prisoners they returned to their lines.

On the other hand, the Germans were successful on a few occasions. Thus on July 25, in the early morning, after a heavy bombardment, with the assistance of flame-throwers they drove in some advanced posts on Infantry Hill. But, taken as a whole, they got much the worst of the exchanges, except in one instance now to be narrated.

It has been seen that on June 20 the British relieved the French between St. Georges and the North Sea. Their presence round Lombartzyde in the Dunes, nine miles from Ostend, appears to have puzzled Prince Rupprecht and his staff. They may have imagined that they would act in conjunction with some force to be landed on the coast under cover of the guns of the British fleet. Be that as it may, the German leaders decided to drive our men back into Nieuport and across the canalised Yser.

We were in a difficult position. The front was a narrow one, our backs were to the canal; no proper trenches or dug-outs could be made, water being so close to the surface; and our only defences were breastworks and barbed wire. A dyke, the Geleede Creek, ran perpendicularly across our front, entering the Yser, south-west of Lombartzyde, dividing it into two sections. If the bridges over the creek were smashed, the troops in the left section could not reinforce those in the right and *vice versa*. If the bridges over the Yser were destroyed



THE GERMAN SUCCESS ON THE YSER: JULY 8, 1917.

the British garrison in this bridge-head would be isolated. At first sight it would have seemed good policy to have withdrawn our men from so exposed an area, but to have done so would have meant our losing control of the machinery regulating the Yser inundations. Moreover, if the Third Battle of Ypres resulted in a crushing victory for the Allies, the possession of the bridge-head would be of great value to us when pursuing the enemy should he evacuate Ostend.

On the evening of July 8 the Germans began a systematic and heavy bombardment of the British position. The bridges over the Geleede Creek and the Yser were destroyed, the wire entanglements torn into fragments, and the breastworks levelled to the ground. At 7.45 p.m. on July 10 German Marines and other troops were sent forward. The brunt of the attack was borne by the King's Royal Rifles





FRENCH TROOPS LEAVING THE NIEUPOORT SECTOR  
On being relieved by the British, some of whom are seen looking on.

holding the coast end of the line with the Northampton on their right. Six to seven hundred yards behind them was the canal. For more than an hour the British kept the Marines at bay. Most of them died fighting, a few swam the Yser and escaped. The enemy had cut off the western end of our position on a front of 1,400 yards and reached the right bank of the Yser near the sea, but on the other side of the Geleede Creek he was driven back.

Such was, in the language of the German *communiqué* of July 12, "the great and magnificent success" of July 10. The enemy claimed to have captured 1,250 prisoners, including 27 officers, but, amongst these, were doubtless counted very many who were dead. On the 13th he attempted to complete his plan by attacking south of Lombartzyde, but was repulsed. The attempt was again repeated

on the 19th with the same result. The southern section of the British line on the coast covering Nieuport remained in British hands, when the Third Battle of Ypres opened.

It will be noticed that the operations described in this chapter were none of them commanding in results. But regarded as a whole they were not unimportant. Many valuable points were seized, and the *moral* of the Allied troops had shown itself superior to that of their opponents. The Germans had lost heavily in killed, wounded and prisoners, considerably in material, and to some extent in terrain. They had never been able to follow up any of their minor successes, and in nearly every instance where they had gained ground temporarily they had been driven out of it again. It may fairly be said that the result of the fighting in June and July had been advantageous to the Allies



## CHAPTER CCXXVIII.

# VICTORIA CROSSES OF THE WAR. (IV.)

NUMBER OF AWARDS—THE SYSTEM OF ANNOUNCEMENT—CROSSES FOR SKIPPERS—THE AFFAIRS OF DRIFTERS AND A SMACK—NAVAL AWARDS—CAPTAIN BISHOP'S GLORIOUS AIR DEEDS—DECORATIONS FOR CANADIANS—BATCHES OF AWARDS—SINGLE-HANDED EXPLOITS—GUARDSMEN'S BRAVERY—BRIGADIER-GENERAL COFFIN—INDIVIDUAL HAULS OF GUNS AND MEN—A FAITHFUL MESSENGER—CASES OF EXTREME ENDURANCE—GRENADIERS AND BOMBERS—A STOKES SHELL EPISODE—HONOURS FOR RECIPIENTS OF THE CROSS—A CAPTAIN'S VALLIANT DEFENCE—SIMILARITY OF CASES—"EXTRAORDINARILY GOOD WORK"—ATTACKS ON "PILL-BOXES"—A COLONEL'S CROSS—A MACHINE-GUNNER'S HEROISM—THIRTY SECONDS' "RECKLESS BRAVERY"—MORE FINE INDIVIDUAL DEEDS—THE AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE—A HAND-TO-HAND FIGHT—A CARRIER OF BANDOLIERS—BAYONET-CHARGE BY A HIGHLANDER—DEVOTION OF A TANK LEADER—POSTHUMOUS AWARDS—A CORPORAL'S FATE—FEARLESS LEADERSHIP—CAVALRY DASH—THE VICTORIA CROSS WARRANTS.

PARLIAMENT, at the end of October 1917, passed a memorable vote of thanks to the Navy and Army for their war services. In the House of Lords the resolution was moved by Earl Curzon, who, in dealing with the work that the naval, military and air forces had done spoke of the extraordinary valour of all ranks. He said that to the Army 301 Victoria Crosses had been awarded, and two bars to the Crosses; and 28 Crosses had been awarded to the Navy. These honours were included in a list of awards which justified the speaker in declaring that some of the deeds for which they were given were almost past belief, and as time went on would be enshrined in legend and form lessons to be taught to the future generations of our race.

It was remarked in Chapter CLI. (Victoria Crosses of the War.—I.) that the new system of warfare had produced new types of fighters—the airman, the submarine man, the bomber, the trenchman, doers of "things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme," and that statement held good for all the period during which Vol. XV.—Part 189.

the great honour of the Cross was conferred. Modern war's appalling forms had evolved a race of heroes whose acts had no rivals out of the realms of mythology; the very Sagas paled before the glamour of the tales of deeds for which the Cross was charily awarded.

Every fresh development had given British fighting men the chance to show that they were fully qualified to meet and master it when victory was needed; and now there was to come the hero of the drifter, the smack, the "pill-box" and the tank. It was all wonderful and varied to the point of numbing receptivity and understanding; yet what even to imagination seemed impossible proved achievable through British enterprise and courage.

The announcements of the awards were made for the most part in considerable batches, and in a few cases the official story was of unusual length; but there were instances when nothing was added to the bare statement that the Cross had been given for certain special work, these being invariably in connexion with naval operations. While expediency undoubtedly justified the with-





[Official photograph.]

#### A DRIFTER FLEET AT SEA.

holding of details in such cases it was difficult to understand the official method of consistently using the term "enemy." The system was well enough adapted to earlier days of the Cross, when there was no doubt as to the identity of the opponent, but it no longer applied to the very greatly altered circumstances of the war, and it was impossible to suppose that the use of the word "German" could have conveyed information of any value to the foe. If a British fighter slew and captured Germans wholesale in straightforward conflict—and British fighters did both—no one knew the humiliating fact sooner or better than the Germans themselves, and no official craft in employing the expression "enemy" could conceal the knowledge from them. Yet "enemy" was persistently, tediously and unilluminatingly employed, and it was left to the reader to choose from the German, Austrian, Turkish or Bulgarian forces; the selection being a matter of personal knowledge or inference.

It was not until the war had entered upon its fourth year that a Victoria Cross was bestowed upon a member of that vast army of auxiliaries who swept and patrolled the seas in such small craft as steam trawlers and drifters. For the most part the crews of these vessels were fishermen, and they had done invaluable service in sweeping the seas clear of mines, in hunting and capturing submarines, and in patrol and other work. These services had involved constant peril and hardship, with inevitable heavy losses. There had been many

meetings with the enemy, encounters in near and distant waters, and in all these fights the toilers of the deep sea had upheld their splendid reputation for courage and endurance.

One of the most remarkable fights of all was that in the Straits of Otranto on the morning of May 15, 1917. The circumstances were very unusual, the forces very unequal, and the odds heavily in favour of the enemy. The Allied



SKIPPER JOSEPH WATT.

drifter line was attacked by Austrian light cruisers, one of which, at about 100 yards range, hailed the drifter Gowanlea and ordered the skipper, Joseph Watt, to stop and abandon her. The Gowanlea was a typical drifter, with a length of keel of less than 90 feet, a depth of less than 10 feet, and a breadth of 18 feet



#### SECOND HAND T. W. CRISP

Returning from the Palace wearing his own D.S.M. and his father's V.C. and D.S.C.

6 inches. She had as crew a mere handful of men, and as armament one gun that was almost toy-like in appearance. The size and power of the Austrian cruiser were not stated, but at her stone's-throw distance she must assuredly have towered above her tiny prey.

It was one thing for an Austrian to give an order to a British fisherman turned fighter, but a very different thing for that stanch seaman to obey. So far from heeding the enemy, Skipper Watt, though instant destruction seemed certain, ordered full speed ahead and called upon his crew to give three cheers and fight to a finish. The very audacity of the defiance might well have taken the Austrian aback; at any rate, fire was opened on the cruiser. Then began a short, sharp, curious fight. Anything in the shape of a cruiser should have had a very easy and simple task in destroying the drifter, but the Austrian found his opponent so little to his liking that he was content to maintain a running fight, the running on his part being towards the safest part of the battle-area. One round only had been fired from the drifter's gun when the weapon was disabled at the breech. The gun's crew, however, in spite of heavy fire, tried to work the gun. Luckily for the *Gowanlea*, the cruiser passed, and then Skipper Watt, not content with what he had done, and disregarding his own damage, took his little ship alongside another drifter, the *Floandi*, which was in worse case than his own, and helped to remove the dead and wounded. It was for his gallantry on this strenuous

occasion that Skipper Watt received the Victoria Cross, the announcement being made on August 29, 1917.

That affair of drifters in the Adriatic showed the sterling quality of the fishers' mettle: it was an episode which appealed with special force to the public at home, but there was soon to be given the story of another fisher V.C. hero which, in some respects, made an even deeper appeal, for it contained the elements of splendid tragedy and sacrifice. This was the story of Skipper Thomas Crisp, a fisherman of Lowestoft. The tale was first told in the House of Commons by the Prime Minister, who



• SKIPPER THOMAS CRISP.

was paying a glowing tribute to the loyalty and courage of the fishermen; on November 2 the *London Gazette* announced the posthumous grant of the Cross to Crisp and the award of the Distinguished Service Medal to his son, Second Hand Thomas William Crisp. The details which were published were unusually full.

One August afternoon, shortly before three o'clock, the smack *Nelson*, of which Skipper



Crisp was in command, was on the port tack, with her trawl down. The skipper was below, packing fish, and one hand was on deck, cleaning fish for next morning's breakfast. The skipper came on deck and seeing an object on the horizon he examined it closely and sent for his glasses. What he saw caused him to shout almost instantly, "Clear for action! Submarine!" He had scarcely uttered the words when a shot fell on the smack's port bow, only about 100 yards away. Thereupon the motor man got to his motor, the hand on deck dropped his fish and went to the ammunition-room, and the other hands, at the skipper's orders, let go the warp and put a "dan" on the end of



LIEUT. CHARLES G. BONNER, D.S.C.,  
R.N.R.

it—the "dan" being the buoyed flag which trawlers use to locate shoals of fish or other objects. The gunlayer—the Nelson had only a three-pounder as armament—held himself in readiness until Crisp said, "It's no use waiting any longer; we'll have to let them have it!" Brave words indeed, worthy of the deep sea man and the name of the smack which he commanded. Meanwhile the submarine, which was in the distance, in almost absolute security, was shelling the smack. The earlier of the shots missed their target, but the fourth shell went through the port bow, just above the water-line. "Then the skipper shoved her round." Again the shells screamed, but there was no confusion, not even when the seventh shell came, passed through the skipper's side, and out through the deck and the side of the smack. That terrible missile ended the life of the skipper and his vessel, for while he

fell to the deck with shattered body the smack was sinking rapidly. Undaunted by what seemed like certain fate, the mortally wounded man's son, who was second hand, or mate, of the Nelson, took charge, the firing continuing and the vessel being dragged down by the sea that surged into her.

The gunlayer went to his skipper to see if he could help him with first aid; but the gallant Crisp knew that he was far beyond the well-meant help. "It's all right, boy, do your best," he said. Then, with the ruling passion of duty strong in death, he said to his son, who also had gone to him, "Send a message off." Obedient to the order, the words were sent: "Nelson being attacked by submarine. Skipper killed. Send assistance at once." That having been done, the skipper spoke again to his son, "Abandon ship. Throw the books overboard." As a forlorn hope, the son asked his father if they might lift him into the boat, but the dying skipper knew too well how futile such an effort at salvation would be, and his only answer was, "Tom, I'm done. Throw me overboard." And so, on the shattered, reddened deck on which he was breathing his last, they had to leave him. They took to the small boat, and in 15 minutes the Nelson went down, taking her commander with her. During that day and night and the next day and night until morning broke the survivors rowed and were blown about in the little craft; then they were saved, and the story of the Nelson and her skipper was made known.

Many valiant men and lads had won the Cross on land and sea and in the air, but there had been no more splendid exhibition of true loyalty and courage and resource than Skipper Thomas Crisp's. There was not and could not be for him the fierce joy of ordinary battle, or the exultation of a skillful sea or air combat; he was trapped to death, there was no hope of escape or rescue—yet knowing all that full well he died, refusing even to have his maimed body taken away from his sinking vessel, lest it should delay and hamper his son and the rest of his crew.

The official story of Crisp's achievement did not indicate the means by which his message was sent; but an explanation was afforded subsequently in *The Times*, in a short article describing how fighting men's lives had been saved by homing pigeons. It was pointed out that the work of the Government pigeons was sometimes literally a matter of life and death

to our fighters, many of whom owed their lives to the speed of the birds. Skipper Crisp was given as a notable instance—a bird flew away with his appeal for help for the crew.

Simultaneously with the award of the Cross to Skipper Crisp there was announced the award of the same honour to Lieutenant Charles George Bonner, D.S.C., R.N.R., and Petty



SETTING OUT.

Officer Ernest Pitcher. No details were given in Bonner's case beyond the general statement that the decoration was conferred for services in action with enemy submarines; while in the case of the petty officer it was stated that he had been selected by the crew of a gun of one of H.M. ships to receive the Cross in accordance with the Warrant of 1856. The honours, decorations, and medals which were awarded at this time were an indication of the persistent and successful war which had been waged against enemy submarines. A very interesting item in the list was:—"Second bar to the D.S.O.:—Captain G. Campbell, V.C., D.S.O. R.N."

The first Cross to be announced in the fourth year of the war was to an airman, a distinguished member of the force which had become known as the "cavalry of the air," and whose exploits appealed with special force to a people who above all things valued and admired dash and enterprise in unfamiliar circumstances—though even desperate conflicts high in the air were becoming common happenings. This recipient was Captain William Avery Bishop, Canadian Cavalry and Royal Flying Corps, who, like the lamented young hero, Captain Albert Ball,\* had already won the D.S.O. and the M.C. Here again was a case exemplifying such astounding daring and success that without the bare official facts to prove it the

story would have been incredible; for Bishop, single-handed, attacked enemy aerodromes, engaged the enemy against overwhelming odds, did much material damage, and finally returned in safety to his station. Bishop had been sent out to work independently. First of all he flew to an aerodrome, but finding no machine about he flew on to another aerodrome some three miles south-east, which was at least twelve miles on the other side of the line. On the ground were seven machines, some with their engines running. From a height of only about 50 feet the captain attacked them, and a



CAPTAIN W. A. BISHOP,  
Canadian Cavalry and R.F.C.

mechanic who was starting one of the engines was seen to fall. One of the machines got off the ground, but at a height of 60 feet Bishop fired fifteen rounds into it at very close range and it crashed to the ground. His action apparently goaded the enemy into further effort, for a second machine got off the ground. This aeroplane had little better luck than its predecessor—Bishop, at a range of 150 yards, fired 30 rounds into it, and the machine fell into a tree. Two more machines then rose

\* Chapter CCV., p. 362.



from the aerodrome, and at a height of 1,000 feet Bishop engaged one of them, emptying the rest of his drum of ammunition with such good effect that the machine crashed 300 yards from the aerodrome. The captain had now accounted for three machines; into the fourth he emptied a whole drum of ammunition; then, and not till then, he made for his station. The demoralizing effect upon the enemy of this single-handed, skilful and inflexible onslaught was such that although four hostile scouts



THE KING PRESENTING HER HUSBAND'S V.C. TO MRS. ACKROYD.

were about 1,000 feet above Bishop for something like a mile of his return journey, "they would not attack." These gallant achievements aroused the Canadian people to enthusiasm, and this they showed in October 1917, when Bishop, who had been promoted major, was married in Toronto.

In passing it may be noted that at the end of 1917 7,000 decorations had been conferred on members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force for valour in the field and outstanding war service, these awards including 19 Victoria Crosses—seven to officers and twelve to men.



CAPTAIN (Temp. Lieut.-Colonel) BERTRAM BEST-DUNKLEY,  
Lancashire Fusiliers.

Before being killed in action, Temporary Captain Harold Ackroyd, M.C., M.D., R.A.M.C., attached to the Royal Berkshire Regiment, saved the lives of many wounded officers and men, his courage being shown in circumstances of the greatest peril, for he worked in the open, under heavy fire from artillery, machine guns, and small arms. The announcement of Ack-



SECOND LIEUT. (Acting Captain) THOS. R. COLYER-FERGUSON,  
Northamptonshire Regiment.

royd's Cross was made known on September 6, 1917, and with it were published eight other awards. Of this total of nine no fewer than five were posthumous honours, Aekroyd's



**SERGEANT ROBERT BYE,**  
Welsh Guards.

fallen comrades being Captain (T. Lt.-Col.) Bertram Best-Dunkley, Lancashire Fusiliers, Second Lieutenant (acting Captain) Thomas Riversdale Colyer-Fergusson, Northamptonshire Regiment, Corporal James Llewellyn Davies, Royal Welsh Fusiliers (Nantymoel, Glamorgan), and Private Thomas Barratt, South Staffordshire Regiment (Tipton). Lieutenant-Colonel Best-Dunkley, by his bravery and devotion to duty while in command of his battalion, added to the already great reputation which the Lancashire Fusiliers had won in the war. Colyer-Fergusson's conduct was an "amazing record of dash, gallantry and skill, for which no reward can be too great, having regard to the importance of the position won." In his case great skill and bravery were shown when plans had gone wrong, and the tactical situation had developed contrary to expectation. Confronted with serious difficulties, he rose to the situation with an energy and ability which saved it, and he performed many acts of personal valour before he was killed by a sniper. Davies was another example of single-handed exploits. He fought successfully with the bayonet, then, wounded though he was, he led a bombing party in an assault on a defended house, killing a sniper who was harassing his platoon. The corporal was so severely wounded that he subsequently died. Barratt also did fine work

against hostile snipers, some of whom, at close range, he stalked and killed. He had safely regained our lines when he had the misfortune to be killed. Barratt was a fine marksman, and his accurate shooting caused many casualties to the enemy and prevented their advance. He was an orphan who belonged to the little parish of Tipton. Some of his early years were spent in the workhouse, and in that institution his father died. Running away from it, the boy was cared for by his grandmother, who at the time of his death made her living by selling fruit in a poor district.

A Welsh Guardsman—Sergeant Robert Bye (Penrhiwceiber, Glamorgan) showed the "most remarkable initiative." He saw that two enemy blockhouses were causing a good deal of trouble, and rushing at one of them he put the garrison out of action; then he rejoined his company, and went forward to the assault of the second objective. When the troops had gone forward to the attack of a third objective, and a party was detailed to clear up a line of blockhouses which had been passed, Bye



**CORPORAL JAS. LLEWELLYN DAVIES,**  
Royal Welsh Fusiliers.

volunteered to take charge of the party. He accomplished his object and took many prisoners; and he made more prisoners when he afterwards advanced to the third objective. In all his operations he gave invaluable help to the assaulting companies.

A Coldstream Guardsman—Private Thomas Witham (Burnley)—also very greatly distinguished himself during an attack and was the means of saving many lives and helping the whole line to advance. An enemy machine



gun was enfilading the battalion on the right, and Witham, on his own initiative, immediately worked his way from shell hole to shell hole through our own barrage, and rushed the gun and captured it, with an officer and two other ranks.



PRIVATE THOS. WITHAM,  
Coldstream Guards, shows his Victoria Cross.

A Gordon Highlander—Private George McIntosh (Buckie, Banffshire)—being, with his company, under machine-gun fire at close range, unhesitatingly rushed forward under heavy fire, and reaching the emplacement threw a Mills bomb into it, killing two of the enemy and wounding a third. Entering the dug-out afterwards, he found two light machine guns, which he carried back with him.

Corporal Leslie Wilton Andrew, Infantry Battalion, New Zealand Force, completed this list of nine. In his case the objective was the very unattractive one of a machine-gun which had been located in an isolated building. On leading his men forward he unexpectedly encountered a machine-gun post which was holding up the advance of another company. Immediately attacking this, he captured the gun and killed several of the crew; then he turned his attention to the isolated building and took this post, killed several of the enemy, and put the rest to flight.

That self-sacrificing hero, Captain Noel Godfrey Chavasso,\* headed a list of 11 recipients of the Cross whose acts were recorded in the *London Gazette* of September 14, 1917. That list also contained the name of another officer

who was to be added to the higher ranks of the roll. This was Lieut.-Col. (T. Brig.-Gen.) Clifford Coffin, D.S.O., R.E. A conspicuous feature of this award was the absence of any special exploit or act such as those for which the Cross had been usually given: there was no hand-to-hand encounter to record, no dashing assault on a "pill-box" or a band of Germans—the record was one of calm consistent bravery under the heaviest fire from both machine-guns and rifles, and in full view of the enemy. Brigadier-General Coffin showed an utter disregard of personal danger. He walked quietly from shell hole to shell hole, "giving advice generally, and cheering the men by his presence." His was one of the notable cases of steadfast courage and unconquerable cheerfulness on the field of battle, and it was "generally agreed that Brigadier-General Coffin's splendid example saved the situation, and had it not been for his action the line would certainly have been driven back."

Extraordinary bravery and persistence were shown by Lieut. John Reginald Noble Graham, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, attached Machine Gun Corps, who was four times wounded before loss of blood forced him to retire. He accompanied his guns across open ground under very heavy fire, he helped to carry



CORPORAL (afterward Sergeant) LESLIE  
W. ANDREW,  
Infantry Battalion, New Zealand Force.

\* Chapter CLXXXV., p. 170; Chapter CCV., p. 394.

ammunition, he disabled his gun so that it should be useless to the enemy, and he brought a Lewis gun into action with excellent effect until all the ammunition was finished. His courage and skilful handling of his guns held up a strong enemy attack which threatened to roll up the left flank of the brigade.

A remarkable case was that of Second Lieut. Denis George Wyldbore Hewitt, Hampshire Regiment, who, while waiting for the barrage to lift, was hit by a piece of shell, which exploded the signal lights in his haversack and set fire to his equipment and clothes. Hewitt extinguished the flames, then, in spite of his wound and the severe pain he was suffering, he led forward the remains of a company and captured and consolidated his objective. This gallant young officer was subsequently killed by a sniper while inspecting the consolidation and encouraging his men.

Seven machine guns and 45 prisoners were captured in a blockhouse which was assaulted in the most courageous manner by Sergeant Edward Cooper, King's Royal Rifle Corps (Stockton). From the blockhouse, which was only 250 yards away, machine-guns were holding up the advance of a battalion on the sergeant's left and causing serious loss to his own battalion. Cooper, with four men, immediately rushed



THE KING DECORATING PRIVATE  
GEORGE McINTOSH,  
Gordon Highlanders.



BRIGADIER-GENERAL CLIFFORD COFFIN LEAVING BUCKINGHAM PALACE  
AFTER RECEIVING THE VICTORIA CROSS.





#### ATTACK ON A BLOCKHOUSE.

landers (Lossiemouth), shewed the coolness, resource, and bravery which won for him the Cross. He located a hostile machine-gun in a wood, and leading some men against it with great dash and courage killed all the team and captured the gun. Having done this, and though badly wounded in the arm, he crawled out to stalk a sniper who was causing casualties, and killed him also; then, when only one officer was left with the company, the sergeant led his men on until the farthest objective, on which the success of the operation depended, was captured. Edwards, while continuing his brave and most useful work, was twice wounded on the following day.

"Extraordinary courage and boldness" were credited to Sergeant (acting C.Q.-M.S.) William H. Grimbaldeston, King's Own Scottish Borderers (Blackburn), whose conduct resulted in his capturing 36 prisoners, six machine-guns and one trench mortar, and enabled the whole line to continue its advance. This Borderer saw that the unit on his left was held up by machine-gun fire from a blockhouse. He was wounded, but he collected a small party to fire rifle grenades on the blockhouse; then he got a volunteer to help him with rifle fire. After these preliminaries he pushed on towards the blockhouse and in spite of very heavy fire reached the entrance, from which he threatened, with a hand grenade, the machine-gun teams inside. One after another these defenders were forced to surrender, leaving to the sergeant's credit the heavy total which has been mentioned.

Very similar to this achievement was the act of Sergeant Ivor Rees (Llanelly), who gave to



**SERGEANT EDWARD COOPER**  
Receives his V.C. from the King.

towards the blockhouse, though heavily fired on, and having got within about 100 yards of it he ordered his men to lie down and fire at the blockhouse. This firing failing, the sergeant wasted no further time—he rushed straight at the machine-guns and fired his revolver into an opening in the blockhouse, whereupon the machine-guns ceased firing, the garrison surrendered and the intrepid sergeant and his little band were to the good to the extent of the seven weapons and 45 captives mentioned.

Though three times wounded in two days, Sergeant Alexander Edwards, Seaforth High-



**SERGEANT (Acting C.Q.M.S.)  
W. H. GRIMBALDESTON,**  
King's Own Scottish Borderers.

**SERGT. ALEX. EDWARDS,**  
Seaforth Highlanders.

**SERGEANT IVOR REES,**  
South Wales Borderers.

the South Wales Borderers another Cross. Having worked up to about 20 yards from a machine-gun which was doing a great deal of damage, the sergeant rushed forward towards the team, shot one, bayoneted another, then bombed the large concrete emplacement, killing five men, taking 30 prisoners, including two officers, and capturing an undamaged machine-gun.

coming. Single-handed, Skinner bombed and took the first blockhouse; then, leading his six men towards the other two blockhouses, he skilfully cleared them, taking no fewer than 60 prisoners, three machine-guns, and two trench mortars.

Corporal (L.-Sgt.) Tom Fletcher Mayson, Royal Lancaster Regiment (Silecourt, Cumberland), did not trouble to wait for orders when a



**SECOND LIEUT. D. G. W. HEWITT,**  
Hampshire Regiment.

Blockhouse operations also gave opening for the display of uncommon valour and resource by Sergeant (Acting C.S.-M.) John Skinner, King's Own Scottish Borderers (Pollokshields, Glasgow). This non-commissioned officer's deeds were in perfect keeping with those of his brother Borderer, Grimbaldston. Skinner was wounded in the head, but he collected six men and resolutely worked round the flank of three blockhouses from which machine-gun fire was



**LIEUT. J. R. N. GRAHAM,**  
Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders.

machine-gun was barring the attack of his platoon, but instantly made for the weapon and bombed it out of action. He wounded four of the team, and the remaining three fled. The sergeant followed them to a dug-out, and there he killed them with his bayonet. Later, single-handed, he tackled a machine-gun and killed six of the team, crowning his work by taking charge of an isolated post and holding it until ordered to withdraw, his ammunition being exhausted.



A private from Leeds—Wilfrid Edwards, King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, and one from Sheffield—Arnold Loosemore, West Riding Regiment—completed this list of September 14; both cases being specially noticeable because of the brilliant success of individual effort. Edwards showed his uncommon courage when under heavy machine-gun and rifle fire from a strong concrete fort. Having lost all his company officers, he dashed forward at great personal risk, bombed through the loopholes,



CORPORAL (L.-Sergt.) T. F. MAYSON,  
Royal Lancaster Regiment.



PRIVATE ARNOLD LOOSEMORE,  
West Riding Regiment.



SERGEANT (Acting C.S.M.) JOHN SKINNER,  
King's Own Scottish Borderers, receives his Cross.

surmounted a fort, and waved to his company to advance. His fine example "saved a most critical situation at a time when the whole battalion was held up and a leader urgently needed." It was more than brilliant—it was uncommonly successful, for Edwards took three officers and 30 other ranks prisoner in the fort. Subsequently he did most valuable work as a runner, and guided most of the battalion out through very difficult ground.

The "Havercake Lad," Loosemore, as reckless of personal safety as his fellow Yorkshire fighter, crawled through partially cut wire, dragging his Lewis gun with him, and single-handed he dealt with a strong party of the enemy, of whom he killed about 20. Immediately afterwards his Lewis gun was blown up by a bomb, and three of the enemy rushed him; but he shot them all with his revolver. Several more snipers were shot by him, though he was each time exposed to heavy fire. Then Loosemore performed one of the acts for which alone the Victoria Cross had been frequently awarded—on returning to his original post he brought back a wounded comrade under heavy fire and at the risk of his life.

Of nine recipients of the Cross whose awards were announced in the *London Gazette* of October 17, 1917, one, Sergeant Frederick Hobson, Canadian Infantry Battalion, was killed in the fighting which gave him his honour, and two died of wounds—Temporary Second-Lieutenant Hardy Falconer Parsons, Gloucestershire Regiment, and Private Harry Brown, Canadian Infantry Battalion. Though Hobson was not a gunner he rushed from his trench

on seeing that a Lewis gun was buried by a shell and that with the exception of one man the crew had been killed. He dug out the gun and got it into action against the enemy, who were advancing down the trench and across the open. The gun jammed, but Hobson, in spite



**PRIVATE WILFRID EDWARDS,**  
King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry.

of wounds, left the gunner to correct the stoppage and, single-handed, rushed at the enemy with bayonet and clubbed rifle and held them back until he was killed by a rifle shot. His courage and resource enabled the gun to be got into action again, and, reinforcements arriving, the enemy were beaten back. Parsons also greatly distinguished himself in a single-handed exploit, his conduct being specially noteworthy because it was in connexion with a night attack. A strong enemy party attacked a bombing post which was held by the subaltern's command. The bombers holding the block were forced back, but Parsons remained at his post, and, alone, although badly scorched and burned by liquid fire he "continued to hold up the enemy with bombs until severely wounded." Private Brown must be added to the very small band of V.C. heroes whose faithful delivery of all-important messages won for them the greatest honour. He and another soldier were ordered to deliver a message at headquarters, at all costs. A position had been captured, and the enemy had massed in force and counter-attacked. The situation was very critical, all wires being cut; and it was of the utmost importance to get word back to headquarters. Brown's comrade was killed in obeying the orders, and Brown's arm was shattered; but,

loyal and determined, he continued his way on through an intense barrage until he reached the close support lines and found an officer. Exhausted, he fell down the dug-out steps, but was able to hand over his message and to say, "Important message!" Then he became unconscious and in the dressing-station a few hours later he died.

Three cases of extreme endurance were furnished, two by Irish Guardsmen, Lance-Sergeant John Moyney (Rathdowney, Queen's County) and Private Thomas Woodcock (Wigan), and the other by Corporal Sidney James Day, Suffolk Regiment (Norwich). The cases of the Guardsmen were obviously closely related to each other. Moyney was commanding 15 men who formed two advanced posts, and in spite of being surrounded by the enemy and having no water and little food, he held his post for four days and four nights. On the morning of the fifth day a large force of the enemy advanced to dislodge him. Moyney ordered his men out of their shell holes and taking the initiative he bombed the advancing enemy, while he used his Lewis gun with great effect from a flank. On seeing that he was surrounded by superior numbers the lance-sergeant led his men back in a charge through the enemy and reached a stream which lay between the



**TEMP. SECOND LIEUT. H. F. PARSONS,**  
Gloucestershire Regiment.

posts and the line. Here he instructed his party to cross at once, while he and Private Woodcock remained to cover their retirement. It was not until the whole of his force, unscathed, had gained the south-west bank that the lance-sergeant himself crossed, and this he did under



a shower of bombs. Woodcock was one of a post commanded by Moyney which was surrounded by the enemy; but he also held out for 96 hours. After that remarkable feat he was crossing a river and heard cries for help. He returned and waded into the water and amid a shower of enemy bombs rescued another member of the gallant little band. Day's achievement began with killing two machine-

exploded. Establishing himself in an advanced position he remained for 66 hours at his post, under intense hostile shell and rifle-grenade fire.

Much resourcefulness had been shown by several winners of the Cross in dealing with grenades and bombs; but there had not been any exact parallel to the deed of Sergeant John Carmichael, North Staffordshire Regiment (Glasgow). He was excavating a trench



LANCE-SERGEANT JOHN MOYNEY AND PRIVATE THOMAS WOODCOCK,  
IRISH GUARDS.



CORPORAL S. J. DAY,  
Suffolk Regiment.

[Bassano

gunners and taking four prisoners when he was in command of a bombing section and clearing the enemy out of a maze of trenches. A stick bomb falling into a trench which was occupied by two officers, one of whom was badly wounded, and three other ranks, Day seized the missile and threw it over the trench, where it instantly

when he saw that a grenade had been unearthed and had begun to burn. Rushing to the spot and shouting to his men to get clear, the sergeant put his steel helmet over the grenade, and not content with that he stood on the helmet. The grenade exploded, and Carmichael was blown out of the trench and seriously injured. The courage of his act and the swiftness of his decision will be realized when it is borne in mind that he could have thrown the bomb out of his trench, but that would have endangered the lives of the men who were working on top.

Fit companion to Carmichael was Private William Boynton Butler, West Yorkshire Regiment (Hunslet, Leeds) who was picking up a Stokes shell which was accidentally fired in an emplacement. Butler rushed to the entrance, and having urged a party of passing infantry to hurry, as the shell was "going off," he turned round, placed himself between the party and the shell and so held it until they were out of danger. Then the private threw the shell on to the parapet and took cover in the bottom of the trench. Almost as soon as

it had left his hand the shell exploded and greatly damaged the trench, Butler, by extraordinary good luck, being only bruised.

This list of nine was completed by the case of Acting Lance-Corporal Frederick G. Room, Royal Irish Regiment (Bristol), who, while in



*Bassano.*  
PRIVATE W. B. BUTLER,  
West Yorkshire Regiment.

charge of his company stretcher-bearers, worked continuously under intense fire, dressing the wounded and helping to remove them. He was the means of saving many of his comrades' lives.

For a considerable period after the war began the established method of announcing the award of the Cross was adhered to, but gradually certain improvements were made, and amongst these none was more successful and welcome than the statement, so far as non-commissioned officers and men were concerned, of the city, town or village to which they belonged. For example, Southsea, Nottingham, Old Trafford (Manchester), Merthyr Tydvil, Flemington and Kirriemuir were mentioned in connexion with winners, the names of the places being added to the names of the regiment. In this way fellow-townsmen were able to share in the honour which had been conferred, and in many instances they took prompt steps to show their satisfaction very practically. There was a feeling that in some respects this custom of adding to the honour of the Cross by making presents of plate or money, or both, was overdone, and that it was not altogether desirable, as the distinction of the decoration itself was enough, without the addition of any other gift whatsoever. It was not possible, either, to establish an equality of recognition, and so it happened that while one

man might receive as much as £1,500, another would not get a penny beyond the allowance which went with the award. In January, 1918, it was announced that the Mayor of Coventry's Fund on behalf of Corporal Hutt, Coventry's first V.C., was nearing £1,000; in addition Hutt had received £200 from another source, and his former employers had given him War Bonds of the value of £250.

In the earlier days of the awards there had been substantial presentations to recipients of the Cross, but there had been a period of quiescence in this respect; when, however, names of places were officially given there was something of an epidemic of grateful recognition, and in one month alone, at the end of 1917, appreciation was shown of the valour of soldiers ranging from the rank of brigadier-general to private. The people of Darlington, justly proud of their Brigadier-General Bradford,\* who was a fellow-townsmen, opened a national fund to commemorate his career; the villagers of East Haddon, Northamptonshire, subscribed for a gold watch and chain, which was presented to Captain H. Reynolds, of the Royal Scots; a gold hunter watch, inscribed with the St. Pancras borough arms, was presented to Sergeant Burman, of the Rifle Brigade; War Bonds were given by the people of Tiverton to Private T. H. Sage, a native of the town.



ACTING LANCE-CORPORAL F. G. ROOM,  
Royal Irish Regiment.

From the top of the tank which visited Birmingham in connexion with the War Savings

\* Chapter CLXXXV., p. 174. Bradford's death was made known on December 5, 1917. He was only 25 years of age. Twice during 1917 he was reported wounded.



campaign the Lord Mayor presented a framed and illuminated address, which had been voted by the City Council to Birmingham's fifth V.C. here, Sergeant A. J. Knight, of the King's Royal Rifle Corps. Seamen, too, came into their own, townspeople of Swanage presenting a silver salver and 67 war saving certificates to First-Class Petty Officer Ernest Pitcher.

The system of indicating a recipient's native town or place of residence occasionally meant

dark by-ways from the station, he reached his home while the deputation still held possession of the station. Subsequently, when the skipper was publicly presented with a testimonial, and when it seemed that he was fairly captured and must at last utter a few words, however haltingly, he again circumvented his friends' intentions, for he got someone else to rise and acknowledge the gift on his behalf.

Another batch of nine Crosses was announced



PRESENTATION OF AN ILLUMINATED ADDRESS TO SERGEANT A. J. KNIGHT, V.C., BY THE LORD MAYOR OF BIRMINGHAM.

a double recognition, for the regiment itself would be moved to bestow honour on its member, apart from anything which a town had done. Almost invariably a winner of the Cross found it harder to face an audience than to confront an enemy in overwhelming force. A case in point was afforded by Skipper Watt, of Adriatic fame. He was due home on short leave, and his proud fellow-townsmen of Fraserburgh took steps to welcome him officially. A civic reception was prepared, with a deputation at the station; but the man who had so valiantly faced deadly odds at sea had no pluck for this sort of meeting, and by travelling in a train by which he was not expected, and pursuing a policy of masterly pilotage by

in the *London Gazette* of November 8, 1917, two of the awards being posthumous. These cases again proved the amazing personal courage of the recipients of the honour and the performance by them of almost incredible deeds. Well was it said of the officer whose name was given first in the list that he showed exceptional devotion to duty. This officer was Captain (acting Major) Okill Massey Larmouth, Canadian Infantry, who had already won the Military Cross. His company having been temporarily surprised during a determined counter-attack on our new positions, Larmouth instantly charged and personally disposed of the attackers; after which he carried on "a tremendous fight" with the advancing enemy.

He was mortally wounded and under intense barrage fire, yet he stood on the parapet of the trench, and while he continuously bombed the enemy he inspired his men to keep up a gallant resistance. This conduct itself, on the part of a man whose hours were numbered, compelled deep admiration, but to add to its merit he "actually caught bombs thrown at him by the enemy, and threw them back." This valiant defence and glorious example Captain Learmouth maintained until his wounds made it impossible for him to carry on; yet, even when so helpless, he refused to be carried out of the line, and continued to give instructions and invaluable advice to his junior officers, finally handing over all his duties before he was taken to hospital, where he died.

The Colonies furnished the second case also of the posthumous award, the recipient being Second Lieutenant Frederick Birks, Australian Imperial Force, who showed most conspicuous bravery when, in attack, accompanied only by a corporal, he rushed a strong point which was holding up an advance. A bomb wounded the corporal, but Birks went on alone, killed the rest of the enemy who held the position, and captured a machine gun. Having done this, the subaltern organized a small party and attacked another strong point which was occupied by about 25 of the enemy. Of that

defensive party many were killed and an officer and 15 men were made prisoners. During the whole of the dangerous and important work he carried out Birks showed wonderful coolness and courage, and he performed that best of all tasks—keeping his men in splendid



**SECOND LIEUT. FREDERICK BIRKS,**  
Australian Imperial Force.

spirits. It was his fate to be killed at his post by a shell while trying to extricate some of his men who had been buried by a shell.

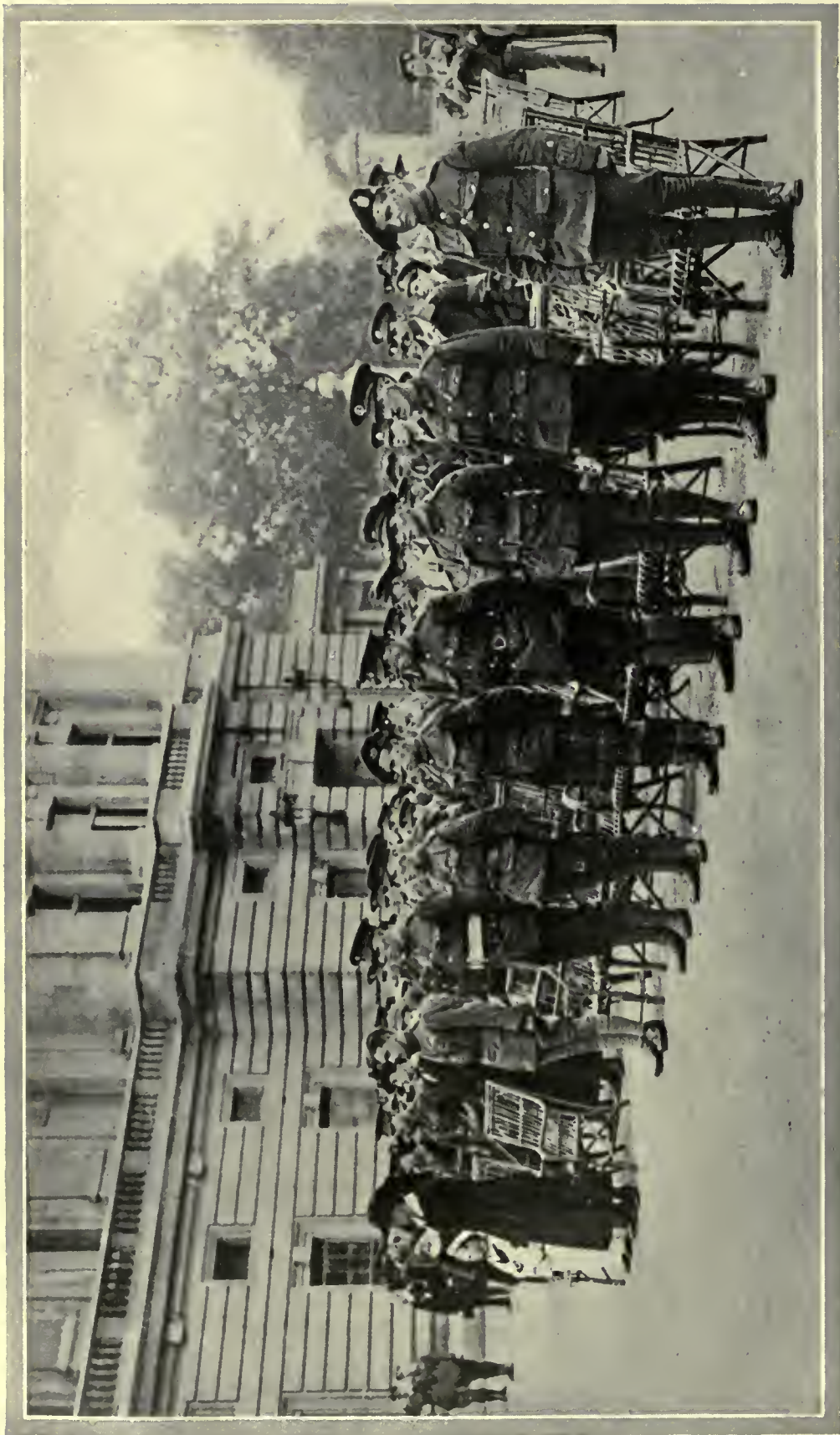
There was strong similarity in the cases of Second Lieutenant Hugh Colvin, Cheshire Regiment, Second Lieutenant Montagu Shadworth Seymour Moore, Hampshire Regiment, Company Sergeant-Major Robert Hanna, Canadian Infantry, Sergeant James Ockenden, Royal Dublin Fusiliers (Southsea), and Sergeant Alfred Joseph Knight, London Regiment (Nottingham). Each of these bold fighters showed a personal courage amounting to recklessness, yet it was only by the display of such valour that their acts were possible, for without exception they fought against very great odds, and fairly threw themselves into positions which invited death.

Colvin took command of his own and another company when both had suffered severely, and with great dash and success he led them forward in attack, under heavy machine-gun fire. Seeing the battalion on his right held up by machine-gun fire, he led a platoon to their help, then he went on with only two men to a dug-out. Leaving the men on the top, he entered the dug-out alone and brought up 14 prisoners. Then he proceeded with his two men to another dug-out which, with rifle and



**MAJOR O. M. LEARMOUTH,**  
Canadian Infantry.





RECIPIENTS OF THE VICTORIA CROSS IN THE COURTYARD OF BUCKINGHAM PALACE, SEPTEMBER 26, 1917,

Photographed as the King departed. The men are wearing their crosses.

Left to right : Mrs. Ackroyd, Lieutenant Insall, R.F.C., Sergeant Bye, Sergeant Cooper, Sergeant Edwards (Seaforths), Sergeant Rees, Private Edwards (K.O.Y.L.I.), Private Ratcliffe, Company Sergeant-Major Skinner.

machine-gun fire and bombs, had been holding up the attack. This dug-out was reached, and the crew were either killed or captured and the machine gun was taken. The lieutenant was then attacked from another dug-out by 15 of the enemy under an officer, and one of his men was killed and the other wounded. Undaunted still, Colvin seized a

and men. Moore's position was entirely isolated, as the troops on the right had not advanced; but he dug a trench and throughout the night he repelled bombing attacks. Forced to retire a short distance next morning, at the earliest moment he reoccupied his position. Most of his men's rifles had been smashed, but he re-armed his little force with enemy



SECOND LIEUT. M. S. S. MOORE,  
Hampshire Regiment.

rifle and shot no fewer than five of the enemy, then, using another as a shield, he forced most of the survivors to surrender. Such was the courage, quickness and resource of this young officer that he cleared several other dug-outs alone or with one man, taking in all about 50 prisoners. He then skilfully consolidated his position, and personally wired his front under heavy close-range sniping in broad daylight, "when all others had failed to do so." Official credit was given to Colvin's leadership and courage for the complete success of the attack in this part of the line.

Second Lieutenant Moore's exploit was in connexion with a fresh attack on a final objective which had not been captured. He unhesitatingly volunteered for the duty, and dashed forward at the head of about 70 men. Heavy machine-gun fire, by the time the objective, some 500 yards on, had been reached, had so severely punished the lieutenant's party that he had on'y a sergeant and four men left; but undismayed he immediately bombed a large dug-out and took 28 prisoners, two machine guns and a light field gun. Gradually the half-dozen assailants were strengthened to a force of about 60 by the arrival of more officers



SECOND LIEUT. HUGH COLVIN,  
Cheshire Regiment.

rifles and bombs and with these he beat off more than one counter-attack, the enemy, not for the first time by many, having been in this way hoist with his own petard. For 36 hours the gallant subaltern held this post under continual shell fire, although out of six officers and 130 men who had started the operation only 10 were available. When at last he was able to withdraw under cover of a thick mist he did not do so without getting his wounded away—thus crowning his gallant deed.

It was in attack also that Hanna distinguished himself. His company had met with most severe resistance and all the officers had become casualties. The attack was against a strong point which was strongly protected by wire and held by a machine-gun. It was "a most important tactical point," and no fewer than three assaults by the company had been driven off with serious losses. These desperate conditions gave to Hanna that opportunity of personal distinction and determination which had marked so many of the achievements of the Canadians. He calmly set about the task of collecting a party of men, and having got it together he headed a rush against the strong



objective, and so successful was he that he won through the wire and personally bayoneted three of the enemy and brained a fourth, the result being that the point was captured and the machine gun was silenced. It was due to Hanna's outstanding courage and resolute leading that a desperate situation was saved.

Sergeant Ockenden was acting as company-sergeant-major in attack when he saw the platoon on the right held up by an enemy machine gun; whereupon he instantly rushed

in a shell hole; and, unsupported though he was, he bayoneted two men, shot a third, and scattered the rest. This terrific plyer of the bayonet, the weapon which, at close quarters, the German justly dreaded, was forced by oppressive circumstance to change his tactics and fall back upon his faithful rifle, another arm against which so often the enemy could not make a stand successfully. An attack was being made on a fortified position and it happened that the sergeant was "entangled



**SERGT. JAS. OCKENDEN, CO.-SERGT.-MAJOR R. HANNA, SERGT. A. J. KNIGHT,**  
 Royal Dublin Fusiliers. Canadian Infantry. London Regiment.

the weapon and captured it, killing the crew, with the exception of one man, who escaped—but only for the time, for the sergeant followed him and "when well in front of the whole line" killed him and returned to his company. This in itself was a deed worthy of the famous Fusiliers to which the sergeant belonged; but his work was only partly done, for having accounted for both gun and crew he led a section to the attack on a farm. Rushing forward under very heavy fire he called upon the garrison to surrender. The enemy, however, continued to fire upon him, and the sergeant in turn opened fire so hotly and effectively that four of the defenders of the farm were killed and the rest, numbering 16, surrendered.

Even more dramatic was the achievement of Sergeant Alfred Joseph Knight. The sergeant began his "extraordinarily good work" by showing exceptional bravery and initiative when his platoon was attacking an enemy strong point and came under a machine-gun's very heavy fire. He rushed through our own barrage, bayoneted the enemy gunner and single-handed took the position. Whetted to his work by this success he subsequently rushed forward, alone, upon a dozen of the enemy, who, with a machine gun, had been encountered

up to his waist in mud." He rose superior to the situation, however. Seeing a number of the enemy firing on our troops, he instantly, nearly buried though he was, opened fire, and with so much coolness and precision that he killed six of them. Having now 10 of the enemy to his credit, Sergeant Knight got clear of the mud and was ready for further calls upon his valour. A fresh demand was made upon him when he noticed that the company on his right flank was held up in an attack on another farm. He collected some men and took up a position on the flank of this farm, which, as a result of the heavy fire he brought to bear, was captured. Of the inspiring acts of this member of the London Regiment it was remarked that all the platoon officers of the company had become casualties before the first objective was reached, and that he took command of all the men of his own platoon and of the platoons without officers. Knight's individual exploits, performed under heavy machine-gun and rifle fire, saved a great many casualties and he was the direct cause of the objectives being captured.

A "pill-box" figured in the conspicuous bravery for which the Cross was awarded to Temporary Captain Henry Reynolds, M.C.,

Royal Scots In attack, and when approaching their final objective, having suffered heavily from machine-gun fire and the "pill-box" which had been passed by the first wave, Reynolds reorganized his scattered men, and then proceeded alone by rushes from shell-hole to shell-hole. When near the "pill-box" he threw a grenade, intending that it should go inside; but this purpose was frustrated



TEMP. CAPTAIN H. REYNOLDS, M.C.,  
Royal Scots.

through the enemy having blocked the entrance. Determined to fulfil his desperate enterprise, the captain crawled to the entrance and forced a phosphorous grenade inside the "pill-box." This weapon set the place on fire and caused the death of three of the enemy and the surrender of the survivors, seven or eight, with two machine guns. Afterwards, though wounded, Reynolds led his company against another objective most successfully, for he took 70 prisoners and two more machine guns. These brave deeds were done under continuous heavy machine-gun fire from the flanks.

The old yet ever new and moving tale of succouring the wounded under fire was told of the other member of that noble band of nine—Private Michael James O'Rourke, Canadian Infantry. He was a stretcher-bearer, and for three days and nights he strove unceasingly to bring the wounded into safety, dressing them, and getting them food and water. During those prolonged operations O'Rourke worked in an area which was swept by shell, machine-gun and rifle fire; and

several times he was knocked down and partially buried by enemy shells. He rescued a comrade who had been blinded and was stumbling about ahead of our trench, in full view of the enemy, who were sniping him; he brought in another comrade under heavy fire, and on a third occasion he brought in a wounded man "under very heavy enemy fire of every description." Neither fire, nor excessive work, nor exhaustion deterred him from persisting in his humane work, which was very rightly acknowledged by the award to him of the highest recognition that can be made of devotion to the helpless on the battlefield.

Of twenty Crosses gazetted on November 26, 1917, no fewer than six were awarded for gallant attacks on "pill-boxes," and it was significant of the danger attending the assaults on these strong structures that the only two posthumous honours in the list were given to members of the half-dozen. Both of these belonged to the Australian Imperial Force. These recipients were: Sergeant Joseph Lister, Lancashire Fusiliers (Reddish, Stockport), Sergeant Lewis McGee, Australian Imperial Force, Lance-Sergeant John Harold Rhodes, Grenadier Guards (Tunstall, Staffordshire), Lance-Corporal William Henry Hewitt, South African Infantry, Private Patrick Bugden, Australian Imperial Force, and Private Frederick George Dancox, Worcestershire Regiment (Worcester).

Sergeant Lister's conduct was remarkably prompt and courageous and was most helpful in enabling our line to advance almost unchecked and to keep up with the barrage. His company was advancing to the first objective when it came under machine-gun fire from the direction of two "pill-boxes." The sergeant saw that the galling fire would hold up our advance and prevent our troops keeping up with the barrage. He dashed ahead of his men and found a machine-gun firing from a shell-hole in front of the "pill-box" Lister shot two of the enemy gunners, a swift act which induced the rest to surrender to him. Having done this, he went on to the "pill-box" and shouted to the occupants to surrender. This call they obeyed, with the exception of one man, whom Lister shot dead. The sergeant's intrepid conduct and his obvious determination to rout the enemy at all costs compelled about 100 of the enemy to come out of shell-holes farther to the rear, and surrender.

Sergeant McGee's exploit was single-handed





STRETCHER-BEARERS UNDER FIRE.

and he was armed only with a revolver when he showed the valour which was rewarded with the Cross and was the prelude to his subsequent death in action. In the advance to a final objective his platoon was suffering severely and machine-gun fire from a "pill-box" stopped the company's advance. It was then that the sergeant, alone, rushed the post and by shooting some of the crew and capturing the rest enabled the advance to proceed. Coolly and deliberately he reorganized the remnants of his platoon, he was foremost in the rest of the advance and he did splendid work

in consolidating the position, contributing largely to the success of the company's operations.

Rhodes, the Grenadier, belonged to the enterprising band of V.C. heroes who in addition to showing the highest personal courage and capturing prisoners managed also to secure valuable information. He was in charge of a Lewis gun section covering the consolidation of the right front company and in carrying out his task he accounted for several of the enemy with his rifle, as well as by Lewis gun fire. Seeing three enemy leave a "pill-box,"

he went out alone through our own barrage and hostile machine-gun fire and performed the dangerous exploit of entering the "pill-box." Having done this, he captured nine of the enemy, amongst whom was a forward observation officer who was connected by telephone with his battery. Rhodes brought these prisoners,



[Bassano.

**PRIVATE MICHAEL J. O'ROURKE,**  
Canadian Infantry.

"together with valuable information," back with him.

Hewitt's attack on a "pill-box" was of the most desperate and determined nature. With his section he assaulted his objective and tried to rush the doorway; but the garrison very stubbornly resisted. In his efforts the lance-corporal was severely wounded; nevertheless he held on. Foiled in one direction he, like a skilful and resourceful fighter, tried another which might promise more encouragement. Turning from the inhospitable doorway, he daringly made his way to the loophole of the "pill-box" and did his best to put a bomb into it. Again he was wounded, in the arm; but neither wounds nor failures daunted him. He at last got a bomb inside, and this missile dislodged the occupants, of whom it was significantly recorded that "they were successfully and speedily dealt with by the remainder of the section."

To the lasting fame of Private Patrick Bugden it was told of him that he was always foremost in volunteering for any dangerous mission and that it was during the execution of one of them that he was killed. His deeds were of the sort which were specially associated with the many Australians who had won the Cross. Twice he distinguished himself when

our advance was held up by strongly-defended "pill-boxes." In the face of "devastating fire from machine guns" he led small parties in assaults on these strong points and silenced the guns with bombs and captured the garrison at the point of the bayonet. At another time, when a corporal had been made prisoner by the enemy and was being taken to the rear, Bugden, single-handed, rushed to his rescue, shot one of the enemy, bayoneted the other two, and so released his comrade. Five times he rescued wounded men under intense shell and machine-gun fire, constantly showing the greatest contempt of danger.

One of a party of about 10 men detailed as "moppers-up," Private Dancox and his comrades found it very difficult to work round a flank, owing to the position of an enemy machine-gun emplacement on the edge of our protective barrage. The emplacement was of concrete and the gun had caused many casualties and considerably hampered our work of consolidation. In spite of the difficulties of the situation Private Dancox gallantly worked his way round through the barrage and entered the "pill-box" from the rear, threatening the garrison with a Mills bomb. Soon afterwards he "re-



**SERGEANT JOSEPH LISTER,**  
Lancashire Fusiliers.

appeared with a machine-gun under his arm, followed by about 40 enemy." The weapon was brought back to our position by Dancox, who kept it in action throughout the day. The picture suggested of this resolute and cheerful soldier "with a machine-gun under his arm, followed by about 40 of the enemy" was catcu-



lated to have upon his comrades precisely the effect which it exercised, for their *moral* was maintained "at a very high standard under extremely trying circumstances."

The Germans made a boast—one of many—that when a new device was used against them in the field by the British they found a means of overcoming it. This they specially claimed to have done in relation to the Tanks; but there was no record, even in the German statements of claims, that they ever succeeded



LANCE-CORPORAL W. H. HEWITT,  
South African Infantry,

in finding a remedy for the unconquerable daring which alone made possible such deeds as those of Private Dancox and his gallant comrades who beat and battered at the doors and loopholes of "pill-boxes" until their urgent call was heard and obeyed.

A field officer who had been already awarded the D.S.O. was included in the score. This was Major (Acting Lieut.-Colonel) Lewis Pugh Evans, D.S.O., Royal Highlanders, commanding a battalion Lincolnshire Regiment. It was recorded of this officer that he took his battalion in perfect order through a terrific enemy barrage, personally formed up all units and led them to the assault. Again, a case arose of a

machine-gun emplacement causing casualties and giving an opening for the display of fine courage and resource. While these losses were being sustained and the troops were working round the flank, the colonel rushed at the emplacement and forced the garrison to capitulate by the effective means of firing his revolver through the loophole. He was severely wounded in the shoulder after capturing the first objective; but he refused to be bandaged, and re-formed the troops, pointed out all future objectives, and once more led his battalion forward. Colonel Evans was again badly wounded, yet he held on to his command until the second objective had been won and consolidated; then he collapsed from loss of blood, but as there were many casualties he refused help, and his indomitable spirit enabled him at last to reach a dressing station.

The East End gave two more Londoners to the Roll of the Cross. These were Sergeant William Francis Burman, Rifle Brigade (Stepney), and Lance-Corporal Harold Mugford, Machine Gun Corps (East Ham). Burman distinguished himself in an attack when his command was held up by machine-gun firing at point-blank range. Shouting to the men next to him to wait a few minutes, he went forward alone. Death seemed certain, but the



PRIVATE F. G. DANCÖX,  
Worcestershire Regiment.

sergeant showed such dash and resolution that he killed the enemy gunner and then carried the gun to the company's objective, where he subsequently used it with great effect. Through this "exceptionally gallant deed" the progress of the attack was assured. Sergeant Burman had already done great things, but he was very



ATTACKING A GERMAN BLOCKHOUSE.

soon to surpass them. About 15 minutes later it was seen that the battalion on the right was being impeded by about 40 of the enemy, who were enfilading them. The sergeant, this time with two other men, ran forward and got behind the enemy, killing six and capturing two officers and 29 other ranks.

Mugford also showed uncommon daring in handling a machine-gun under intense shell and machine-gun fire. In spite of these diffi-

culties, he got his gun into a forward and much exposed position, and from this point he was able to deal most effectively with the enemy, who were massing for counter-attack. The corporal's No. 2 was killed almost immediately, and he was himself severely wounded at the same moment. Mugford was then ordered to a new position and told to go into a dressing-station as soon as the position was occupied. He, however, refused, and insisted on con-





SERGT. W. F. BURMAN, LANCE-CORP. H. MUGFORD,  
Rifle Brigade.



Machine Gun Corps.



CORP. E. A. EGERTON,  
Notts and Derby Regiment.

tinuing on duty with his gun, with the result that he severely punished the enemy. So far this machine-gunner had covered himself with glory, he had won an enviable renown by his consistent bravery, and it seemed as if he could not do more; yet, as so often happened with the officers and men who won the Cross, he excelled even his own gallant preliminary performances. Soon after he had refused to go to a dressing-station Mugford was again wounded—this time terribly, for both of his legs were broken by a shell. Even now, a hero among heroes, he remained with his gun, and, thinking only of his comrades, he begged them to leave him and take cover. But he had no option in the matter; he was no longer able to refuse to be removed, and so he was taken to a dressing-station, where he was again wounded, in the arm. For the third time, therefore, this non-commissioned officer had been wounded, and it was not until he was absolutely helpless that he allowed his shattered body to be carried from the field of battle. Well indeed was it put on record concerning this lance-corporal of the Machine Gun Corps that his valour and initiative were instrumental in breaking up the enemy's impending counter-attack.

There had been frequent assertions that on many occasions the enemy had become demoralized in the presence of the British and that they had collapsed under the amazing audacity of some of the minor assaults of British units. These declarations were substantiated by several of the records of deeds which won the Cross. Swift and successful was the act of Corporal Ernest Albert Egerton, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Regiment (Longton), whose "reckless bravery" relieved in less than 30 seconds an extremely difficult situation. Fog and smoke had obscured visibility during an

attack, and consequently the two leading waves of the attack passed over some hostile dug-outs without clearing them. From these dug-outs rifles and machine-guns caused heavy casualties amongst the advancing waves. When volunteers were called for to help to clear up the situation, Egerton at once jumped up and dashed for the dug-outs under heavy fire, at short range. "He shot in succession a rifleman, a bomber, and a gunner, by which time he was supported, and 29 of the enemy surrendered."

A swift, smart piece of work was also credited to Private Albert Halton, King's Own Royal Lancaster Regiment (Carnforth), who, after the objective had been reached, rushed forward about 300 yards under very heavy rifle and shell fire and captured a machine-gun and its crew which was causing many losses to our men. The private then went out again and brought in about a dozen prisoners, showing the greatest disregard of his own safety and setting a fine example to those around him.

It was officially told of Acting Corporal Filip Konowal, Canadian Infantry, that he alone killed at least sixteen of the enemy; and of Lance-Corporal Walter Peeler, Australian Imperial Force, that he "actually accounted for over 30 of the enemy." Konowal was in charge of a section in attack and to that section fell the difficult task of "mopping up" cellars, craters and machine-gun emplacements. His direction was so successful that all resistance was overcome and heavy casualties were inflicted on the enemy. These "mopping-up" enterprises involved many desperate encounters with an enemy at bay, and in all sorts of odd holes and corners, at unexpected times, there were meetings which inevitably meant death to at least some of the combatants. That these encounters were not shirked by British fighters,



ACTING CORPORAL F.  
KONOWAL,  
Canadian Infantry.



PRIVATE A. HALTON,  
King's Own Royal Lancaster  
Regiment.



LANCE-CORPORAL W.  
PEELER,  
Australian Imperial Force.

and indeed especially appealed to their combative and sporting instincts, was shown by such cases as that of this Canadian Infantryman. In one cellar he himself bayoneted three enemy and attacked, single-handed, seven others in a crater, killing them all. When the objective was reached the corporal found that a machine-gun was holding up the right flank and causing many casualties. Rushing forward, he entered the emplacement and having killed the crew brought the gun back to our own lines. Such was the one day's toll of Corporal Konowal. The next day, still single-handed, he again attacked another machine-gun emplacement, killed three of the crew, and destroyed the gun and emplacement with explosives. The exact total to his credit was not, apparently, known with certainty; but there were at least the sixteen mentioned—and the corporal carried on continuously during the two days' actual fighting until he was severely wounded.

Of Lance-Corporal Walter Peeler the story was told in the *London Gazette* that when, with a Lewis gun, he was accompanying the first wave of an assault he encountered an enemy party sniping advancing troops from a shell-hole. The position was immediately rushed by Peeler, who accounted for nine of the enemy and cleared the way for the advance. Twice afterwards he performed similar acts of valour, accounting each time for a number of the enemy. Being directed to a position from which an enemy machine-gun was being fired on our troops he located and killed the gunner, and the rest of the enemy party ran into a dug-out which was near. They were, however, dislodged from the shelter by a bomb, and 10 of the enemy ran out. "These he disposed of," was the cold official explanation of their fate. In the manner

described the lance-corporal "actually accounted for over 30 of the enemy," thus adding to a list of exceptional performances.

Another member of the Australian Imperial Force, Sergeant John James Dwyer, Australian Machine Gun Corps, distinguished himself in connexion with machine-gun fighting. He was in charge of a Vickers machine-gun and went forward with the first wave of the brigade. When he reached the final objective he rushed his gun forward in advance of the captured position, so that he could obtain a commanding spot. Seeing an enemy machine-gun firing on our right flank and causing casualties, Dwyer unhesitatingly rushed his weapon forward to within 30 yards of the enemy gun and by firing point blank put out of action and killed the crew. Snipers from the rear of the enemy position made a strong effort to destroy Dwyer, but totally ignoring them he seized the gun and carried it back across the shell-swept ground to our front line: then he established both this gun and the Vickers gun on the right flank of our brigade. The sergeant now commanded these guns with much coolness and gave great help in repulsing counter-attacks. Next day, when the position was heavily shelled, Dwyer took up several positions. His Vickers gun, with which he had done so much useful work, was blown up by shell fire; but he conducted his gun team back to headquarters through the enemy barrage, and having secured one of the reserve guns, rushed it back without delay to our position.

So far in this batch of 20 four members of the Australian Imperial Force have been dealt with; there remains a fifth—Private Reginald Roy Inwood, who showed the greatest courage



during an advance to a second objective. Alone he moved forward through our barrage to an enemy strong post, and this he captured with nine prisoners, killing several of the enemy. During the evening Inwood volunteered for a special all-night patrol, which went out 600 yards in front of our line, and there his coolness and sound judgment enabled him to secure and send back some very valuable information as to the enemy's movements. In the early morning of September 21 Inwood located a machine-gun which was causing several casualties. Again acting alone, he bombed the gun and team, killing all but one, and that man he brought in captive with the weapon.

A hand-to-hand fight characterized the exploits for which the Cross was given to Sergeant John Molyneux, Royal Fusiliers (St. Helens). There were in this little affair the elements of a stirring drama. There was a house, and a trench in front of it, and from that trench a machine-gun was doing grievous mischief to our men in an attack. The assault was being held up by the weapon. This was the sort of opportunity for which the British

jumped out of the trench and, calling for someone to follow him, he rushed for the house. The sergeant was ahead of his gallant followers, and by the time they arrived he was "in the thick of a hand-to-hand fight." This combat was brief and very decisive—the enemy surrendered, and in addition to the dead and



ACTING CORPORAL F. GREAVES,  
Notts and Derby Regiment.

wounded between 20 and 30 prisoners were taken. The achievement in itself was brilliant; it irresistibly appealed to the British fighter and aroused in him all that was best of his sporting qualities, but more than that the affair was important because it prevented a slight check from becoming a serious block in the advance, and saved many lives.

Another stirring example of initiative and leadership in non-commissioned and lower ranks was afforded by the case of Acting Corporal Fred Greaves, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Regiment (Balborough). Machine-gun fire from a "concrete stronghold" temporarily held up his platoon, and the platoon commander and sergeant were casualties. Seeing this, and realizing that unless this post was quickly taken his men would lose the barrage, Greaves, followed by another non-commissioned officer, rushed forward, reached the rear of the building, bombed the occupants, killed or captured the garrison, and took no fewer than four machine-guns. It was solely due to his personal pluck and initiative that the assaulting line at his point was not held up



SERGEANT J. J. DWYER,  
Australian Machine Gun Corps.

fighter longed, and when it came he took it. "Sergeant Molyneux instantly organized a bombing party to clear the trench in front of the house. Many enemy were killed, and a machine-gun captured." The Fusilier had opened his work well; he promptly finished it. This perilous obstacle having been cleared, he

and that our troops escaped serious casualties. A most critical stage of the battle arose later in the afternoon, when the troops of a flank brigade had temporarily given way under a heavy counter-attack and all the officers of the company were casualties. Quickly grasping the situation, Greaves threw out extra posts

"pill-box" or man-handling an enemy group; it was an exhibition of sheer calm pluck and disregard of personal danger which was specially noticeable even in the annals of the Crosses of the war.

There was more of the joy of adventure and the thrill of action in the case of a member of



PRIVATE CHAS. MELVIN,  
Royal Highlanders.

CORP. J. B. HAMILTON,  
Highland Light Infantry.

SERG. JOHN MOLYNEUX,  
Royal Fusiliers.

on the threatened flank and opened up rifle and machine-gun fire to enfilade the advance. It was recorded of the corporal that the effect of his conduct on his men could not be over-estimated, and that those under his command gallantly responded to his example.

A display of perfect coolness in circumstances of the utmost danger was rewarded with the Cross in the case of Private (Acting Lance-Corporal) John Brown Hamilton, Highland Light Infantry (Lanarkshire). In this incident there were wanting those thrilling surroundings which marked the honours that have been already dealt with; yet his bravery was of the highest character. One of those crises had arisen in which there was great difficulty in supplying small-arm ammunition to the front and support lines. The supply had reached a seriously low ebb and Hamilton on several occasions, on his own initiative, carried bandoliers of ammunition through the enemy's belts of fire to the front and support lines; then, passing along these lines in full view of the hostile snipers and machine-gunners, at close range, he distributed the ammunition to the men. This courageous conduct not only ensured the steady continuance of the defence by rifle fire, but the moral effect of the lance-corporal's example inspired and heartened all who saw him. There was not in this case any of the glamour or excitement of rushing a

another North Country regiment. This was Private Charles Melvin, Royal Highlanders (Kirriemuir), whose conduct added lustre to the famous Black Watch. His company had advanced to within 50 yards of the front-line trench of a redoubt; they were then forced to lie down, owing to the enemy's intense fire, and await reinforcements. Delay, however, was not to the liking of Private Melvin, and he rushed on alone over ground that was swept from end to end by machine-gun and rifle fire. Halting when he reached the enemy trench, he fired two or three shots into it and killed one or two of the enemy. This warning failing to scatter the enemy, who went on firing at him, the Highlander jumped into the trench and attacked the foe with his bayonet in his hand, for he had not been able to fix it on his damaged rifle. So resolute and gallant was this single-handed assault that most of the enemy fled to the second line; but not before the private had killed two more and disarmed eight unwounded and one wounded opponents. True to the British tradition of humanity, he attended to the hurts of the wounded man and then, "driving his eight unwounded prisoners before him, and supporting the wounded one, he hustled them out of the trench, marched them in and delivered them over to an officer." This might have satisfied most men, but Melvin was not content until he had provided himself with a



load of ammunition and returned to the firing-line, where he reported himself to his platoon sergeant. The valour of these acts was heightened by the fact that all were performed under intense rifle and machine-gun fire, and that the whole way back Melvin and his party were exposed to a very heavy artillery barrage fire.

Completing the score was Private Arthur Hutt, Royal Warwickshire Regiment (Earlsdon, Coventry), who distinguished himself greatly both as a leader and a fighter. When all the officers and non-commissioned officers of No. 2 Platoon had become casualties he took command of and led forward the platoon. Being held up by a strong post on his right, he at once ran forward alone in front of the platoon and shot the officer and three men in the post, causing between forty and fifty others to surrender. Finding that he had pushed too far, he withdrew his party, personally covering the withdrawal by sniping the enemy and killing a number. He then carried back a badly wounded man and put him under shelter. Having organized and consolidated his position, and learning that some wounded men were lying out and were likely to become

prisoners if left, no stretcher-bearers being available, Hutt went out and carried in four men under heavy fire.

Standing well out in a list of ten awards made known on December 18, 1917, was a Tank leader whose devotion cost him his life. This was Second Lieutenant Clement Robertson,



[Lassano.]

**PRIVATE ARTHUR HUTT,**  
Royal Warwickshire Regiment.

Royal West Surrey Regiment, S.R., Temporary Lieutenant, Acting Captain, Tank Corps. Here again was one of the cases in which V.C. awards indicated the remarkable developments of the methods of modern warfare, and the success of a purely British invention. Robertson was leading his Tanks in attack under heavy shell, machine-gun and rifle fire, and his course lay over ground which shell-fire had heavily ploughed. He knew to the full how great was the risk of the Tanks missing their way, yet he continued to lead them on foot, "guiding them carefully and patiently towards their objective, although he must have known that his action would almost inevitably cost him his life." Such, indeed, was the end of the brave captain, who was killed after his objective had been reached; but death did not come until his skilful leading had assured successful action. To appreciate fully this officer's devotion to duty it is only necessary to bear in mind the desperate enterprises on which Tanks were sent, the uncommon perils into which these land-forts were driven, and the considerable protection which was lost by a man who voluntarily left the shelter of the metal structure and coolly exposed himself to the intense mixed fire with which a Tank was invariably greeted by the enemy when at close quarters.



**SECOND LIEUT. CLEMENT ROBERTSON,**  
Royal West Surrey Regiment, S.R. (Temporary Lieutenant, Acting Captain, Tank Corps.)

There were three more posthumous awards in this particular list; making no fewer than four out of a total of ten. These awards were to Major Alexander Malins Lafone, Yeomanry; Captain Clarence Smith Jeffries, Australian Imperial Force, and Corporal William Clamp, Yorkshire Regiment (Flemington). Major



**CORPORAL WILLIAM CLAMP,**  
Yorkshire Regiment.

Lafone's was one of the very rare cases in which enemy cavalry were mentioned, and the details indicated one of the engagements which appealed with exceptional force to a man of Lafone's resource and fighting power. For more than seven hours he held a position against vastly superior enemy forces, his task being made the harder because heavy shelling of his position made it very difficult to see. In one attack enemy cavalry charged his flank; but the major drove them back with heavy losses. In another charge the enemy left 15 casualties within 20 yards of the major's trench, Lafone himself bayoneting one man who reached the trench. The time came in this desperate affair when all Lafone's men except three had been hit and the trench was so full of wounded that it was difficult to move and fire; then the major ordered those who could walk to move to a trench slightly in the rear, and from his own post he maintained "a most heroic resistance." When at last he was surrounded and charged by the enemy he stepped into the open and went on fighting until he was mortally wounded and fell unconscious.

Captain Jeffries showed his high courage and inspiring example in an attack when his company was held up by enemy machine-gun fire from concrete emplacements. In the first,

having organized a party, he rushed an emplacement and captured four machine-guns and 35 prisoners, after which he led his company forward under extremely heavy enemy artillery barrage and enfilade machine-gun fire to the objective. Later he again organized a successful attack on a machine-gun emplacement, this time capturing two machine-guns and 30 more prisoners, so having to his credit six machine-guns and no fewer than 65 prisoners. The gallant Jeffries was killed during the second attack, but it was entirely due to his courage and initiative that the centre of the attack was not held up for a lengthy period.

The fate which had befallen not a few V.C. men from snipers' bullets overtook Corporal William Clamp when he had shown very great bravery in attacking concrete blockhouses. Intense machine-gun fire from these and from snipers in ruined buildings checked an advance; but the corporal with two men dashed forward and tried to rush the largest blockhouse. The two men having been knocked out, Clamp's brave effort failed; but instantly collecting some bombs and calling upon two men to follow him, he again dashed forward. The corporal was the first to reach the blockhouse, and hurling in the bombs he killed many of the occupants. Then he entered and brought out a machine-gun and about 20 prisoners, whom he



**MAJOR ALEXANDER M. LAFONE,**  
Yeomanry.

took back under heavy fire from neighbouring snipers. This was one of the critical situations which so often arose and with which men like Corporal Clamp so successfully dealt. In this case he again went forward and encouraged his



men, cheering them and rushing several snipers' posts. This high courage and cheerful example the corporal maintained until a sniper's bullet killed him.

Fearless leadership under most difficult conditions, in darkness and in an unknown country, was recognized by the award of the Cross to Lieutenant-Colonel Arthur Drummond Borton, D.S.O., London Regiment. In these most unfavourable and dangerous circumstances he deployed his battalion for attack, and at dawn led his attacking companies against a strongly held position. The colonel showed an utter contempt of danger when a withering machine-gun fire checked the leading waves, and under heavy fire he moved freely up and down his lines. He reorganized his command and leading his men forward captured the position. At a later stage of the fight Colonel Borton led a party of volunteers against a battery of field guns in action at point-blank range, capturing the guns and the detachments. It was recorded of him that his fearless leadership was an inspiring example to the whole Brigade.

The dash and daring of our cavalry whenever it was possible for the mounted arm to act was shown by the conduct of Lieutenant Henry Strachan, M.C., Canadian Cavalry. The squadron leader was killed while galloping towards the enemy front line and Strachan took command. He led the squadron through the



LIEUTENANT HENRY STRACHAN, M.C.,  
Canadian Cavalry.



LIEUT.-COLONEL A. D. BORTON, D.S.O.,  
London Regiment.

enemy line of machine-gun posts, then, with the surviving men, he led the charge on the enemy battery, killing seven of the gunners with his sword. This valiant personal example resulted in all the gunners being killed and the battery silenced; then Strachan rallied his men and fought his way back, at night, through the enemy's line, not only bringing in all unwounded men safely but also 15 prisoners. The result of this uncommonly gallant operation was the silencing of an enemy battery, the killing of the whole battery *personnel* and many infantry, and the cutting of three main lines of telephone communication two miles in rear of the enemy's front line.

Within a month of the announcement of the award to Captain Strachan there was a large gathering in Bo'ness (Linlithgowshire) Town Hall on the occasion of the presentation of a sword of honour to him. A very interesting feature of the report of the ceremony which appeared in *The Times* was the statement that the Cross was awarded to Captain Strachan "for his daring leadership of cavalry at the break through at Cambrai." Lord Rosebery was present, and in a characteristic speech he said he was proud to congratulate Captain Strachan on the honour he had brought to his native town and the county. It was not a bad thing, he added, when the war lumbered slowly along, that they should receive occasionally the encouragement of feeling that they had a hero of their own.

Another Canadian officer—Lieutenant Robert Shankland, Canadian Infantry—showed great courage and resource under critical and

adverse conditions and gave to all ranks that inspiration which was so invaluable in times of special stress. Shankland had gained a position in action and then rallied the remnant of his platoon and men of other companies and disposed them to command the ground in front. The lieutenant inflicted heavy casualties upon the retreating enemy, and later he dispersed a counter-attack and so enabled supporting troops to come up unmolested. Shankland having shown his grit as a fighter, displayed first-rate qualities as an intelligence officer, for he personally communicated to battalion headquarters an accurate and valuable report as to the position of the brigade frontage, after which he rejoined his command and carried on until he was relieved. It was owing to his courage, skill and splendid example that a very critical position was undoubtedly saved.

"He bayoneted fifteen of the enemy," "he led the final assault with the utmost skill," "this gallant non-commissioned officer repeatedly went out under heavy fire and brought wounded back to cover, thus saving many lives," he was "conspicuous in rallying and leading his command"—these were things said of the conduct of Acting Corporal John Collins, Royal Welsh Fusiliers (Merthyr Tydvil), who provided yet one more instance of extraordinary courage and leadership in the lower ranks in the Army. The corporal's conduct was the more noticeable because, after deployment, before an attack, his battalion was forced to lie out in the open under heavy shell and machine-gun fire which caused many casualties. Destructive fire and uncut wire were powerless to restrain him, great odds melted before his powerful plying of the bayonet, and after that exploit with the steel he pressed on with a Lewis gun section beyond the objective and most effectively covered the reorganization and consolidation, although isolated and under fire from guns and snipers.

The same cool leadership and inspiring example characterized the acts of Sergeant Harry Coverdale, Manchester Regiment (Old Trafford, Manchester), who in attack on enemy strong points, and when close to his objective, killed an officer and took two men prisoners, the three being snipers; then he rushed two machine-guns, killing or wounding the teams. Later he reorganized his platoon in order to capture another position; but after getting within 100 yards of it he was held up by our own barrage

and forced to return, having sustained nine casualties. Subsequently he again went out with five men to capture this position, but seeing a considerable number of the enemy advancing he withdrew his detachment man by man. He was the last to retire and was able to report that the enemy were forming for a counter-attack.

This list of 10 was completed with Private



ACTING CORPORAL JOHN COLLINS,  
Royal Welsh Fusiliers.

Thomas Henry Sage, Somersetshire Light Infantry (Tiverton), whose act was the result of great promptness and presence of mind, and nearly cost him his life. He and eight other men were in a shell-hole. One of the men was shot while throwing a bomb. The bomb fell into the shell-hole, and Sage immediately threw himself on it, "thereby undoubtedly saving the lives of several of his comrades, though he himself sustained very severe wounds."

The Victoria Cross Warrants had been so framed that it was possible for civilians to win the decoration, and there were three well-known instances of civilian recipients—Mr. Thomas Henry Kavanagh, Mr. Ross Lewis Mangles and Mr. William Fraser McDonell, all members of the Bengal Civil Service; and all three of whom were awarded the Cross for acts of bravery in the Indian Mutiny in 1857. The original Warrant of January 29, 1856, expressly ordained that the Cross should only be awarded to those officers or men who had served in the



presence of the enemy, and that "neither rank, nor long service, nor wounds, nor any other circumstance or condition whatsoever, save the merit of conspicuous bravery" should be held to establish a sufficient claim to the honour. It was undoubtedly open to civilians to win the Cross, but no such award had been made since the days of the Mutiny, nor had there been any clear understanding as to the position of women with regard to the decoration; and with the purpose of getting information on this most interesting point a question was asked in the House of Commons on December 3, 1917, by Sir A. W. Yeo, the member for Tower Hamlets, Poplar. In reply Mr. Jan. Macpherson, Under-Secretary for War, said: "When a case arises in which a woman performs an action in the circumstances contemplated by the Victoria Cross Warrant consideration will be given to an



**SERGEANT HARRY COVERDALE,**  
Manchester Regiment.

extension of the conditions. At present the warrant would not, I think, admit of a grant." As a matter of fact neither the original Warrant nor the subsequent Warrants of 1867, 1881 and



**PRIVATE THOMAS H. SAGE,**  
Somersetshire Light Infantry.

1911 provided for such a case as that which had been mentioned, and only time was to show whether one or more members of the army of women who had enrolled for war work would have the unparalleled honour of being awarded the Cross.

That noble clause which has been quoted from the original Warrant of the Cross—that conspicuous bravery only should establish a claim to the honour—was thoroughly exemplified by details which were given from time to time relating to the personality of the winners. All classes alike were in equal fellowship; even more than that there was the man from the lowest depths who, given the chance of redemption, found and took it on the field of battle. Such a case was mentioned by a well-known criminal lawyer, who wrote:—  
"One of the most notorious of pre-war criminals gave his life for his country in a deed of gallantry that won for him the posthumous honour of the V.C."

The following awards of the Victoria Cross were announced between August and the end of December 1917:—

ACKROYD, Temp. Capt. Harold, M.C., M.D.,  
R.A.M.C., attached R. Berkshire Regt.  
ANDREW, Corpl. Leslie Wilton, Infy. Bn., New  
Zealand Force.

- BARRATT, Pte. Thos., South Staffordshire Regt. (Tipton).
- BEST-DUNKLEY, Capt. (Temp. Lieut.-Colonel) Bertram, Lancashire Fusiliers.
- BIRKS, 2nd Lieut. Frederick, Australian Imperial Force.
- BISHOP, Capt. Wm. Avery, D.S.O., M.C., Canadian Cavalry and R.F.C.
- BONNER, Lieut. Charles George, D.S.C., R.N.R.
- BORTON, Lieut.-Colonel Arthur Drummond, D.S.O., London Regt.
- BROWN, Pte. Harry, Canadian Inf. Bn.
- BUGDEN, Pte. Patrick, Australian Imperial Force.
- BURMAN, Sergt. William Francis, Rifle Brigade (Stepney, E.).
- BUTLER, Pte. William Boynton, West Yorks. Regt. (Hunslet, Leeds).
- BYE, Sergt. Robt., Welsh Guards (Penrhiwceiber, Glamorgan).
- CARMICHAEL, Sergt. John, North Staffordshire Regt. (Glasgow).
- CLAMP, Corpl. William, Yorkshire Regt. (Flemington).
- COFFIN, Lieut.-Colonel (Temp. Brig.-General) Clifford, D.S.O., R.E.
- COLLINS, Acting-Corpl. John, Royal Welsh Fusiliers (Merthyr Tydvil).
- COLVIN, 2nd Lieut. Hugh, Cheshire Regt.
- COLYER-FERGUSON, 2nd Lieut. (Acting Capt.) Thos. Riversdale, Northamptonshire Regt.
- COOPER, Sergt. Edward, King's Royal Rifle Corps (Stockton).
- COVERDALE, Sergt. Harry, Manchester Regt. (Old Trafford, Manchester).
- CRISP, Skipper Thomas, R.N.R.
- DANCOX, Pte. Fk. Geo., Worcestershire Regt. (Worcester).
- DAVIES, Corpl. James Llewellyn, R. Welsh Fusiliers (Nantymoel, Glamorgan).
- DAY, Corpl. Sidney James, Suffolk Regt. (Norwich).
- DWYER, Sergt. John Jas., Aus. M.G. Corps, Aus. Imp. Force.
- EDWARDS, Sergt. Alexander, Seaforth Highlanders (Lössiemouth).
- EDWARDS, Pte. Wilfrid, King's Own Yorks L.I. (Leeds).
- EGERTON, Corpl. Ernest Albert, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Regt. (Loughton).
- EVANS, Major (Acting Lieut.-Colonel) Lewis Pugh, D.S.O., Royal Highlanders, commanding a Battalion Lincolnshire Regt.
- GRAHAM, Lieut. John Reginald Noble, A. and S. Highrs., attached M.G.C.
- GREAVES, Acting Corpl. Fred, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Regt. (Balborough).
- GRIMBALDESTON, Sergt. (Acting C.Q.M.S.) Wm. H., K.O. Scottish Bord. (Blackburn).
- HALTON, Pte. Albert, King's Own Royal Lancaster Regt. (Carnforth).
- HAMILTON, Pte. (Acting Lce. Corpl.) John Brown, Highland Light Inf. (Lanarkshire)
- HANNA, Coy. Sergt.-Major R., Canadian Inf.
- HEWITT, 2nd Lieut. Denis Geo. Wyldbore, Hampshire Regt.
- HEWITT, Lce. Corpl. William Henry, South African Inf.
- HOBSON, Sergt. Frederick, Canadian Inf. Bn.
- HUTT, Pte. Arthur, Royal Warwickshire Regt. (Earlsdon, Coventry).
- INWOOD, Pte. Reginald Roy, Australian Imperial Force.
- JEFFRIES, Capt. Clarence Smith, Australian Imperial Force.
- KONOWAL, Acting Corpl. Filip, Canadian Inf.
- KNIGHT, Sergt. Alfred Joseph, London Regt. (Nottingham).
- LAFONE, Major Alexander Malius, Yeomanry.
- LEARMOUTH, Capt. (acting Major) Okill Massey, M.C., Canadian Inf.
- LOOSEMORE, Pte. Arnold, West Riding Regt. (Sheffield).
- LISTER, Sergt. Joseph, Lancashire Fusiliers (Reddish, Stockport).
- MCGEE, Sergt. Lewis, Australian Imp. Force.
- MCINTOSH, Pte. Geo., Gordon Highlanders, Buckie, Banffshire.
- MAYSON, Corpl. (Lce. Sergt.) Tom Fletcher, R. Lancaster R. (Silecourt, Cumberland).
- MELVIN, Pte. Charles, Royal Highlanders (Kirriemuir).
- MOLYNEUX, Sergt. John, Royal Fusiliers (St. Helens).
- MOORE, 2nd Lieut. Montagu Shadworth Seymour, Hampshire Regt.
- MOYNEY, Lce. Sergt. John, Irish Guards (Rathdowney, Queen's County).
- MUGFORD, Lce. Corpl. Harold, M.G. Corps (East Ham).
- OCKENDEN, Sergt. James, Royal Dublin Fusiliers (Southsea).
- O'ROURKE, Pte. Michael James, Canadian Inf.



- PARSONS, Temp. 2nd Lieut. Hardy Falconer, Gloucestershire Regt.
- PEELER, Lce. Corpl. Walter, Australian Imperial Force.
- PITCHER, Petty Officer Ernest.
- REES, Sergt. Ivor, South Wales Borderers (Llanelly).
- REYNOLDS, Temp. Capt. Henry, M.C., Royal Scots.
- RHODES, Lce. Sergt. John Harold, Grenadier Guards (Tunstall, Staffordshire).
- ROBERTSON, 2nd Lieut. Clement, Royal West Surrey Regt., S.R. (Temp. Lieut., Acting Capt., Tank Corps).
- ROOM, Pte. (Acting Lce. Corpl.) Fk. G., Royal Irish Regt. (Bristol).
- SAGE, Pte. Thos. Hy., Somersetshire Light Inf. (Tiverton).
- SHANKLAND, Lieut. Robt., Canadian Inf.
- SKINNER, Sergt. (Acting C.S.M.) John, King's Own Scottish Borderers (Pollokshields, Glasgow).
- STRACHAN, Lieut. Hy., M.C., Canadian Cavalry.
- WATT, Skipper Joseph, R.N.R.
- WITHAM, Pte. Thos., Coldstream Guards (Burnley).
- WOODCOCK, Pte. Thos., Irish Guards (Wigan, Lancashire).



## CHAPTER CCXXIX.

# FOOD CONTROL AND RATIONS IN GREAT BRITAIN.

ABUNDANCE DURING TWO YEARS OF WAR—APPOINTMENT OF FOOD CONTROLLER AT END OF 1916—CAUSES OF SHORTAGE—THE RUNCIMAN PUBLIC MEALS ORDER—LORD DEVONPORT—LORD RHONDDA'S APPOINTMENT—PURCHASING POWER OF THE SOVEREIGN—MR. J. R. CLYNES—A STANDARD NINEPENNY LOAF—MAXIMUM PRICES—LOCAL COMMITTEES—SUGAR CARDS—INDIVIDUAL REGISTRATION—"VOLUNTARY" RATIONS—SHORTAGE OF FATS—QUEUES—MEAT PRICES—MEAT SHORTAGE—THE MEAT RATIONING SCHEME EXPLAINED—FIRST EFFECTS OF RATIONING—GERMAN EXPERIENCE—LORD RHONDDA'S SUCCESS.

IT was almost a commonplace before the war, among certain schools of political and economic thought, that an island country which was not self-supporting in food would be in danger of starvation soon after the outbreak of an armed conflict with any large maritime Power. Like so many of the other prophecies which were widely believed in those days this unpleasant forecast was completely falsified by events. The outstanding feature of the food situation as it developed in Great Britain was the insignificance of the interference of military and naval operations with the provisioning of the civilian population during the first two years of hostilities. Except for a gradual and sustained upward movement of the prices of most of the articles of common consumption there was no food problem in the country until the nations had entered on the third year of war. Up to this point the people of the United Kingdom were in the happy position of being spectators at a distance, and not always perhaps with a clear vision, of the food troubles of enemy countries, and regarded with little more than academic interest the elaborate schemes of rationing by which the enemy Governments sought to overcome those troubles.

But the situation underwent a perceptible change in the closing months of 1916, and for a variety of reasons, which will be examined more closely later, the problems of supply and distribution began to thrust themselves on the attention of the people and the Government. To many who had been lulled into security by two years of plenty, the possibility that their daily bread and the rest of the things they ate might not continue to reach them by the same almost automatic process as in normal times came with a little shock, and when they found it difficult to get two or three articles of food in the quantities to which they had been accustomed, they exercised the Englishman's prerogative and made a noise about the matter. It has to be recorded that when first a scarcity of butter, margarine, meat, bacon, cheese and tea caused inconvenience and some actual hardships among the poorer classes, the discontent which arose was rather out of proportion to the burden which the people had to carry. Lord Rhondda, who was then the Food Controller, in a speech made at a meeting of the Aldwyeh Club, told the "grouzers" quite bluntly that what they were speaking of as famine would be regarded as luxury in Germany. Even in the forty-fourth month of the



war the Prime Minister was able to say that there was less hunger in this country than there had been before the war began.

To some extent the discontent was not seen in its true perspective. Resentment was created and fed, not so much by the difficulty in getting accustomed foods, as by a belief among the working people that unfair distribution enabled the wealthy to get supplies without trouble to themselves while the poor were deprived of their share. This impression rested on very slender foundations, but it was fostered and spread by men and women with pacifist leanings, and also quite honestly by less flabby speakers, who believed that the disparity they described existed, and whose sole wish was to remedy a supposed injustice. Complaints would have been fewer if the scarcity had come earlier in the war. The pinch was suddenly felt at a time when the strain of three years of unremitting toil, the draining of the man-power resources of the country, and the losses in the field which left few people untouched, had "dulled the enthusiasm for sacrifice" and created a sense of weariness. It was not a weariness that brought the nation to any thought of peace without victory, but it made life less buoyant, and men and women less able to take up an addition to their cares.

Out of the situation as it developed there arose a popular cry for rationing which gave the necessary impetus to a demand consistently advanced much earlier by those who realized how vital an influence the food question might have in turning the balance between victory and disaster. It was not, however, until the beginning of 1918 that the Government definitely sanctioned the putting into operation of a national scheme to restrict and regularize the consumption of foods of which a scarcity had arisen. Even then, in spite of vague assurances given and repeated at frequent intervals of the existence of a carefully thought-out plan, the machinery for rationing was not ready, or had not got beyond the stage of experiment, and the national system had to follow upon the gradual fusion and extension of local schemes started in industrial areas where a dearth of supplies and labour pressure had compelled the authorities to take action.

The reluctance of the Government to resort to rationing may have been partly prompted by a desire to avoid encouraging the enemy in hopes of success for his "ruthless" sub-

marine campaign, but it was also an outcome of the great achievement of the Navy and the British Mercantile Marine in maintaining month after month, and year after year, the transport of meat and grain, oils and fats, tea and sugar, from all parts of the world, to British ports. Many fine ships and much valuable food went to the bottom of the sea, but, in a greater degree than these losses, it was the world shortage due to diminished harvests and decreased production that brought men to take thought of the danger that the people's bread might fail. The scarcity of butter and margarine, and the sudden diminution of the meat supplies—two things which made rationing inevitable—had their origin more in the exigencies of war policy and mistakes in the exercise of food control than in the attacks of the German submarines. Had the duration of the war been less prolonged, and the means of defence against the development of the submarine more effective, the triumph of our seamen would have been complete. Although the United Kingdom in the days of peace produced only a little over a third of the food necessary for the existence of the population, and the closing of the sea would have meant, as the theorists had told us, starvation and surrender within a period measured by months, the outstanding fact of the first two years of the war was that a scarcity of food was not felt at all, and that the working classes, with higher wages, actually enjoyed better and more substantial meals than they had been able to obtain in normal times. When at length certain shortages developed, they were felt severely, but through the skilful use of the available tonnage the actual fall in imports late in 1917 compared with peace-time figures was only 4 per cent. If it is stated that, apart from supplying the needs of the civil population at home, the shipping problem included the service of our armies in many theatres of war, and the partial provisioning of our Allies, the extent of the national indebtedness to the men who guarded or sailed the seas may in some sense be measured. Notwithstanding this, the Government cannot be acquitted of blame for carrying optimism to the extent of deferring even effective organization for rationing the nation until rationing was practically thrust on them by industrial areas where the food situation had become acute. There was probably a third cause influencing the hesitation and distrust with

which the Government viewed rationing proposals. Great Britain is a democracy, and a democracy "peculiarly intolerant of precise regulations in the home." Ministers feared the possible effect of any official interference with the nation's habits. A bureaucracy like Germany could ignore what is known as public opinion, and develop its plans accordingly. In Great Britain, a Government nervous about the way in which the public might regard the inconvenience and difficulties of rationing, once again trailed unwillingly in the rear of

be dealt with merely by the making of speeches urging national economy. On November 17 of that year wide powers were conferred on the Board of Trade for the control of the manufacture, sale, and use of food, and in the exercise of these powers Mr. Runciman issued on November 20 a Milling Order which made obligatory a 76% extraction of flour from wheat. This very modest step was followed on December 5 by the first Public Meals Order, which put a limitation on the number of courses that might be served at luncheon and dinner



DEMONSTRATION OF MANCHESTER WORKERS IN FAVOUR OF COMPULSORY RATIONING JANUARY 26, 1918.

that opinion, and had suddenly to recognize that people demanded that they should be rationed. Several months were then occupied in building the foundations on which national rationing might be based, and in developing a scheme out of the pioneer experiments tested locally.

Food control in Great Britain did not take definite form until the end of 1916. In Chapter CXCII it was shown that Mr. Asquith's Government, shortly before its fall, was compelled, "largely as the result of a Press campaign," to recognize that a situation which was beginning to cause uneasiness could not

in hotels, restaurants and clubs. Then Mr. Lloyd George became Prime Minister, and made the establishment of a Food Controller one of his first actions. He chose Lord Devonport for the position and gave him what at the time was regarded as a comparatively free hand to seek a solution for the problem which had arisen. Lord Devonport held office for about five months. Soon after his appointment the position in regard to the national reserve of cereals became acute and people of foresight began to urge the advisability of compulsory rationing. It was announced that the necessary machinery for rationing would





#### AGRICULTURAL SCHOOL FOR SOLDIERS.

The Food Production Department of the Board of Agriculture opened a school for soldiers of low medical classification, many of whom had seen service at the front.

be prepared, but neither the machinery nor a plan for rationing ever reached such a stage under the first Food Controller that details could be made public. The policy of the Department was more effectively directed to checking the consumption of wheat by increasing the extraction of flour from the grain, making an admixture of flour milled from other cereals compulsory, prohibiting the sale of new bread, and similar measures. At the same time an appeal was made for the voluntary observance of a rationed scale of consumption of bread, meat and sugar, and a Food Economy Campaign, organized by Mr. Kennedy Jones, M.P., carried this appeal through the country, with the result that a good many people, chiefly of the upper and professional classes, regulated their housekeeping on the basis suggested to them. There is no evidence that the really heavy eaters of bread—men engaged on industrial and agricultural work—made any attempt to economize, either in food or anything else which increased earnings brought within their reach. The inherent weakness of the scale was that it imposed a flat rate, so that a worker accustomed to eating eight to ten pounds of bread in a week regarded the suggestion that he should cut down his consumption to four pounds as stupid, and ignored the appeal altogether.

Later the appeal took the form of a request

that everybody should reduce the consumption of bread by one pound a week, but by this time it was fairly well known that the reserves of grain had been considerably augmented and that real danger had for the time been averted, Lord Devonport did not add greatly to his reputation by his service as a Minister and his resignation of office caused few regrets. But much of the work he did was good. His business knowledge and energies were chiefly centred on supply, and by exerting pressure on the Government to provide shipping to bring more food into the country, encouraging production at home, and taking various measures to get all the bread possible from the wheat which could be sent to the mills, he removed the threat of a bread famine, prepared the way for the bountiful potato harvest lifted in the autumn of 1917, and saw the stocks of cattle and sheep raised to a reassuring figure.

These were achievements, however, of which the public at the time had little knowledge, and meanwhile Lord Devonport and the Government in the spring of 1917 had become the targets for sharp criticism arising out of resentment at the inflation of the price of many articles of food. There was a widespread conviction that the steadily rising cost of meat, vegetables, bread and other essentials could be attributed to the taking of unreasonable profits by the producers, wholesale dealers or

retailers, through whom food reached the consumer. Lord Devonport made one or two rather timid attempts to stem the upward rush of prices, but his experiments were either made too late—as in the days of a dearth of potatoes—or lacked boldness. At a time when popular dissatisfaction over “profiteering” had become so marked that it could not be ignored by the Government, Lord Devonport resigned his post.

It is the purpose of this chapter to describe the gradual development of the situation which led to the adoption of compulsory food rationing and to deal with the experiments in local rationing which were the foundation of a national scheme. For this reason it must be concerned with the activities and policy of the second Food Controller, Lord Rhondda, rather than the first, and no more need be said of Lord Devonport except that his one constructive contribution to rationing was a revised Public Meals Order which substituted for Mr. Runciman’s limitation of the number of courses which could be served in an hotel or restaurant a well-thought-out system of rationing by bulk. The details of this system and some account of other orders put into operation while Lord

Devonport held office were given in Chapter CXCII.

For some time after Lord Devonport had asked to be relieved of his office there was considerable doubt as to who would be his successor. The task to be taken up was a difficult and a thankless one; it promised no reward, and ambitious politicians showed no eagerness to compete for a position which might lay upon them the fetters of failure. Even Labour fought shy of the appointment, although the War Emergency Workers’ National Committee—a body representing the various sections of the Labour, Cooperative and Industrial Women’s Movement—had on May 12 published a comprehensive “draft” policy on the question of food supply. In a modified form much of this policy was carried into effect later in the year by a “capitalist” peer. The things demanded were:

#### GOVERNMENT POLICY.

- (a) The purchase of all essential imported foodstuffs.
- (b) The commandeering or controlling of all home-grown food products such as wheat, meat, oats, barley, potatoes, and milk.
- (c) The commandeering of slips and the control of transport facilities.
- (d) The placing on the retail markets of all supplies so obtained and controlled at prices which will secure



ETON BOYS AT WORK IN THE POTATO FIELD.



the full benefit of Government action to the consumer; and the proportional regulation, on a family basis, of the sale of any foodstuffs in which there is a shortage of supplies.

(e) The selling of bread and flour for the period of the war and six months afterwards at a price not exceeding 6d. per quarter loaf, any loss so involved to be met as a portion of the general cost of the war.

#### MUNICIPAL POLICY.

Powers to be given to municipal, urban, and other local authorities to set up special food control committees, to which shall be co-opted representatives of Labour, cooperative and industrial women's organizations, for the purpose of supervising the registration of consumers, the equitable local distribution of foodstuffs, and the institution of municipal food services.

for nearly six months, and by his energy and freedom from "departmentalism" had raised that Department to a high pitch of efficiency. Before joining the Government he was Managing Director of the Cambrian Combine and other colliery companies in South Wales, and was regarded as a business man first and a House of Commons man afterwards. At the time of his change of office it was said of him in *The Times* (June 16, 1917): "He is a believer in direct methods and may be trusted to bring



["Times" photograph.]

#### LORD RHONDDA AT HIS DESK AT THE MINISTRY OF FOOD.

One of the men invited by the Prime Minister to become Food Controller was Mr. Robert Smillie, President of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, an able Labour leader, but a bitter critic of the Government. Mr. Smillie was assured that if he took the post he would have full power over the distribution and over the fixing of prices of food, but he refused to accept the responsibility of constructive work. Eventually, on June 15, Mr. Bonar Law announced in the House of Commons that Lord Rhondda had consented to go to the Food Ministry. Lord Rhondda had then been President of the Local Government Board

to the uneasy task of food control not only wide understanding of commercial and business conditions, but energy and freedom from pre-conceived ideas." Experience of his administration showed that Lord Rhondda added to this equipment a sense of humour, a knowledge of how to handle men, readiness to receive and weigh the advice of others, and what he himself would have called a "thick skin." He made it quite clear when he consented to become Food Controller that he did so only at the pressing request of the Prime Minister, but having committed himself to the work he set out vigorously to carry his ideas into effect. The

intentions with which he assumed office can be summarized from a statement made on June 17 :

I have been given very ample authority by the Government to deal with the whole situation. I am empowered, should I find it necessary, to take over the food supplies of the country and to adopt strong measures to check all speculation in the necessities of life. . . . My first action will be directed towards securing a reduction in the price of bread. This I consider to be the urgent need of the moment. I intend to be as fair as the conditions of war will permit, but frankly my sympathies are with the consumer. I want the help of local authorities in the matter of distribution, and I confidently count on the advice and active help of the cooperative societies and other distributing agencies.

This was followed a week later by an official statement which gave an indication of the lines on which Lord Rhondda intended to work in seeking to reduce the existing high prices. The declaration was in the following form :

Lord Rhondda has decided that, in order to limit further rises in the prices of the more important food-stuffs and as far as possible to reduce the present level of prices, it will be necessary to institute much stricter and more complete measures of control in the industries engaged in the production of foodstuffs. Maximum prices require to be enforced by strict control through the producer and the retailer, with the object of limiting profits at every stage of production and distribution to a fair remuneration for services rendered.

The first step is to determine the costs of production and handling. For this purpose the Food Controller has already taken steps to set up a Costings Department in the Ministry of Food, consisting of highly skilled accountants, who will have full powers to examine books and obtain all particulars which may assist him to arrive at accurate figures as to costs. The object of control will be to fix prices by reference to actual costs with the addition of the normal pre-war rate of profit independent of market fluctuations in the manner which has already enabled the Army authorities to purchase many of their essential supplies at prices considerably below the market prices ruling for civil consumption.

Nothing could have been more to the public mind than that the new Food Controller should devote himself to the consideration of food prices. A man at this period would have needed to be deaf and unable to read to escape the conclusion that people of all classes were looking to Lord Rhondda to give them cheaper food. The following table shows the rise in the cost of living up to July 1, 1917, and the reduced purchasing power of the sovereign spent on food in the large towns of the United Kingdom during the war :

	Cost of one week's food for family.	Percentage increase above July 1914.	Purchasing power of a sovereign spent on food.
	s. d.		s. d.
1904 ...	22 6	—	—
1914.			
July ...	25 0	—	20 0
August 8 ...	29 0	16 per cent.	17 3
August 29 ...	27 9	11 " "	18 0
September 12 ...	27 9	11 " "	18 0
September 30 ...	28 3	13 " "	17 8
October 30 ...	28 3	13 " "	17 8
December 1 ...	29 3	17 " "	17 0

	1915.	s. d.		s. d.
January 1 ...	29 9	19 per cent.	16 10	
February 1 ...	30 9	23 " "	16 3	
March 1 ...	31 6	26 " "	15 10	
April 1 ...	31 6	26 " "	15 10	
May 1 ...	32 0	28 " "	15 7	
June 1 ...	33 9	35 " "	14 10	
July 1 ...	33 0	35 " "	14 10	
August 1 ...	34 0	36 " "	14 8	
September 1 ...	34 3	37 " "	14 7	
October 1 ...	35 6	42 " "	14 1	
November 1 ...	35 9	43 " "	14 0	
December 1 ...	36 6	46 " "	13 8	
1916.				
January 1 ...	37 0	48 " "	13 6	
February 1 ...	37 3	49 " "	13 5	
March 1 ...	37 9	51 " "	13 3	
April 1 ...	38 0	52 " "	13 2	
May 1 ...	39 9	59 " "	12 7	
June 1 ...	40 6	62 " "	12 4	
July 1 ...	41 3	65 " "	12 1	
August 1 ...	40 6	62 " "	12 4	
September 1 ...	42 0	68 " "	11 11	
October 1 ...	42 9	71 " "	11 8	
November 1 ...	45 3	81 " "	11 0	
December 1 ...	46 9	87 " "	10 8	
1917.				
January 1 ...	47 9	91 " "	10 5	
February 1 ...	48 3	93 " "	10 4	
March 1 ...	49 3	97 " "	10 2	
April 1 ...	49 9	99 " "	10 0	
May 1 ...	50 6	102 " "	9 11	
June 1 ...	51 6	106 " "	9 8	
July 1 ...	52 3	109 " "	9 6	

While the advance in prices applied to nearly every article of general consumption—luxury foods, chiefly owing to the fall in the demand, alone escaped the increase—popular unrest mainly arose out of the heavy cost of bread and meat. In the summer of 1917 the price of the quartern loaf had risen to one shilling compared with a normal price of 6d. The advance in meat prices is shown in the following figures, contrasting the wholesale prices prevailing at the London Central Markets on June 25, 1914, with the quotation on June 24, 1917. The prices were per stone of 8 lb. :

	1914	1917
Beef—		
Scotch sides ...	4s. 6d. to 5s. 2d.	10s. 8d. to 11s. 1d.
English ...	4s. 2d. to 4s. 5d.	10s. 3d.
American—		
Forequarters, chilled ...	2s. 2d. to 2s. 4d.	7s. 3d.
Mutton—		
Scotch ...	6s. 9d. to 6s. 4d.	11s. 5d.
English ...	3s. 6d. to 4s. 0d.	11s. 1d.
Australian ...	2s. 2d. to 2s. 8d.	6s. 1d.
Lamb—		
English ...	5s. 8d. to 6s. 8d.	11s. 6d.
Scotch ...	6s. 0d. to 7s. 0d.	12s. 0d.
Australian ...	3s. 6d. to 4s. 0d.	7s. 0d.

To enable him to deal with speculation and profiteering wherever it was established that these evils existed, Lord Rhondda, soon after he had taken office, obtained by Order in Council powers similar to those already possessed by the Army Council, the Admiralty and the



Ministry of Munitions, for the requisitioning of supplies and the control of prices. These powers as exercised by the Departments named had resulted in extensive economies of public money. As applied to food supplies they enabled Lord Rhondda to requisition the whole or part of the output of any factory and to apply a price based on the cost of production, with the addition of a reasonable pre-war rate of profit, without regard to the price ruling in the open market. Authority was given to the Food Controller to examine books and to ascertain such particulars as to output, cost, and rate of profit as might be required for fixing a reasonable price. Mr. U. F. Wintour, C.B., C.M.G., who as Director of Army Contracts had been concerned with the practical application of such a system, was appointed Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Food, and Mr. E. F. Wise, who had had charge of the section of the Army Contracts Department which dealt with the control of raw materials required for clothing and equipping the Army, was also brought in as an assistant secretary.

Early in July Lord Rhondda secured as Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Food, Mr. J. R. Clynes, the Labour M.P. for

North-East Manchester. In this way the Labour movement became directly associated with food control, and in Mr. Clynes gave one of its soundest and most efficient representatives to the task. Within the limitations of his subordinate office, Mr. Clynes from the first did valuable work, and not only as an administrator, but as a moderating influence in the councils of his own working-class organizations, he served his country well. A slightly-built, delicate, studious man, passionately but sanely concerned with the interests of the masses of the people and the betterment of their conditions of life, he talked little, but worked incessantly to render what good he could to his fellows. As a member of the Government he achieved a rare success; he retained the confidence of Labour and gained the ardent loyalty and admiration of the permanent officials—some of them conservative-minded Civil Servants—who came under his control. This he did through his transparent sincerity and natural ability. He had no use for official "eyewash," and at the same time he showed scanty toleration for the rhetorical excesses of men who sought to exploit the difficulties of the food situation to foment class anta-



GIRL MILLERS AT NOTTINGHAM.

gonisms. More than once he had to face the task of quieting at Labour Party and Trade Union conferences a sense of uneasiness and doubt aroused by glib but ill-informed speakers who had tried to convince the delegates that the poor and the workers were suffering through the selfishness of the rich and the class bias of the Government. He never failed to upset the artificial case of the extremists by his quiet but unassailable statements of facts. He took office because he "was satisfied that genuine and drastic measures would be tried to save the situation" as the situation existed when he joined the Ministry, and he found congenial but abundant work in helping to shape and direct those measures.

Before the end of July, Lord Rhondda had sufficiently developed his policy to announce that from an early date he would standardize the price of flour in such a way as would enable bread to be sold at 9d. the quarter loaf. This standardizing was effected some weeks later by the grant of a State subsidy, the cost of which was estimated at £40,000,000 a year. In agreement with the Army Council, he had also arranged that the maximum prices for live cattle—usually only partially fattened—for the Army should be reduced to 74s. per cwt. in September, 72s. in October, 67s. in November, and 60s. in January. The prices represented considerable reductions on those ruling at the time, and they were later made the basis in fixing maximum wholesale prices for meat for civilian consumption. From the first the scale was attacked by those interested in agriculture, and events as they developed showed that the decision to proceed on a falling schedule had a serious effect on the meat supplies of the country; eventually the necessity for a revision of prices was realized, but, as will be shown later, the rushing into the markets of immature cattle and the reluctance of farmers to fatten stock which would have to be sold at a rate regarded as unremunerative had created a scarcity which called for very drastic restriction of consumption. So far as Lord Rhondda's responsibility is concerned, it should be said that he stated to a deputation of the Central Chamber of Agriculture that he would have preferred to have fixed a flat price from September onwards and to have compensated farmers who lost money because of the high price they had paid for store cattle, but he was advised that this was impracticable. At the time the prices were

fixed no danger of a dearth of meat seemed imminent. A meatless day in public eating places had been revoked, the meat rations in force in the restaurants permitted the consumption of no less than 5½ lbs. a head a week



[*Times*] photograph.

MR. J. R. CLYNES.

Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Food.

if customers cared to have it, and the voluntary meat ration for households of 2½ lbs. a head a week proposed by Lord Devonport remained unchanged.

The duties of the Food Controller during the war were to economize and maintain supplies, to restrict high prices and excessive profits, and to secure equality of distribution where scarcity was found to exist. Public interest in the third summer of the war, however, when the tension in regard to the wheat reserves had been temporarily relieved and the Director of Food Economy, Mr. Kennedy Jones, M.P., after a few months' work, had resigned his position and described his work as done, was centred not on supplies or even distribution, but on prices, and the Government and Lord Rhondda were concerned above everything else in taking steps to allay the discontent caused by the high cost of living. For a period a large proportion of the orders issued by the Minister of Food were solely concerned with price fixing and securing the control over supplies which made fixed prices possible. Eventually there were scarcely any



foods, except vegetables, the retail cost of which was not regulated. The following schedule gives the maximum prices which prevailed early in 1918 for some of the controlled articles :

BREAD.		s.	d.
4 lb. loaf	...	0	9
2 lb. loaf	...	0	4½
1 lb. loaf	...	0	2½
FLOUR.		s.	d.
Per 14 lb.	...	2	8

	per lb.
	s. d.
Thick flank steak	1 10
Chuck steak	1 8
Gravy beef	1 4
Minced beef	1 6
Sausage to contain not less than 50 per cent. of meat	1 3
Sausage, 67 per cent.	1 6
Bones	0 2
Mutton and Lamb :	
Leg, whole	1 7
Loin, whole	1 5
Best end	1 8
Loin chops, not trimmed	1 10
Saddles	1 5



GIRL LAND-WORKERS IN THE LORD MAYOR'S SHOW, 1917.

MEAT.		per lb.	per lb.
		s. d.	s. d.
Beef :			
Topside of round	...	1 8	
Silverside, with bone	...	1 6	
Thick flank	...	1 7	
Best cut	...	1 8	
Knuckle end	...	1 6	
Aitch bone	...	1 0	
Sirloin	...	1 7	
Thin flank	...	1 0	
Leg and shin	...	0 8	
Suet	...	1 6	
Foreribs	...	1 6	
Wing ribs, four bones	...	1 8	
Long ribs	...	1 4	
Back ribs	...	1 3	
Top ribs	...	1 3	
Brisket	...	1 0	
Clod and sticking, with bone	...	1 0	
Rump	...	1 8½	
Rump steak, boneless	...	2 2	
Fillet steak	...	2 2	
Buttock steak	...	2 0	
Shoulders...	...	1 5	
Neck, whole	...	1 2	
Best end	...	1 6	
Scrag	...	0 11	
Best neck chops...	...	1 8	
Breasts, whole	...	0 11	
Cut, best end	...	1 0	
Suet	...	1 2	
Pork :			
Legs, whole	...	1 6	
Middle...	...	1 10	
Hind loin, whole...	...	1 8	
Fore loin or griskin or spare rib, without blade			
bone	...	1 8	
Loin, ex back fat	...	1 8	
Best end	...	1 9	
Neck end	...	1 7	
Shoulder, without hock...	...	1 6	
Blade bone	...	1 6	
Belly	...	1 7	
Chops or steaks	...	1 10	

	per lb.
	s. d.
Pork—Continued :	
Heads, including tongue ... ..	0 9
Tongues ... ..	1 4
Chaps ... ..	1 2
Hocks ... ..	0 8
Feet ... ..	0 4
Tenderloin, without bone ... ..	1 11
Pork bones, excluding factory bone ... ..	0 3
Sausage, to contain not less than 50 per cent. pork ... ..	1 6
Sausage meat, to contain not less than 50 per cent. pork ... ..	1 4
Pickled pork could be sold at 1d. per lb. above fresh pork prices, but must not be sold as bacon.	
Rabbits, skinned, each ... ..	1 9
Per lb. ... ..	0 10

FISH.

	Whole fish,	Cuts,
	per lb.	per lb.
	s. d.	s. d.
Brean (fresh and salt water) ... ..	1 0	—
Brill ... ..	2 6	3 3
Carp ... ..	1 4	1 10
Cod ... ..	1 3	1 10
Dabs ... ..	1 3	—
Dogfish (skinned or filleted) ... ..	1 0	—
John Dory ... ..	1 3	—
Eels (freshwater) ... ..	2 0	—
Eels (conger) ... ..	1 0	1 4
Flounders ... ..	1 3	—
Grayling ... ..	1 4	—
Gurnards ... ..	1 0	—
Haddock ... ..	1 3	1 10
Hake ... ..	1 3	1 9
Halibut ... ..	2 6	3 3
Herrings (fresh) ... ..	0 8	—
Ling ... ..	1 2	1 8
Mackerel ... ..	0 8	—
Mullet, Red ... ..	3 0	—
Grey ... ..	1 6	—
Perch ... ..	1 0	—
Pike or Jaek ... ..	1 4	1 10
Pilchards ... ..	0 8	—
Plaice ... ..	1 10	—
Salmon (including grilse) ... ..	3 0	4 0
Skate (Wings) ... ..	1 4	1 6
Soles and Slips ... ..	3 6	—
Soles (Lemon) ... ..	2 0	—
Sprats ... ..	0 6	—
Tench ... ..	1 4	—
Trout (fresh and saltwater after		
February 2) ... ..	3 0	4 0
Turbot ... ..	2 6	3 3
Whiting ... ..	1 3	—
Smoked Cod ... ..	2 0	—
Smoked Haddock ... ..	2 0	—
Kippered Herrings ... ..	1 0	—
Bloatered Herrings... ..	0 10	—
Frozen Salmon ... ..	2 2	2 9
Butter, per lb. ... ..	2 6	
Margarine, per lb. ... ..	1 0 to 1 4	
Government cheese, per lb. ... ..	1 4	
Milk, per gallon ... ..	2 8	
Tea, per lb. ... ..	2 8	
Coffee (roasted), per lb. ... ..	1 6 to 2 6	
Chocolate, per oz. ... ..	0 3	
Potatoes, per stone of 14 lb. ... ..	7d. to 1 5	
Onions, British ... ..	0 3	
Lentils ... ..	0 8	
Maize ... ..	0 3½	
Oatmeal ... ..	0 4½	
Rice ... ..	0 4	
Peas, blue and green ... ..	0 9	
White haricot beans ... ..	0 6	
Large butter beans... ..	0 8	

	per lb.
	s. d.
Sugar :—	
Cubes and chips ... ..	0 6½
Granulated, crystals, dry white sugar, West Indian crystals, etc. ... ..	0 5½
Jam :	
Plum and apple ... ..	0 9
Gooseberry ... ..	0 10
Blaekberry or greengage ... ..	0 10½
Raspberry and red currant ... ..	0 11
Raspberry ... ..	0 11½
Apricot, black currant, strawberry, or cherry	1 0

It has been mentioned that the 9d. loaf could be made possible only by a Government subsidy. A further subsidy was required to give the farmers a guaranteed price of £6 to £6 10s. a ton for the 1917 potato crop. After the failure of supplies in the spring of the year the Government sought to persuade growers to put all the land they could under potatoes, and as an inducement gave a pledge that the selling price should not fall below a certain level. The intention was that the public should pay this guaranteed price, but the crop was so heavy that the supply exceeded the demand, and the farmers could not dispose of their stocks at the official minimum rate. To avoid waste the Food Controller undertook to supply bakers with potatoes to be used with flour in the manufacture of bread at a price of £3 10s. a ton, and made up the difference to the growers. The subsidy was also given in respect of other sales under the guaranteed rates. In many ways the procedure was not satisfactory, and when in 1918 it again became desirable that the largest possible crop of potatoes should be raised a fresh arrangement was made. The chief objection to the 1917 scheme was that while it guaranteed the farmer a certain price it did not guarantee a certain market, but exception was also taken to the fixing of a flat rate which did not take into account quality, the place where the potatoes were grown, or the time when they were delivered. Under Lord Rhondda's plan freedom in the matter of price was left to the farmer until the beginning of November. After November 1 the Food Controller was to take over the whole of the remaining crop in Great Britain at a price to be assessed on the basis of the yield, the quality of the potato, the district where it was grown, and the time of delivery; and which would ensure that the average price for the lowest quality would not fall below £5 15s. per ton in England and £5 5s. per ton in Scotland. For better varieties a proportionate increase in price was promised. and for potatoes grown on acreage in excess



of the total acreage under potatoes on any farm in 1916 specially attractive prices were offered.

Some indication of the activity of the Food Controller's Department may be gathered from the fact that during 1917 over 180 orders and general licences were issued by Lord Devonport and Lord Rhondda, and of these more than 130 remained in force or were coming into force at the end of the year. Even before Lord Devonport gave up office it had become apparent that the duties of the Ministry were too numerous and too general for food control to be efficiently exercised by a central body acting alone. The task of ensuring that the ever-growing volume of regulations were properly applied and observed called for local administration. At the Local Government Board Lord Rhondda had shown himself to be a firm believer in decentralization, and before he had been Food Controller many weeks the Government had decided to entrust to local authorities important duties in connexion with the distribution and prices of foodstuffs and with the maintenance of national economy in their consumption. In thus decentralizing food control work Lord Rhondda had to choose between appointing local committees himself and entrusting their appointment to such bodies as borough, urban, and rural district councils. He took the latter course, largely because it allowed of a considerable measure of popular control over the appointment and proceedings of the committees. While avoiding any dictation to local authorities in detail of the lines on which the committee should be chosen, he gave them a strong lead in policy in the circulars he issued.

It will be the first duty of the Committee [he wrote] to safeguard the interests of the consumers, and this should be borne in mind at the time of its appointment. It will be provided that the Committee must include at least one representative of labour and one woman. The local authority should also consider the desirability of taking full advantage of the experience and advice of representatives of cooperative societies and other traders in their area.

In another circular he said :

Lord Rhondda regards it as of the greatest importance that food control committees should secure at the outset the full confidence of the public in their areas and he urges that the interests of the consumer should be the first consideration to be borne in mind by local authorities when appointing them.

Rather unexpectedly, keen controversy arose over the appointment of the committees. In many districts attempts were made to include among the members a number of local

traders, and as it was understood that the committees would have considerable powers in dealing with food prices strong objection was taken to the election of grocers, butchers, and other shopkeepers, who might naturally be supposed to have an interest in keeping prices at a high level. In some towns the protests led to changes in the constitution of the committees, and to meet the general feeling that the situation required the interference of the Ministry, Lord Rhondda announced that if it could be shown that any Food Control Committee failed in its trust and that the local authority, notwithstanding this, declined to consider an alteration of its membership, he would be prepared to intervene. At the same time he called for a return showing in detail the membership of all the committees, and gave an undertaking to make inquiries into any case in which the interests of the private trader seemed to be unduly represented. The chief fault in the appointment of the committees was that they represented in nearly every district the grouping of parties or interests as represented on the local councils. Before the war Labour had obtained only a small representation on these councils, and a system, therefore, which repeated on a reduced scale the constitution of the responsible local authority could hardly fail to cause disappointment and some bitterness among the working classes. Eventually the agitation, having partly effected its purpose, died down, and in the course of a few months the committees, to the number of nearly 2,000, were doing their work smoothly, if with varying degrees of energy and thoroughness. When towards the end of the year it became apparent that rationing could no longer be postponed, and, in the continued absence of a national plan, the local committees were invited to put into operation schemes of their own devising, sanction was given to an increase in the membership of the committees so that additional Labour representatives could be appointed.

Concurrently with the decision to decentralize food control work the Government came to the conclusion that a scheme for the better distribution of sugar must be put into force. From the first days of the war there had been a scarcity of sugar, "due chiefly," as has already been shown, "to the shutting off of imports from enemy sources," and the position instead of improving had steadily

become worse. Expedients to secure an equitable sharing out of the available supplies had not been entirely successful, and eventually it was recognized that only by a form of rationing could fairness be secured. The sugar distribution scheme may be regarded as the first real test of food rationing in Great Britain. Before it came into operation on December 31, 1917, a few food control committees had found it necessary to ration tea, butter, and margarine in their own districts, but these local schemes at that time covered a very small percentage of the popu-

tered customers whose cards had been deposited with him.

(c) Caterers of all kinds were to have their supplies regulated after consideration of the number of meals ordinarily served and the sugar they normally used.

(d) Institutions would have their supplies of sugar regulated in accordance with the number of residents or the number of meals served.

(e) Manufacturers would have their supplies of sugar regulated according to any restrictions imposed on their use of sugar.

(f) Registered retailers were to have their supplies of sugar regulated in accordance with the number of their registered customers and the quantities of sugar any caterers, institutions, or manufacturers were authorized to buy from them.

(g) Wholesalers were to have their supplies regulated in accordance with the quantities which registered



INDEXING APPLICATIONS FOR SUGAR CARDS AT THE IMPERIAL INSTITUTE.

lation. Five months' preparation was needed to set up the machinery of sugar rationing, and even then controlled distribution had to be started with hundreds of thousands of people unaware that rationing with its restrictive regulations and obligations was to be introduced. The main features of the scheme as it was originally drawn up were as follows :

(a) No sugar was to be sold retail except by retailers registered by a local Food Control Committee.

(b) Every household was to obtain from the local food office a sugar registration card to cover all members of the household not in receipt of Government rations. A portion of this card was to be deposited by the household with the registered retailer he selected for the purpose. The retailer, when the scheme came into operation, would be required to give preference to regis-

retailers, caterers, institutions, and manufacturers or other wholesalers were authorised to obtain from them.

Application forms for sugar cards were sent out to householders about the end of September. The system then contemplated, as indicated in paragraph (b) above, was one of family registration and family tickets. One sugar registration card was to be issued by the local food office in response to every valid application, and was to cover the number of persons named in the application. The application forms were duly filled in, except by a considerable minority of the population, which, in spite of newspaper announcements





THE FOOD CONTROLLER'S REGISTRATION HEADQUARTERS AT THE IMPERIAL INSTITUTE.

and the lavish display of posters on hoardings, appeared to have no knowledge of the scheme, and towards the end of October the registration cards were distributed to those people who had succeeded in filling up the forms accurately. An amazing number of the forms, however, were useless as returned, owing to the failure of householders to understand what they were required to do. Thousands of applicants instead of writing their own address on the line indicated for the purpose copied a fictitious address printed on posters or leaflets as a guide to the public. Further thousands

gave no address at all, and every possible variety of error or omission that could be imagined was perpetrated. If the public blundered, the Department added its own share to the confusion. When the consumers, the retailers, and everyone else had grown accustomed to the idea of the family card, the system was suddenly thrown over in favour of individual registration, and individual cards or ration papers. The mistake did not lie in the decision to adopt a more complicated but more efficient system, but in the time and money wasted in the

preparation for distribution through the family and not the individual. For some time the officials were at no pains to make it clear that a sweeping change had been decided upon. It was announced that people who had not obtained cards must apply through the Post Office for sugar ration papers, and it was indicated that those who removed must also exchange an individual card for a ration paper with coupons. What was partially obscured for some time was that the first scheme had been "scrapped," that new application forms had to be obtained, additional information given to the food control committees, and a separate card obtained for each member of the household. When the adoption of this new plan was realized sharp criticism was heard of the Department, and while some of the strongest abuse had a political motive and was aimed at the Government as a whole rather than the Food Ministry, a general impression prevailed that the discovery that the family system of registration would prove ineffective might have been made earlier if more care had been given to the consideration of the matter. When the merits of the family and the individual cards respectively were examined, the latter at once appeared sounder and more flexible. The one question asked was why Lord Rhondda's officials had taken so long to realize how much the better it was of the two systems.

The advantages of individual registration were really more marked than could be suspected by those who were unaware of the full importance of the information demanded on the new application papers. Many people were puzzled to know why the authorities must be told the day, month, and year of birth of each member of a family. Women resented what they called the "impertinence" of questions which required them to disclose their age, and an assurance had to be given that the information would be regarded as strictly confidential and would be used only for official purposes. The date of birth supplied on the forms enabled the authorities to make use of an ingenious form of index of the cards issued, so that quick reference could be made to a card at any moment. The system made fraud easy to detect; certain discovery awaited any attempt to put in duplicate applications. A staff of 800 girls was installed at the Imperial Institute to compile the index, send out ration papers, and deal with removals and births and

deaths. Every application after it had been dealt with was filed according to the day of birth and the first letter of the surname, and this had the effect of bringing each paper into a bundle which, on the average, did not include more than 220 forms.

In spite of the labour involved by the eleventh hour change of plans, the work was carried through with such expedition that on the day appointed sugar rationing came into effect. Large numbers of people at the time had not received either cards or ration papers, but a start with the way only three-parts prepared was regarded as better policy than delay in the hope of achieving perfection. Events justified the decision to go ahead. Against the temporary inconvenience caused to a minority and a busy period during which the position of the people without cards had to be regularized, must be set the undoubted fact that the complicated machinery of the scheme worked with comparative smoothness from the first week. For this the section of the Ministry of Food which carried through the work should be given the credit it undoubtedly earned. The ration of sugar allowed for each member of a household was half a pound a week and this quantity was successfully distributed. Before the scheme came into force no one could be sure of obtaining in any week so much as half a pound of sugar. Some people got more; some got less. With distribution controlled from the importer to the consumer, everyone was quickly assured of his equitable share of the supplies.

When a scheme for sugar rationing was first announced there was no indication that a scarcity of other foods was imminent. By the end of November of 1917, however, the distribution of butter, margarine, and tea had partially broken down and all over the country people were finding it necessary to hunt around to get even a part of the supplies of these articles to which they had been accustomed. At this time a new Director of Food Economy—Sir Arthur Yapp, the efficient and resourceful secretary of the Y.M.C.A.—had undertaken at the request of Mr. Lloyd George to organize a second campaign to secure a reduction, by voluntary determination, of the consumption of cereals, fats, and meat.

A new scale of voluntary rations, calculated on scientific lines, and ostensibly based on the available or visible supplies of the rationed articles, had been drawn up and submitted for



general observance. The scale differed very materially from that put forward in the first months of the year by Lord Devonport, and was in the following terms :

BREAD.	WEEKLY RATION.
	lb. oz.
Men on heavy industrial work or agricultural work ... ..	8 0
Men on ordinary industrial or other manual work ... ..	7 0
Men unoccupied or on sedentary work ... ..	4 8
Women on heavy industrial or agricultural work ... ..	5 0
Women on ordinary industrial work or in domestic service ... ..	4 0
Women unoccupied or on sedentary work ... ..	3 8
<b>OTHER FOODS.</b>	
(For all adults.)	
Cereals, other than bread ... ..	0 12
Meat ... ..	2 0
Butter, margarine, lard, oils, and fats ... ..	0 10
Sugar ... ..	0 8

No definite scale was at first laid down for children, but it was suggested that they should receive "reasonable" rations. Mothers, puzzled to know how much to order, generally interpreted "reasonable" as being the quantity required to satisfy fully the appetites of their growing boys and girls, and the broad tendency of the scheme was to increase considerably the total authorized consumption of bread. The

new scale served the purpose of "tiding over an interval," and as a considered experiment furnished useful guidance when compulsory rationing plans had to be prepared. The scale was published on November 13. By the end of the month the majority of the people were finding difficulty in getting fats even in smaller quantities than the 10 oz. a head laid down as the voluntary weekly ration. Butter and margarine queues were reported in *The Times* of December 1 not only in the poorer districts of London but in the middle-class suburbs as well. From the industrial districts of South Wales came accounts of women standing in queues for four and five hours to get supplies ; the situation was equally serious in the North. On December 4 a deputation of women from all parts of the country, headed by Mrs. Drummond, waited on Lord Rhondda to urge the necessity of compulsory rations. Lord Rhondda in his reply said that the decision whether there should be compulsory rationing or not did not finally rest with him, but it is certain that at this time rationing had come within the circle of practical politics, and officials of the Ministry were giving serious attention to the question.



BLENDING AND PACKING MARGARINE.



A BUTTER QUEUE AT TONYPANDY IN THE WINTER OF 1917.

The shortage of fats took the country by surprise, and it is probable that the Food Control Department was also unprepared for the situation as it showed itself. Otherwise a voluntary fat ration of 10 ounces weekly for each person would never have been sanctioned on the eve of the scarcity being felt, and considered measures rather than expedients would have been available to meet the danger of the queues. The shortage was due to several causes. Submarine activity temporarily held up supplies of margarine from Holland; our blockade of Germany involved interference with the supply of feeding stuffs for Scandinavian cattle, with the result that the export of agricultural produce from the Northern countries had to be reduced; British farmers were able to obtain only limited quantities of feeding stuffs for their own stock; and British margarine factories were too few in number to yield an output which would make up for the falling off in imported fats and the decrease in the home manufacture of butter. By the middle of December the available supplies from all quarters were barely sufficient to provide four ounces of margarine and one ounce of butter a week per head of the population.

Unequal distribution and the determination of the greedy to get more than their share resulted in many families failing to obtain either butter or margarine, even in the smallest quantities. During the weeks before Lord Rhondda took action to check the evil the only alternative to going without these foods was to stand for hours outside the provision shops. In *The Times* of December 17, 1917, it was pointed out in a leading article that over and above the vast collective loss of time and energy which the weary waiting represented, the queues were obviously a fertile source of grumbling and discontent. "We see that Lord Rhondda attributes them," the article continued, "to the shortness of certain articles of consumption! If that were the whole story, we can only say that they provide the most complete argument for compulsory rationing in these particular articles, though his attitude hardly suggests that he realizes it. But in point of fact the queue is sometimes at least as much the consequence of failure in distribution as of failure in stocks. In certain communities the stocks are there in bulk and the money is there—in the pockets of would-be purchasers—to pay for them. What is lacking





COMMANDEERING MARGARINE FROM A MULTIPLE SHOP FOR DISTRIBUTION BY OTHER RETAILERS.

is the ordinary channel from one to the other, the result of the calling up of shop-assistants, the absence of storage accommodation in small shops and the general curtailment of all facilities for transport. Half the trouble would be at an end in these cases if the existing stocks could be placed in the hands of a larger number of dealers, and if there were machinery for bringing them from these dealers to the homes of the people."

A few days later Lord Rhondda acted on this suggestion to the extent of making an Order which gave powers to the local food committees to control supplies of margarine in their areas, and arrange for equitable distribution to the shops. The chief home manufacturers of margarine consented to ration their shops according to the Food Controller's estimated requirements, and to allocate the surplus to competing retailers in the same area. Where this was insufficient the local committees made use of their powers to requisition the surplus from any shop which had excessive supplies in relation to the accommodation it was able to provide for the sale of margarine, and to transfer the surplus

to other shops. By this procedure the queues were split up, but the remedy only touched the fringe of the trouble, and large numbers of people continued to obtain more than their share at the expense of others. The queues were very much abused. Women sent out children—sometimes four or five from one household—to stand in the lines and buy for them. At one period a firm with hundreds of branch shops served out margarine in 2 lb. parcels, and persistent persons in the queues were able to get six, eight, or more pounds in one day. A business was made of buying margarine to sell at a good profit to those who through illness or unwillingness to waste time would not join a queue. These "experts" devoted the whole day to roaming from queue to queue, or if the conditions were favourable, to rejoining a queue to get a second supply from one shop. Another evil of the queues was their dangerous psychological effect. The sight of a line of people waiting to buy an article emphasized in the minds of others the fact that there was a food scarcity, with the result that there was a rush to obtain supplies, and the queues were lengthened.

Generally the waiting people were cheerful, but the seed of discontent was in them, and each time the queue had to be used by ordinary decent people to make purchases, the inconvenience and waste of time were more deeply felt. There is evidence, too, that agitators and people who sought to persuade the country to conclude a premature peace were only too ready to use the discontent as an instrument to serve their purpose.

Rationing by this time had really become inevitable, and failing national action some of the more enterprising municipal authorities determined to put local schemes of their own devising into operation. The first direct move was made by the Birmingham Corporation, and out of a deputation which waited on Lord Rhondda on December 12 there came the system which was ultimately to lead not only to a wide development of similar local plans in all parts of the country but to general compulsory rationing. The deputation, which included the Lord Mayor and other representatives of the Birmingham Food Control Committee, asked for and obtained permission to put into local operation a scheme "to improve the methods of distributing essential

food commodities." The proposal was that each household should be supplied with a card, tying him to a particular retailer and entitling him to prescribed rations of tea, butter, and margarine. The sugar card was to be adopted as the basis of supply, and, as far as possible, no retailer would be allowed to register a larger number of customers than his staff or premises would permit him to serve with reasonable promptitude. It was a tradition in Birmingham that if the municipality set its hand to a task, that task should be carried through with energy, enthusiasm, and efficiency, and within less than three weeks, in spite of the enormous work involved, rationing had been applied to a population of over 1,000,000 people. The scheme, of course, was not brought into operation without a certain amount of confusion. Thousands of people during the first week or 10 days were unable to buy rationed foods because they were without the necessary cards. They had neither registered their names with retailers for the supply of sugar nor made application for a sugar-ration paper, and as the Birmingham scheme was based on the sugar card, their dilatoriness or ignorance deprived them temporarily not



SUPPLYING COMMANDEERED MARGARINE TO A SMALL DAIRY FOR DISTRIBUTION



only of sugar, but of tea and margarine as well. Women presented themselves at the Birmingham Food Office and with transparent truthfulness told the clerks that they had never heard anything about a sugar card. The inquiries dealt with by the Food Committee's officials in six days numbered more than 50,000. In innumerable cases women had lost their sugar cards, and beyond this in the short period of 10 days 1,000 or so people had actually lost their tea and margarine cards. There were further complications caused by domestic servants changing their situations, lodgers moving into fresh apartments, and other problems. Still another difficulty arose through the very large number of small retailers, who, with a limited business, had been in the habit of getting supplies from two, three, or even more wholesalers. Returns made during a period of eight weeks showed that in that time one shopkeeper sold 19 lb. of tea taken from five wholesale firms, and there were dozens of similar instances of a lack of coordination and regulation in distribution. It must be said that the Birmingham authorities grappled with all these difficulties with a great measure of success, and by the end of January the scheme was working smoothly.

The rations in Birmingham were 4 oz. of butter or margarine and 1 oz. of tea a week for each man, woman, or child, and this scale was adopted by other municipalities which decided to put local rationing schemes into force. Among the pioneer cities and towns were Chesterfield, Sheffield, Nottingham, Gravesend, Pontypool, Preston, and the Cleveland group of boroughs in north-east Yorkshire. In Preston an experiment was tried of distributing tickets allowing purchases to be made only at certain specified hours, but this broke down in practice and the local committee had to turn to other methods. To prepare the way for local rationing in Sheffield and Nottingham a kind of census of the resident population was taken. The task in both cities was carried through by school teachers, and useful preliminary work was done by explaining to the children the purpose of the census and the information which the parents would be asked to supply. This interesting numbering of the people had to be organized in a hurry, and was of a rough-and-ready character. For this reason it produced its own difficulties, but, as was very properly pointed out at the time, the country was indebted to every local

authority which had the initiative and courage to undertake experiments in the endeavour to arrange an equitable distribution of food supplies. In an appreciation of the value of local effort which appeared in *The Times* it was stated that if the Food Committees would only avail themselves to the full of their new authority—an order which enabled the committees to enforce schemes for controlling the distribution and consumption of any article of food in their areas—there should at least be an end henceforth of the scandal and misery of unnecessary queues, and the country would be projected, inevitably, and as the need in each case arose, into a system of compulsory rationing for the staple foodstuffs.

While in a rather irregular way rationing schemes were being prepared in isolated districts, the demand for general rationing grew steadily in volume. On the last Saturday of the year an important National Labour Convention in London passed a strongly worded resolution protesting against the prolonged delay of the Government in organizing an equitable system of distribution of the supplies of food, and demanding compulsory rationing to ensure equal sharing of the available food among all families, without distinction of wealth or class. On January 1, 1918, Lord Rhondda issued a memorandum to local committees outlining a model scheme of food distribution. The suggested system followed closely on the lines of the plan which on that day was put into operation in Birmingham. It was recommended that every customer should be registered with one shop for the purchase of a particular foodstuff and not allowed to buy elsewhere; that the shopkeeper should be required to divide his weekly supplies in fair proportion among all customers registered with him; that the supplies of any particular article should be distributed among the retailers in a district in proportion to the number of customers registered with them, and a limit fixed to the quantity of the article which any particular class of customer might obtain; and that distribution should be regulated by cards containing spaces to be marked up each week as the holder purchased supplies. There was a further recommendation that committees whose areas formed one district for the purpose of food distribution should act in close consultation in any scheme which they prepared. This memorandum served the purpose of spurring slow-moving

committees to take steps to deal with the queue problem and gave them a definite foundation on which to build. Draft schemes began to arrive at the Ministry of Food for approval in increasing numbers. At the same time large tracts of country—some of them agricultural where the food pinch had not been felt, but some also industrial districts where the committees stubbornly set themselves against any local ventures in rationing—continued to hold aloof, and it was not until a scarcity of meat in an aggravated form suddenly introduced a new factor into the situation that the next

that the butchers should be limited to 75 per cent. of their previous sales. He was asked by the Board of Agriculture not to do this as it would cause a good deal of discontent among the farmers. Right through to Christmas there was an abundance of meat, and few people except the dealers and butchers realized that this appearance of plenty was caused by the sale and slaughter of immature stock. From the time when it was announced that wholesale beef prices would gradually be reduced until a bottom figure of 7s. 4d. a stone of 8 lbs. was reached in January 1918, the



PREPARING BIRMINGHAM'S 900,000 MEAT CARDS IN THE COUNCIL HOUSE.

important move towards general rationing was taken.

Warnings that the meat supplies would fail during the winter months were continually uttered in the autumn of 1917 by those who spoke for the agricultural industry; consumers, however, regarded the warnings as an attempt by the farmers to hold to the profits which the falling scale of maximum prices instituted by Lord Rhondda threatened to take from them, and paid little attention to the ominous forecasts which were circulated. Lord Rhondda himself in October saw that cattle were being killed too rapidly and proposed

farmers pursued a policy of rushing to the markets bullocks which were not fully fattened. Revisions of the scale which postponed the final reduction first until July 1918, and then until July 1919, might have checked the practice, but the position had been made worse by the fact that the absence of fixed live weight prices tempted butchers to offer for cattle exorbitant rates which bore no proportion to the dead meat schedules. When maximum wholesale and retail prices for meat were fixed by the Ministry of Food it was believed that the traders would adjust their methods so as to render further intervention unnecessary, but



a period of senseless competition ensued that led to a premature exhaustion of reserves which under better regulated conditions would have been kept back and marketed in smaller graded consignments.

No part of Lord Rhondda's administration aroused more criticism than his regulation of prices for meat, and when the time came that supplies fell away in the markets Lord Chaplin in the House of Lords introduced a motion declaring that the Food Controller must be regarded as largely responsible for the shortage, and that any powers vested in his Department by which the production of food could be affected should be transferred to the Board of Agriculture, and be subject to the control of that Board alone. In an indictment of what he called "the mania for fixing prices," Lord Chaplin contended that 250,000 lean cattle had been slaughtered. Lord Rhondda in his reply showed that on July 1, 1917, the price of beef stood at 232 as compared with 100 before the war, while mutton on the same date had risen 142 per cent. beyond the pre-war rates. When he took office, he said, there was seething discontent among large masses of the people, which, had it been allowed to continue, would

not only have seriously embarrassed those to whom had been entrusted the conduct of the war, but would have rendered victory for the Allies well-nigh impossible. The reports of the Industrial Commissioners showed that the unrest was chiefly caused by the high food prices. Had the law of supply and demand been allowed to continue, prices would have increased several fold, and essential articles would have been placed beyond the reach of millions of the poorer classes of the community. His policy had been one of fixing prices at every stage from the producer to the consumer, based on the cost *plus* a reasonable profit. It was a mistake to think that prices had been fixed haphazard. They were fixed after consultation with expert advisers, whose services he had utilized to the fullest extent. With regard to the descending scale of prices for cattle, Lord Rhondda stated that these were recommended by a committee set up by the Board of Agriculture before he came into office, and that so far from being responsible for it he had endeavoured to alter it. He met the suggestion that prices should be fixed by the Board of Agriculture by a claim that the existing arrangements were working satis-



MR. PROTHERO, LORD RHONDDA, AND LORD CHAPLIN AT CAXTON HALL,  
Where they spoke at an important meeting of Farmers, February 1, 1918.



**WAITING FOR THEIR SUNDAY JOINT AT SMITHFIELD MEAT MARKET.**

The absence of the usual rows of carcasses is a noticeable feature of this photograph.

factorily. It was wide of the mark, he added, to say that prices were fixed so low that farming could not be made to pay. Notwithstanding the fact that prices had been fixed months previously for fat cattle, farmers were still prepared to pay what appeared to be extravagant prices for store cattle.

What happened in 1917 was that 2,632,000 cattle were slaughtered as compared with 2,522,000 in 1916. The increase, however, took place entirely in the last three months of the year, and apart from Army slaughtering was between 10 and 12 per cent. over the figures of the corresponding period of the previous year. The net result was that the number of cattle in the country in December was 5 per cent. less than in December, 1916. While the normal aggregate of cattle was not seriously reduced, what remained when the shortage became felt were mostly young lean stock and breeding animals quite unfit for slaughter as they stood. The action which suddenly demoralised the markets of beasts was the fixing of live weight prices and the introduction of a system of grading, but even without this, the reckless sending of cattle to the slaughter yard could not long have continued

on the scale followed in the autumn months of 1917. The live weight prices arranged were as follows :

**BULLS, BULLOCKS AND HEIFERS.**

Grade.	Yielding meat, per cent.	per cwt.
		s. d.
1st ... ..	56 and over	75 0
2nd ... ..	52 to 56	70 0
3rd ... ..	48 to 52	65 0

**COWS**

1st ... ..	52 and over	70 0
2nd ... ..	46 to 52	62 0
3rd ... ..	42 to 46	53 0

These rates came into operation on December 27, 1917. The effect was immediate. At Lincoln on January 1, 1918, less than one-sixth of the usual number of beasts were offered for sale. At the Leeds cattle market there was a demand for 600 cattle and only 14 were offered. On the following day at Leicester 41 beasts came to the market instead of the usual 400 ; at Wolverhampton there were 95 instead of 400, and a similar state of affairs prevailed throughout the country. On the other hand, there was an abnormally large show of sheep everywhere, sheep at this time not having been made subject



to live weight prices. The mutton, it may be said, disappeared very promptly when a few days later sheep were made subject to the same regulations as cattle. Lord Rhondda next found it necessary to fix the retail price of rabbits at 2s. each with their skins, or 1s. 9d. each without the skins, and then the rabbits in their turn vanished from the shops. With a general scarcity prevailing, meat queues were added to the margarine queues, and there were extraordinary week-end scenes in London. Outside the retail shops near to Smithfield Market as many as 4,000 people gathered in one queue and the customers began to assemble as early as two o'clock in the morning. In the market itself retail butchers had to line up in long queues to get meagre supplies for their shops. It was suggested at first that farmers were deliberately withholding stock because they resented the fixing of prices and the introduction of the grading system. At the Ministry of Food experts gave repeated assurances that the contraction of supplies would be temporary, and that in a few days, or weeks, or months, the situation would come nearer to the normal. On January 7, 1918, however, it was stated bluntly in *The Times* that the whole country was confronted with a meat famine. Compulsory rationing of meat had become imperative, but as this could not be brought into operation by a wave of the hand, other expedients were adopted to ease the situation, while a practical scheme of rationing was being prepared. By an Order made on January 12, 1918, butchers' supplies were cut down to 50 per cent. of those returned for the previous October. Steps were taken, though they were not at the time enforced, to enable the Government to requisition cattle. The plan provided for the organization of the farmers into groups, one for each market district, which could be called upon by the Live Stock Commissioners of the Ministry of Food to produce for slaughter a stated quota of cattle each month.

Another measure was the drastic revision of the Public Meals Order. This increased the quantity of bread which could be eaten, but severely limited the permitted consumption of meat, and included fats for the first time among the rationed foods. The new scale provided that the meat, flour, bread, sugar (except in the case of continuous residents who were entitled to one ounce a day), butter and margarine and other fats served should be in

accordance with the following average quantities per meal:

	Meat.	Sugar	Bread.	Flour	Butter, Margarine, and other Fats.
	Oz.	Oz.	Oz.	Oz.	Oz.
Breakfast ...	Nil	Nil	3	Nil	$\frac{1}{2}$
Luncheon (including midday dinner)...	3	$\frac{1}{2}$	2	1	$\frac{1}{2}$
Dinner (including supper and meat tea) ...	3	$\frac{1}{2}$	3	1	$\frac{1}{2}$
Tea ...	Nil	Nil	$1\frac{1}{2}$	Nil	$\frac{1}{2}$

It has been shown that under the Public Meals Order made by Lord Devonport the consumption of meat allowed in each week was  $5\frac{1}{2}$  lbs.; Lord Rhondda reduced the quantity to six ounces a day and instituted two compulsory meatless days, so that the weekly consumption was cut down to 1 lb. 14 ozs. The traditional character of the Englishman's breakfast was shattered by the disappearance of bacon from the meal, and the heavy meat tea favoured in the Northern counties became impossible. The only class of eating-place excluded from the new regulations was that which did not serve meals exceeding 1s. 2d. in price. The saving clause was intended to enable the working man to get his meals in the usual way.

At the time when the scarcity of meat lent additional urgency to the problem of the queues a scheme of local rationing was being prepared for application to ten million people living in London and the counties of Middlesex, Herts, Essex, Kent, Surrey and Sussex. It had been intended that in the early stages of its operation the scheme should chiefly be directed to the prevention of the margarine queues, but provision was made for the extension of the rationed distribution to other foods, the consumption of which it might become desirable to regulate. Within 10 days of the first publication of the details of the scheme Lord Rhondda had asked the representatives of the food committees to include the rationing of meat, as well as of butter and margarine, in their arrangements, and when, on February 25, the system was put into force meat cards formed a part of the machinery. The London scheme was by far the most important of the local experiments in rationing which preceded the national enforcement of the principle, and with the possibility that in the event of successful working being obtained the plan in its main outlines would become the foundation for the



[By special permission of the proprietors of "Punch."  
**OUT OF CONTROL.**

Lord Rhondda: "My next illusion, ladies and gentlemen, is the one-and-ninepenny rabbit. I now drop that sum into the hat, and in its place the rabbit will—" [Rabbit disappears.]

expected general scheme, food committees in other parts of the country took it over bodily for application to their own districts.

The preliminary work necessary to bring rationing into operation had to be carried through with almost excessive rapidity in London, but the borough food committees devoted themselves to the task with commendable energy, and if the way had not been made perfectly smooth by February 25 the scheme was launched with much less confusion than the pessimists had predicted as inevitable.

The first step was the circulation of application forms for cards to all the heads of households. The method of distribution was left to the discretion of the committees and the plan generally adopted was to send out the form by post on the basis of the sugar registrations, and then supply cards in accordance with the returns which were made. The one fault of this procedure was that it resulted in delay through the inability of people to furnish correctly the comparatively simple information required. The muddle of the sugar applications in fact



was repeated. Applicants failed to give their addresses or did not state the retailers with whom they intended to register. These, and other omissions, made it necessary either to send back the forms for correction or to wait until the people concerned came to the food offices to find out why they had not received their cards. A few of the committees foresaw

taken by the householder or his representative personally to one of a number of local centres for scrutiny and possible correction of inaccuracies, and here, too, confusion was avoided. The issue of cards to the householders began on February 5, and by February 18 the majority had been sent out. In some parts of the area delay caused by an inadequate supply of cards led to anxious enquiries during the last week before rationing came into operation, but there were comparatively few families, except those from which inaccurate forms had been returned, which were not provided with the essential tickets on "the appointed day."

It is probable that no law or regulation affecting the domestic habits of the people of this country ever aroused more general interest than the rationing of food. For days before the scheme came into force its details were a daily subject of conversation alike in the home and in public places. There were people who argued that rationing, or, at any rate, meat rationing, must inevitably break down in operation, and others who, with irrepressible optimism, found in the use of cards and coupons the solution of the whole problem of the queues and the equitable distribution of reduced supplies. Officials and others who had steadily urged the advisability of compulsory rationing expected a formidable outcrop of difficulties and complexities, but believed that within a few weeks the great majority of people would make themselves familiar with the machinery of the scheme, and that with a little goodwill and patience smooth working was not only possible, but was assured. The essential features of the scheme at the time of its inauguration may be summarized in the following way :

Two cards were issued to each person, a food card and a meat card. The food card had to be used if butter or margarine was required, and the meat card when purchases of butchers' meat, poultry, game or rabbits were made.

Butter, margarine, and meat could be bought only from the retailers with whom the consumer was registered. The cards were valid for twenty weeks.

In each week  $\frac{1}{4}$  lb. of butter or margarine could be bought by each person; the meat ration was estimated to average  $1\frac{1}{2}$  lb. a week.

The meat card had 80 coupons attached, four of which could be used in any one week. Only three out of the four were available for fresh beef, mutton, or pork; the fourth was intended for the purchase of bacon, poultry, game, and cooked meats.

For the purpose of getting butchers' meat the coupons had a currency value, each one enabling the customer to make purchases to the value of 5d. If used for buying other meats a weight value was substituted. All the coupons, if desired, could be used to obtain poultry and similar articles.

LONDON AND HOME COUNTIES.				Meat Card D 7.			
Butcher's Name		Butcher's Address		<small>(See Instructions overleaf.)</small> <small>HALL AND SON (DURING FEBRUARY)</small> <small>GILPIN AND CO. MARCH</small> <small>J. HATCLIFF. APRIL</small> <small>W. BUCKEN AND CO. MAY</small>			
9	9	9	9	10	10	10	10
11	11	11	11	12	12	12	12
13	13	13	13	14	14	14	14
20	20	<b>MEAT CARD [L. and H. C.]</b> Office of Issue <b>WESTMINSTER</b>				15	15
20	20	A. Holder's Name— <i>His Majesty the King</i>				15	15
19	19	Address— <i>Buckingham Palace</i>				16	16
19	19	B. Holder's Signature— <i>George V.</i>				16	16
18	18	C. Butcher's Name and Address—				17	17
18	18	IF FOUND, DROP IN A PILLAR BOX.				17	17
8	8	8	8	7	7	7	7
6	6	6	6	5	5	5	5
4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3
2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1

THE KING'S MEAT CARD.

the situation which would arise, and took effective measures to avert the trouble. At Bethnal Green, where the position was complicated by the large number of aliens living in the district, a "Food Card Sunday" was arranged. The head of every household in the borough had to take his completed form to the nearest school. There the form was scrutinized by voluntary clerks, errors were put right and the applicant received on the spot the cards to which his family were entitled. As about 27,000 applications had to be dealt with and some 220,000 food and meat cards issued, the committee had set themselves a serious task, but an appeal for voluntary clerks brought over 2,000 helpers, and the plan was carried through with gratifying success. In another London borough—Wandsworth—the application forms had also to be



"Times" photograph.

#### A SITTING OF THE CONSUMERS' COUNCIL, MARCH 20, 1918.

Left to right: Mrs. Reeves, Messrs. Watkins, Wilson, Syrett, Hyndman, Bartle, Sexton, Chard, Col. Weigall, Messrs. Coller, Bramley, Carmichael and Dudley, the Countess of Selborne, Sir William Ashley, Mr. Stuart-Bunning, Lord Rathcreedan, and Mrs. Cottrell. Five members were not present at this sitting.

The coupons could also be used to obtain meat meals in restaurants.

Special cards were issued for children under 10 years of age. These were available for the full ration of butter or margarine, but only half the quantity of meat could be supplied on them.

When butter or margarine was purchased the retailer had to cancel a square on the food card. When meat was bought the butcher or other trader detached the necessary number of coupons from the meat cards.

Meat rationing presented difficulties owing to the decision to combine currency and weight values for the coupons. This decision was largely influenced by the wishes of the Consumers' Council, a body set up by Lord Rhondda to keep the Ministry of Food in direct touch with the people on matters affecting rationing, distribution, and prices. Mr. J. R. Clynes presided over the meetings of the Council, and the members included representatives of the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress, the War Emergency Workers' National Committee, the Parliamentary Committee of the Co-operative Congress, and the Women's Industrial Organizations. The view taken by the Council in regard to meat was that if the coupons were made valid for purchases up to a certain price those people who wanted the best cuts of beef and mutton would have to be satisfied with smaller quantities than could be had if cheaper joints were selected.

The principle could not be extended to poultry or game, however, as on a price value 20 or more coupons would have been required for a single fowl. A way out was found by arranging a scale of equivalent weights, and the scheme as first put into operation provided that with each full coupon the amounts of meat set out below could be obtained:

1. Fivepennyworth of uncooked butcher's meat, including pork or offal.

2. The following weights of other uncooked meats:

12½ oz. of poultry or any bird, uncooked, without feathers, but including offal, or 9 oz. without offal.

10 oz. of rabbit or hare, uncooked, without skin but including offal; or 7½ oz. without offal.

6 oz. of venison or horseflesh with bone, 5 oz. without bone.

4 oz. of uncooked ham or bacon with bone; 3 oz. without bone.

6 oz. of first-quality uncooked sausages containing not less than 67 per cent. of butcher's meat, including pork or offal.

3. The following weights of cooked, canned, preserved, and miscellaneous meats:

3½ oz. butcher's meat (including pork) or offal, cooked with the usual bone; 2½ oz. without bone.

6 oz. of any cooked bird.

5 oz. of cooked rabbit or hare.

4 oz. of venison or horseflesh, cooked with the usual bone; 3 oz. without bone.

3 oz. of cooked ham or bacon with bone; 2½ oz. without bone.





PREPARING FOOD CARDS AT CAMBERWELL.

2½ oz. of canned, preserved, and potted meats of any kind in tin, glass or other container, according to the estimated weight of the actual meat without the container.

2½ oz. of meat pies, cooked sausages, sandwiches, and similar articles, according to the estimated weight of the meat.

4 oz. of preserved sausages, according to the estimated weight of the actual meat.

Practical experience of the scheme in operation did not suggest, at any rate during the first month, any grave flaws in its constitution. A beginning was not possible without some groaning of new and untested machinery, but the initial hitches were not very serious. The one formidable rock ahead was the possibility that industrial workers who had been led by a long course of platform speeches to believe that the rationing of food would give them a larger share of the available supplies might allow disappointment over the inevitable collapse of false hopes to breed resentment and opposition to the system. On the day that rationing came into force this serious warning was given in a leading article in *The Times* :—

Rations will not give more food to most people, but rather less; and the chief danger about them at the moment is the disappointment of those who were misled into believing that the rich were getting abundant supplies of meat and butter while the poor were going short. But the compulsory equality of the rationing

system should take the sting out of the disappointment and we do not anticipate any serious consequences from it.

So far as the hard manual worker was concerned, Lord Rhondda, in sanctioning the introduction of a rather hastily prepared plan, had not lost sight of the possibility that for this class the meat ration was not really sufficient, and before the first protest could be made he let it be known that not only was the question of a supplementary ration for men engaged on heavy manual work under consideration, but that he also hoped, in preparing a system of general national rationing, to grade the population as far as possible on a basis of occupation and to arrange the scale of rations in accordance with this grading. With this threatened source of troubles foreseen and forestalled, the minor problems that arose out of the operation of the scheme could be dealt with as they appeared, and in the main they proved to be matters of detail which could be disposed of better by local administrative action than by central decisions. Perhaps the most unexpected among the points which first called for attention was the almost unanimous determination of people who had to take meals in restaurants and clubs in London not to eat meat away from home. With a few

exceptions confined to the cheaper and more popular type of public eating places, the restaurants, in spite of the fact that the coupons of the meat cards could be used in halves, decided that for any meat dish served at least a whole coupon must be given up. Most men, and particularly those of small households, found that, if a joint of meat was to be bought at the week-end, and a little bacon obtained for breakfast, no coupons could be spared for meals in restaurants. The result of this was that thousands turned to fish and egg dishes, and towards the end of the week caterers found they were holding stocks of beef and mutton for which there was no demand. To avoid waste, local food committees had to give dispensations for the disposal of the meat without the surrender of coupons, and the restaurant cooks were warned to reduce the estimates of their requirements when they prepared their next application. Another development was that the sale of butcher's edible offals, such as sweetbreads, kidneys, liver, and hearts, fell away to nothing, and poulterers and game dealers found it equally difficult to sell fowls, ducks, plover and hares. In some districts it became necessary to

remove these articles temporarily from the list of rationed foods, and in addition the scale of equivalent weights was revised so that it became possible to get a chicken weighing three pounds with three coupons or a hare weighing six pounds with nine coupons. The poulterers asked for further concessions and in some quarters the suggestion was put forward that birds and game should not be rationed. It was believed, however, and there were reasons to justify the belief, that people would be ready to buy poultry if the prices were reduced. During January and February when it was almost impossible to obtain butcher's meat without standing in queues outside the shops, unreasonably high prices were easily obtained for chickens, hares and other meat for which maximum rates had not been fixed. Roasting chickens went up to 3s. 6d. a lb., and hares cost as much as 15s. each. The dealers once having secured such prices showed reluctance in reducing them when the demand slackened, and it was chiefly because of this attitude that their stocks found few purchasers after rationing had equalized the distribution of beef and mutton.

There was a tendency to abuse the pro-



SOLDIERS AND SAILORS, HOME ON LEAVE, APPLYING FOR "EMERGENCY" RATION CARDS, CAMBERWELL.



vision in the rationing schemes which made possible the sale without coupons of perishable goods in danger of spoiling. Reports which reached the Minister of Food showed that traders sold without obtaining the necessary licence from the local committee, obtained unnecessarily large stocks of highly perishable goods, or sold goods which were not immediately liable to perish. Within a

**FOOD CARD. D. 3.**  
**London and Home Counties.**

Customer's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

<b>A.</b>	<b>BUTTER AND MARGARINE.</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
		11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
<b>B.</b>		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
		11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
<b>C.</b>		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
		11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
<b>D.</b>		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
		11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20

**CUSTOMER'S PART.**

**D.** \_\_\_\_\_

Shopkeeper's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**C.** \_\_\_\_\_

Shopkeeper's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**B.** \_\_\_\_\_

Shopkeeper's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Give this part to your Shopkeeper.**

**A. Butter and Margarine.**

Shopkeeper's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**FOOD CARD.**

Originally available for Butter and Margarine, but with provision for the supply of other goods.

fortnight of the scheme coming into operation firm measures had to be taken to bring these sales under strict control, and one of the steps taken was to give local committees power when they granted a licence for the disposal without coupons of any foodstuffs to fix maximum prices at which the articles might be sold. Another problem which had to be settled was the position under rationing of people who kept their own poultry, shot or trapped rabbits, or in other ways supplied themselves with meat without going for it to a retailer.

A committee was appointed with Lord Somerleytown as chairman to go into the question. The committee reported that in their opinion the restriction of consumption imposed

by any rationing scheme must extend to producers of food, and should be enforced by requiring them to produce cards or coupons to their Food Control Committees to cover their consumption of their own produce. They recommended, however, that as in all foreign rationing schemes, actual producers of certain foods, and their dependents, should be granted larger rations of these foods than they could buy on their cards, and that so long as there was no general prohibition of private transport of rationed food by post or rail, the producers should be allowed to supply their households, wherever resident, with their own produce at the special ration calculations. The scale of rations suggested was as follows:

**CATTLE AND SHEEP.**—No extra.

**PROS.**—Double the normal weight of meat to the coupon for the flesh of the first pig killed in each half-year, and one-half more than the normal weight to the coupon for other pigs; offal and lard to be outside the ration for self-suppliers.

**VENISON.**—No extra.

**WILD RABBITS, HARES, WOOD PIGEONS.**—Ration free.

**TAME RABBITS.**—Ration free.

**POULTRY.**—No extra.

**GAME BIRDS.**—One-half more than the normal weight to the coupon.

**BUTTER.**—One-half more than the normal weekly ration.

Such difficulties as have been described weighed little in the balance against the remarkable improvement in food distribution which rationing effected. The butter and margarine queues disappeared from the streets, and although at first Saturday customers of the butchers had to line up in some districts, this was chiefly attributable to the general postponement of shopping to the last day of the week and to the considerable time occupied in the process of calculating what meat could be served on the number of coupons the customer was prepared to use. Experience of the working of the system quickly reduced the waiting.

It had been intended that meat rationing on the lines of the London and Home Counties scheme should be extended to the whole country on March 25, but a postponement of a fortnight was found necessary to enable Lord Rhondda to complete his plans for allowing a supplementary ration for industrial workers. The only essential difference in the national scheme compared with that in operation in London was that a consumer could register at separate shops for butchers' meat and pork. Provision for this double registration was made because in the country and particularly in the North of England the sale of pork and pork products was to a considerable extent a distinct trade. As in London,

the local administration of the scheme was entrusted to the local food control committees.

Before concluding this survey of the coming into operation of rationing a few words must be added about the development of food hoarding, influenced in some degree through a desire to forestall rationing by the formation of reserves, which in the first weeks of 1918 was exposed by a large number of raids on private houses

and by prosecutions. The Order prohibiting the hoarding of food was made by Lord Devonport and came into effect on April 9, 1917. It provided that no person should "acquire any article of food so that the quantity of such article in his possession or under his control at any one time exceeded the quantity required for ordinary use and consumption in his household or establishment." For several months



LADY RHONDDA OPENING A "GOVERNMENT INFORMATION BUREAU."

At these bureaux which were erected in the large retail stores, the stations, and other places, leaflets and books explaining the food regulations could be obtained.



the regulation was not stringently applied, and there can be no doubt that many households were unpleasantly surprised when the searching out of culprits began. During January of 1918 the defendants brought before the magistrates included some well-known people, and heavy penalties were imposed in a majority of the cases. While the whole country approved the prosecutions, and the punishment of the offenders, a stage eventually was reached when the thrifty housewife found herself becoming nervous over the modest contents of her store cupboard, even when hoarding could never have been charged against her. Fears were expressed that the officials of the Food Department intended to ransack dwelling houses indiscriminately and to force everybody "to purchase incessantly in very small quantities." Although search warrants were not issued on idle reports and action in any case was taken only after careful consideration and inquiry, there was some danger of the growth of a system of domestic or neighbourly espionage which would have been entirely foreign to British traditions. For these reasons and for the still more serious one that people who had large illicit stocks of food were believed to be

destroying their excess supplies, an announcement made on February 6 granting a conditional indemnity to people who had rendered themselves liable to the provisions of the Hoarding Order was well received. It was provided that during the week beginning February 11 members of the public might report excess stocks to the local food committees with a view to their voluntary surrender for the benefit of the public. Persons reporting and surrendering their supplies in these circumstances were indemnified against prosecution. Publication of the terms of the amnesty resulted in an urgent demand for a definition of hoarding, but the Minister of Food would not give a more explicit explanation than that a fortnight to three weeks' supply of any of the staple articles of food was not excessive, and that home-produced food like bacon, jam, bottled fruit, and preserved eggs did not come under the Hoarding Order. This statement reassured many people, but it was too vague to be entirely satisfactory, and food committees all over the country were worried by people with trivial reserves who came seeking advice as to their position. Serious confessions of hoarded food were exceedingly



#### POTATOES IN PLACE OF FLOUR.

Mrs. Weigall gives a demonstration of the uses of the potato as a flour substitute.



#### A COMMANDEERED FOOD HOARD.

In this particular case nearly a ton of food was removed, and a fine of £90, with £28 7s. costs, was inflicted.

few in number, but, on the other hand, during the surrender week hospitals received hundreds of anonymous gifts of tea, sugar, flour, rice and other articles from people who chose this way of disposing of their stores rather than admit their possessions to the authorities.

When the probability that compulsory rationing would have to be adopted in this country was first seriously discussed, an article was published in *The Times* from its Correspondent formerly in Berlin describing the blunders through which, in the development of State distribution, the German authorities groped their way to comparative wisdom. It was then noted that the German Government's lack of foresight concerning the probable duration of the crisis had governed the whole situation, and that if they could retrace their steps, the enemy authorities would undoubtedly begin, first, by planning their whole policy to cover a long period of time; and, secondly, by dealing at the outset with the whole range of consumption. "If I may venture to suggest some rough conclusions from German experience," *The Times* Correspondent said, "they are these: The whole object of rationing should be to reduce consumption generally and over

a long period of time. Measures should be taken to ensure the widest possible control of supplies, including the supplies of foods which appear to be abundant, and foods which are, or may become, 'substitutes' for staple foods. Both in collection and distribution the fullest use should be made of existing agencies, and the large agencies, without too much official interference, should deal with the small producer. The system of 'lists of customers' should be applied to the retail trade; Germany found it to be the remedy for the intolerable 'waiting' at food shops of queues of customers who, having placed no orders, had to take their chance of finding food to buy. There should be as little interference as possible with prices, and the proper point for interference is prevention of retail profiteering by checking the difference between wholesale cost and retail prices. Maximum prices must not be allowed to check production. The proper remedy for profiteering on the part of producers is taxation, and ultimately the proper remedy for want, in so far as it is due to high prices, is relief. . . ."

These suggestions were made in May 1917, and in the same article the following quotation was given from a circular issued by Herr von





By special permission of the Proprietors of "Punch."

Wife of Profiteer: "Er—can you tell me if—er—really nice people eat herrings?"

Batocki's Press Bureau at the beginning of the year :

Already the English and French have to accustom themselves to the idea of copying our system of State distribution, which they have ridiculed so freely ; it remains to be seen whether, in face of the approaching crisis, they will be able by mere feeble imitation to supply the equivalent of the experience and habit which we have gained in two and a half years of war economics.

Rationing, as has already been shown, was started in this country only after much hesitation and reluctance, but it cannot be charged against Lord Rhondda that he descended to the " feeble imitation " which Herr von Batocki expected. If we " groped our way " towards rationing, the groping was done in accordance with our own methods. Lord Rhondda, in shaping his policy, avoided as far as possible any rough riding over British habits and prejudices ; some of the criticism which fell upon him arose out of the very caution with which he negotiated those prejudices. Even the delay in getting rationing into operation that caused local authorities to embark on their own experiments had its useful as well as its regrettable side, although this was no adequate compensation for the dilatoriness of the Government in preparing for rationing. Local application of compulsory economy in food gave the people,

through men of their own selection, a voice in making the regulations to which they had to conform, and with this there was a realisation that rationing was a self-determined remedy to meet a situation which had become dangerous. When eventually arrangements for national and uniform rationing were made in the case of meat, local schemes had to be fitted into the general system, but local administration was maintained. The one way in which German procedure was followed was in beginning rationing with only one or two staple foods. Fortunately, so far as could be seen in March, 1918, the consequences were not likely to be the same in England as they had been in Germany. But, as has been shown, our supplies were comparatively abundant, and time alone would show whether the country would have reason to regret the waste of foods to which consumption was diverted from the one or two staple foods which were rationed at first.

Germany's first experiments were with butter tickets ; the first foods after sugar to be rationed in Great Britain were butter and margarine, though meat cards quickly followed. By the late summer of 1916 Germany had

rationed bread, potatoes, sugar, milk, meat, butter and fats, cheese, coffee, cocoa, tea, rice, macaroni, and other articles. In Great Britain, in the spring of 1918, national rationing had been extended only to sugar and meat. Local rationing of butter and margarine became almost general except in the agricultural districts, but the need to ration tea, which led to this article finding a place in the earliest among the local schemes, soon disappeared. Although some anxiety was felt about bread, Mr. Clynes on March 14 was able to say in the House of Commons that with care in consumption rationing might be indefinitely postponed. It was

and it abolished rather than created queues outside the food shops. A direct effect of the introduction of the London and Home Counties scheme was to reduce the number of people joining food queues in the Metropolitan police district from an average for Saturday, the popular shopping day, of 600,000 to 25,000. As for the point that there should be "as little interference as possible with prices," it has been shown that Lord Rhondda became Food Controller under conditions which made the fixing of food prices imperative. Production, or at any rate supply, may have been checked by the limitation of the cost to the consumer,

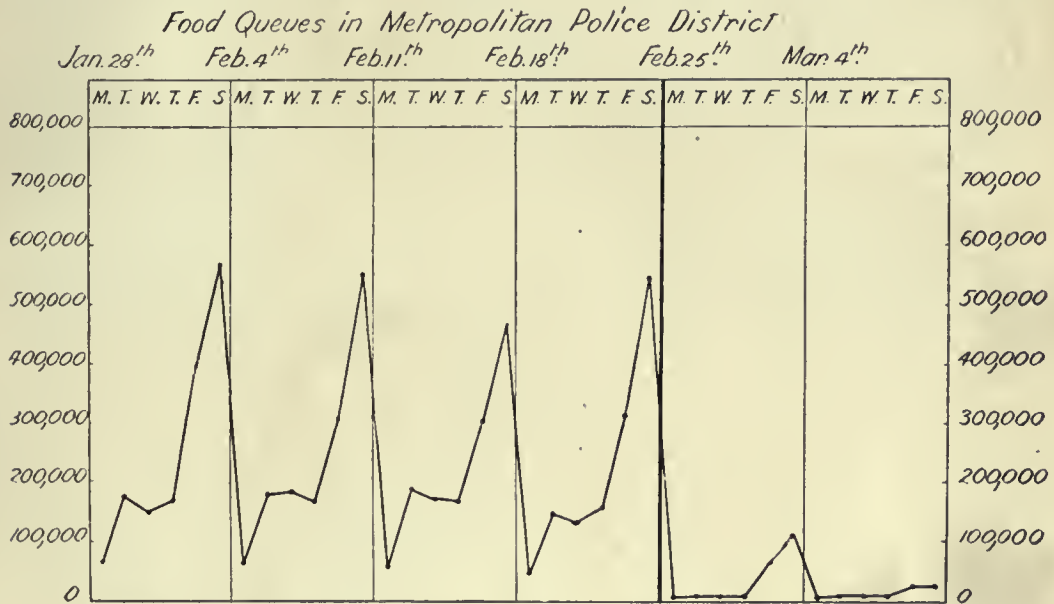


CHART showing the estimated number of persons attending food queues in the Metropolitan Police District on each day from January 28 to March 9, 1918—i.e., four weeks before and two weeks after the introduction of rations.

found advisable in the distribution of milk to institute a scheme which gave priority to invalids, children and nursing mothers, but this was controlled by the local committees without recourse to rigid rationing regulations. So far as the other foods were concerned, cheese was the only article mentioned at this period as likely to be brought within the operation of the food cards.

The contention that "the whole object of rationing should be to reduce consumption generally and over a long period of time" was one which found no divergence of opinion at the Ministry of Food, and it can equally be said that Lord Rhondda's policy aimed at the "widest possible control of supplies." Rationing in Great Britain from the first was arranged on a basis of registration of customers with retailers,

but the Food Controller had to stand within this danger in turning to what appeared to be the less of two evils. To impartial observers it seemed that when in the future a considered judgment could be passed the policy pursued would be regarded as fully justified. Whatever mistakes or miscalculations he made, Lord Rhondda, after holding a difficult and highly responsible office for nine months, was still Food Controller and remained in office with the goodwill and approval of the majority of the population. Compulsory rationing, with its complexities and restrictions, aroused very little of the irritation that had been expected, and during the period which followed the introduction of rationing regulations there was probably less grumbling about the food situation than had been heard





#### A TRACTOR PLOUGH.

The Government placed a number of tractors at the disposal of farmers in order to facilitate the ploughing up of uncultivated land.

at any time during the preceding twelve months. After the trials with the queues, the inconveniences of limited consumption were regarded complacently and were a subject of jest rather than of complaint. When the nation could laugh, and with no trace of bitterness behind the mirth, over an unaccustomed, if still a very mild, restraint of its freedom, there was obviously little resentment threatening the position of the Minister who had found it essential first to sanction and then to compel rationing. It could, on the contrary, almost be said of the second Food Controller that he became popular, except with the farmers and some of the produce merchants, and his relations with the agricultural industry were really

better than some of the spokesmen of the industry suggested.

Within the limits of a survey mainly devoted to the progressive control of the available food supplies and the gradual evolution of rationing on a national basis, it is not possible to deal with many of the measures by which the British people received their food during the first three and a-half years of war. The world-wide activities of the Royal Commission on Wheat Supplies, the loyal help and self-sacrifice of America in provisioning the Allied larders, and the extraordinary development of food production in Great Britain, are interesting topics which cannot be dealt with in the present chapter.



## CHAPTER CCXXX.

# GERMANY : AUGUST, 1916— FEBRUARY, 1918.

POLITICAL SITUATION AT END OF 1916—RUMANIA—AMERICAN INTERVENTION—BETHMANN HOLLWEG'S SPEECHES—PROMISES OF INTERNAL "REFORMS"—PRUSSIAN FRANCHISE RESCRIPT—THE "ERZBERGER CRISIS," JULY, 1917—FALL OF BETHMANN HOLLWEG—HIS RECORD—THE MICHAELIS CHANCELLORSHIP—THE REICHSTAG "PEACE RESOLUTION," JULY 19—MINISTERIAL CHANGES—KÜHLMANN BECOMES FOREIGN SECRETARY—THE "WILHELMSHAVEN MUTINY"—FALL OF MICHAELIS—COUNT HERTLING BECOMES CHANCELLOR—HERTLING'S CAREER AND POLICY—PROGRESS OF THE SOCIALIST "SPLIT"—MAJORITY AND MINORITY—THE STOCKHOLM CONFERENCE PLOT—ITS HISTORY AND FAILURE—STRIKES IN APRIL, 1917, AND JANUARY, 1918—ECONOMIC SITUATION—FOOD—FINANCE AND INDUSTRY—PUBLIC OPINION—THE GROWTH OF CHAUVINISM—TEXTS OF POPE'S PEACE NOTE AND REPLIES.

EARLIER chapters have sketched the main course of events in Germany during the first two years of war.

It has also been seen how the German "peace" campaign of December, 1916, was the preface not to peace but to "unrestricted" submarine warfare and war with the United States, and in that connexion some account has been given of the first stages of the new régime which was inaugurated under Hindenburg and Ludendorff in the autumn of 1916, after the intervention of Rumania and the Italian declaration of war on Germany.\* The present chapter is a review of German affairs from the beginning of the third year of war down to February, 1918. It was a period of tremendous events, during which the incalculable weight of the United States was thrown into the balance on the side of the Allies, while, on the other hand, the Russian Empire passed through Revolution into chaos and from chaos to speedy humiliation and disruption, with

the immediate result that the European War threw its shadows ever wider, and threatened not only the Farthest West but the Farthest East. The war had become a "world war" indeed.

In Germany itself all these great events were accompanied by incessant disputing and debating. When once the veto upon discussion of German "war aims" had been removed, and the "peace" proposals of December, 1916, had been made, a German political offensive ran parallel with the German military effort. This political offensive, because it was directed against the great democracies of the West, necessitated a pretence not only of reasonableness in the settlement of the war but of readiness to reform Germany from within. Thus general discussion of the constitutional and political structure of the German Empire became inevitable, and all parties took a hand in it. There were repeated "crises," of a kind familiar enough to those who had studied German politics before the war, but bewildering and misleading to the world at large. Even leading statesmen

\* See Vol. IX., Chapter CXLVII.: "Germany's Second Year of War"; and Vol. XI., Chapter CLXXX.: "The German Peace Campaign of December, 1916."  
Vol. XV.—Part 191.



in England—still more, perhaps, in the United States—for a time believed seriously that the Russian Revolution, which was hailed with delight at Potsdam, threatened Germany with "infection." At some moments it was seriously supposed that the militarist domination of Germany was menaced, or even that the spirit of Prussia could be changed and purified by the inspired wisdom of the Reichstag. Brief Labour troubles, again, were in many quarters exaggerated and misunderstood. In reality autoeracy and militarism emerged ever stronger from their harmless ordeals. They showed their new strength by the overthrow of the fifth Imperial Chancellor, Herr von Bethmann Hollweg, in July, 1917, and they destroyed, for the time, all serious opposition by their dictation of "peace" to Russia.

The first months of the third year of war were very anxious and, upon the whole, depressing. The intervention of Rumania produced an impression which was too easily forgotten afterwards, when the Bolshevist betrayal led to the Rumanian tragedy. In the decision of Bukarest it is not too much to say that Berlin read the judgment of the world—the cool and considered judgment that Germany would be defeated, and that, in particular, her ambitions in the East and South-East would be wrecked. In the Italian

declaration of war Berlin read, similarly, the cool and considered judgment of the world that the Triple Alliance would never rise again. Meanwhile, in spite of all German promises, the Battle of the Somme went on and on, putting an apparently intolerable strain upon German man-power and material resources. Yet, faced by the final defection of two former Allies, Germany was preparing to make in the United States a new and mighty enemy, whose action must inevitably sway the whole neutral world—outside the range of Germany's immediate neighbours, who were hostile but helpless. The near-sighted diplomatists of the Wilhelmstrasse still clung to the hope of a miracle. "Wilson *must* mediate," they would say to American visitors. And in their most sanguine moments they perhaps believed that the Asquith Government would stay in power and would be unable to refuse such mediation. At the end of November, 1916, Herr von Jagow, the mild-mannered Foreign Secretary, retired. The pace was getting too hot for him. It was characteristic of the time that the *North German Gazette* published an astonishing panegyric of Jagow—pretty evidently from the pen of the Chancellor himself—applauding his tireless energy, adroitness, vigilance, and "wise advice." It would have been more pertinent to congratulate him on his happy escape into obscurity.



STREET VENDORS IN MUNICH ON A "VICTORY-DAY."

As has been seen elsewhere, Herr von Jagow's successor, Herr Zimmermann, was full of wild schemes of adventure, and thought he could meet the intervention of the United States by an alliance with Japan and Mexico ! In reality German diplomacy was now utterly in the iron grip of the Army leaders. Herr von Bethmann Hollweg was repeating the experiences of July, 1914. Reluctant, even outwardly recalcitrant, he was calling "peace" but being driven the way that the General Staff meant him to go. When Tirpitz had tried to drive the Government into "ruthless" submarine warfare and war with the United States, Bethmann Hollweg had been strong enough to overthrow him. When the Army led the campaign, in the name of Hindenburg, but with the whole weight of Prussian militarism and industrialism and the Prussian autocracy behind it, the Chancellor was overpowered. Moreover, he was himself marked down for sacrifice, in punishment of his reluctance, and in due time, as will be seen, he fell. His repeated protests that his objections to "ruthless" submarine warfare had always been only temporary and opportunist damaged his reputation abroad without availing him anything at home.

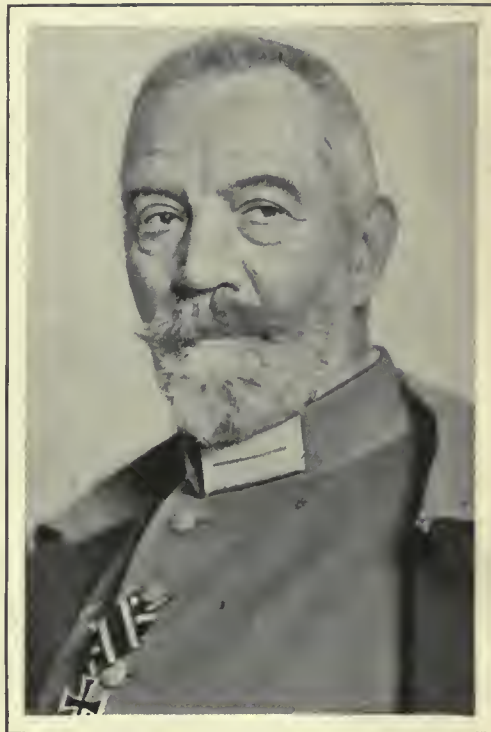
Herr von Bethmann Hollweg's speeches in and after the autumn of 1916 reflected his endless oscillation between militarism and sham democracy. At the end of September he was still railing at England :

Our existence as a nation is to be crushed. Militarily defenceless, economically crushed and boycotted by the world, condemned to lasting sickness—that is the Germany which England wants to see at her feet. Then, when there is no German competition to be feared, when France has been bled to death, when all the Allies financially and economically are doing slave work for England, when the neutral European world must submit to every British order, every British black list, then upon an impotent Germany the dream of British world supremacy is to become a reality.

A few days later the Government summarily dismissed the Reichstag for a long vacation, in order to avoid a public debate on submarine warfare. Early in November, when proceedings were confined to the secrecy of the Main Committee, the Chancellor reverted to the origins of the war. "No honourable critic," he declared, could deny that the Triple Alliance had always been on the defensive against the "aggressive character" of the Triple Entente ; "not in the shadow of Prussian militarism did the world live before the war, but in the shadow of the policy of isolation which was to keep Germany down" So far from opposing

a League of Nations Germany was ready to place herself at the head of it !

The first conditions for the development of international relations by means of an arbitration court and the peaceful liquidation of conflicting antagonisms would be that henceforth no aggressive coalitions should be formed. Germany is ready at all times to join the



HERR VON BETHMANN HOLLWEG,  
German Imperial Chancellor 1909-1917.

union of peoples, and even to place herself at the head of such a union which will restrain the disturber of the peace.

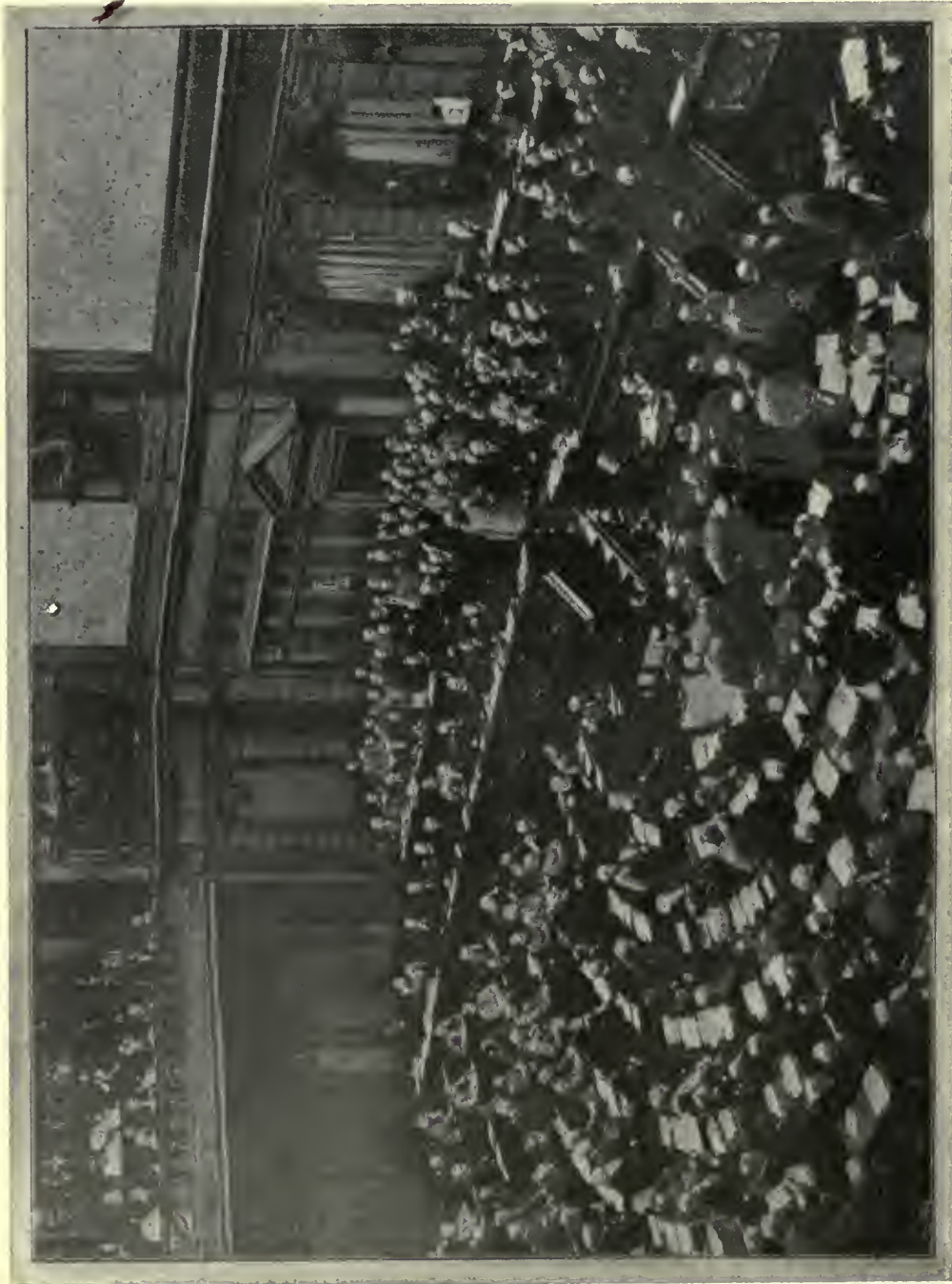
Then came, in quick succession, the "peace offer," the declaration of "unrestricted" submarine warfare, and the break with the United States and other Powers. These subjects have been dealt with so fully that it is not necessary here to do more than note one or two of the official utterances of the Chancellor. On January 31, 1917, he read to the Reichstag the German Note on submarine warfare, and said :

No one among us will close his eyes to the seriousness of the step which we are taking. That our existence is at stake everyone has known since August 4, 1914, and this has been brutally emphasized by the rejection of our peace offer. When, in 1914, we had to seize and have recourse to the sword against the Russian general mobilization, we did so with the deepest sense of responsibility towards our people and conscious of the resolute strength which says, "We must, and therefore we can." Endless streams of blood have since been shed, but they have not washed away the "must" and the "can."



In now deciding to employ the best and sharpest weapon, we are guided solely by a sober consideration of all the circumstances that come into question, and by a firm determination to help our people out of the distress and disgrace which our enemies contemplate for them. Success lies in a higher hand, but as regards all that human strength can do to enforce success

war, the Chancellor did all he could to explain away the crimes at sea and to promote a sham display of "democratization." On February 27 he made another long and argumentative speech in the Reichstag about submarine warfare and



HERR VON BETHMANN HOLLWEG'S LAST SPEECH IN THE REICHSTAG, MAY 16, 1917.

for the Fatherland you may be assured, gentlemen, that nothing has been neglected. Everything in this respect will be done.

During the two months, February and March, which intervened between the rupture of diplomatic relations and the American declaration of

about the "friendly relations" with America which Bismarck had once called "an heirloom from Frederick the Great." He was full of "regret" for "the rupture with a nation which, by its history, seemed to be predestined to work together with us, not against us, for common

ideals.' But there could be no "going back," since Germany's "honest desire for peace had only encountered hostile ridicule on the part of her enemies."

On March 29 Herr von Bethmann Hollweg made one more attempt. He said to the Reichstag:

In a few days the representatives of the American people meet to decide on the question of war or peace between the American and the German people. Germany has never had the smallest intention of attacking America, and has none to-day. Germany has never desired war with America, nor has she any desire for war to-day. We have more than once told the United States that we renounced the unrestricted use of submarine warfare in the expectation that England would be brought to observe in her blockade policy the laws of humanity and international agreements. England has not only maintained, but continually intensified, her illegal and indefensible blockade policy. She has, in common with her allies, scornfully rejected our peace offer, and announced war aims which amount to the annihilation of ourselves and our allies. For this reason we resorted to unrestricted submarine warfare; for this reason we were forced to resort to it. Does the American people see in this any reason for declaring war on the German people, with which it has lived at peace for more than a hundred years? Does it, for this reason, desire to increase the bloodshed? It is not we who bear the responsibility for such a result.

A few days later Germany and the United States were at war. It is a remarkable fact that, although he remained in office for three and a-half months longer, Herr von Bethmann Hollweg never again mentioned the United States in a public speech and seldom spoke of the submarine war. In his last speech in the Reichstag (May 16) he said:—"Our submarines are operating with increasing success. I will not employ any fine words about them. The deeds of our submarine men speak for themselves. I think that even the neutrals will recognize this. As far as is compatible with our duty towards our own people, who come first, we take into account the interests of the neutral States." That was all. This time there was not, as in Herr von Bethmann Hollweg's famous speech of August 4, 1914, on the invasion of Belgium, any public admission of "the wrong" that Germany had committed and he had authorized. But the Chancellor's silence was significant.

In point of fact it soon became the deliberate policy of Germany to keep the United States as far as possible out of the public view of the war. The rapid adoption of compulsory service was a shock to Germany, but a long period of preparation must precede effective military action by the United States, and the German Press was content to conceal the future and merely to encourage the German public with

occasional ridicule of the American effort and some abuse of President Wilson, who was regarded much as Sir Edward Grey had been regarded in the first year of the war. The Army leaders had little desire to provoke discussion of America's real military resources; the politicians hoped against hope that American idealism could be brought into some sort of antagonism to British and other Allied aims and interests. At the same time it was of great importance to prevent simple German minds from being assailed at one and the same time by the collapse of Russian autocracy and the rising against Germany of American democracy.

In any case Germany's main business was for the present with Russia, where the outbreak of the Revolution had preceded by three weeks the intervention of the United States. It has been said that the Revolution was hailed with joy at Potsdam. But until the failure of the Russian offensive in July it was not certain that the first-fruits of the Revolution would fall to Germany, and nearly a year was to pass before they actually ripened into a German "peace." Meanwhile Germany passed through a series of mild convulsions. Unfortunately they were without any real result except to strengthen the reaction when it came, and they seriously darkened counsel in the countries of the Allies. On the one hand, Germany continued the "peace offensive"; on the other hand, the German Government endeavoured to meet the apparently rising tide of democracy by more or less innocuous domestic "reforms." Herr von Bethmann Hollweg, for his part, was not entirely insincere. He had always feared the extreme rigidity of Prussia, Prussian bureaucrat and Junker though he was to the bone, and he knew enough of western civilization to believe that Prussia-Germany could retain its stability only with the help of considerable constitutional changes. In the Prussian Diet on March 14 Herr von Bethmann Hollweg declared that unity could be secured only by granting the people in general equal cooperation in the administration of the Empire, and he exclaimed:—

Woe to the statesman who does not recognize the signs of the time; who, after this catastrophe, the like of which the world has never seen, believes that he can take up the work where it was interrupted.

But in the Reichstag on March 31 he again urged delay even in the reform of the Prussian franchise:—

I admit that it would be most congenial to me if I could carry out the reform to-morrow. But at this



moment, when the war has reached its crisis, when it is a question of bringing all—even our last ounce of strength—to bear, I must consider very soberly whether the advantages of attempting such an action are greater than the disadvantages which are inevitably bound up with it. . . . Since I am compelled to bring forward these serious considerations, I must say that the stake at issue in this war is far too great for us to allow ourselves to be carried away by our opinions. If I am forced to hold this view, it is wrong and unjustifiable to reproach me with pursuing a policy of stagnation.

Meanwhile Germany was professing an almost disinterested benevolence towards the Russian Revolution. It was insisted that she would do nothing that could interfere with the internal affairs of Russia, and that the Russian people need have no fear of any meddling. In reality, of course, whatever may have been the confused hopes of Herr von Bethmann Hollweg for "reform" in his own country, it was obviously to the interests of Germany to allow the disintegration of Russia to continue undisturbed, provided that Germany herself could be kept safe from revolutionary infection. In these circumstances, and under cover of "democratic" displays, the German Government embarked upon an ingenious scheme—the attempt to organize an International Socialist Conference, at the apparent instance of the Russian revolution-

aries, but at the real instigation of the German Government, acting through the "tame" German Socialists. If the conference could be arranged, Germany would have secured what she had failed to secure by her direct "peace offer" in December; if the Western Powers refused to be entangled, their refusal could be turned to good account in Russia.

It will be necessary to return to this subject later, and to disentangle other outstanding features of the complicated history of the next few months—especially the labour troubles, which first made their appearance on a considerable scale in April, the development of dissensions among the Socialists, and the reception of a "peace" Note from the Pope. Meanwhile let us trace the main events which led to Herr von Bethmann Hollweg's fall. They turned throughout upon the definition of German policy at home and abroad, upon "reform" and "war aims," upon the choice between positive action in either sphere or both, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, "stagnation" at home while the war was pushed to a purely military conclusion. On April 7, notwithstanding his hesitating speech a week before, Herr von Bethmann Holl-



FEEDING BERLIN: THE SOUP CARTS.



POOR BERLINERS FETCHING THEIR TEN-PFENNIG DINNERS FROM THE RED CROSS FOOD KITCHEN.

weg was able to publish what became known as the Easter Rescript. It was addressed by the Kaiser as King of Prussia to himself as Minister President of Prussia, and ran :

Never has the German people shown itself so firm as during this war. The knowledge that the Fatherland is acting in bitter self-defence has exercised a wonderfully reconciling power, and in spite of all sacrifices of blood on the battlefield and severe privations at home, the resolve has remained unshakable to stake the utmost for a victorious issue. National and social spirit have understood each other and become united and given us enduring strength. Everyone has felt that what has been built up in the course of long years amid many internal struggles was worthy of defence.

Brilliant before my eyes stand the achievements of the entire nation in battle and distress. The experiences of this struggle for the existence of the Empire introduce with sublime solemnity a new age. It falls to you, as the responsible Chancellor of the German Empire and the First Minister of my Government in Prussia, to help to fulfil the demands of this hour by the right means and at the right time. On various occasions you have laid down the spirit in accordance with which the forms of our political life must be constructed in order to make room for the free and willing cooperation of all members of our people. The principles which you have developed in doing so have, as you know, my approval. I feel conscious of remaining thus in the path taken by my grandfather, who, as King of Prussia in the sphere of military organization, and as Emperor of Germany in the sphere of social reform, gave a pattern of the fulfilment of the duties of a monarch and laid the foundations which will enable the German people in united and stern perseverance to overcome these bloody times.

The maintenance of the fighting force as a true people's army, and the promotion of the social progress of the people in all its classes, have been my object from the beginning of my reign. Anxious as I am, while strictly

preserving the unity of people and Monarchy, to serve the interests of the whole, I am resolved, so soon as the war situation permits, to set to work on the building up of our internal political, economic, and social life.

Millions of our fellow-countrymen are still in the field, and still the decision of the conflict of opinions, which is inevitable in a far-reaching change of the Constitution must, in the highest interests of the Fatherland, be postponed until the time of the return of our warriors comes, and they themselves can in counsel and action cooperate in the progress of the new era. But in order that after the successful ending of the war, which, I confidently hope, is no longer far off, whatever is necessary and appropriate in this respect may be done at once, I desire the preparations to be carried out without delay.

The reform of the Prussian Diet and the liberation of the whole of our internal political life from this question is particularly near my heart. At the very beginning of the war preparations for the alteration of the franchise for the Prussian Lower House were undertaken at my suggestion. I now charge you to lay before me the definite proposals of the Ministry, in order that on the return of our warriors this work, which is fundamental for the internal construction of Prussia, may be carried out rapidly by means of legislation.

After the gigantic accomplishments of the whole people in this terrible war, there is, in my opinion, no room left in Prussia for the class franchise. The Bill will further have to provide for the immediate and secret election of deputies.

The services of the Upper House and its permanent importance for the State no King of Prussia will fail to recognize. But the Upper House will be better able to do justice to the gigantic demands of the coming time if it unites in its midst, to a greater degree than hitherto, leading men, marked out by the respect of their fellow-citizens, from all classes and callings of the people.

I act according to the traditions of great ancestors when, in renewing in important respects our firmly planted and storm-proved Constitution, I show to a loyal



brave, efficient, and highly developed people the confidence it deserves. I charge you to make this edict known forthwith.

Thus legislation was still to be postponed until "after the war." The Rescript satisfied nobody. The Conservatives were given warning that the Prussian three-class franchise, based upon the qualification of wealth, was to be abolished, and that voting would be



HERR ERZBERGER,

The Centre Party Deputy who provoked the "Chancellor crisis" in July, 1917.

direct and secret, instead of indirect and open. But in a speech from the Throne in 1909 the Kaiser-King of Prussia had made similar promises and broken them, and the Rescript confirmed the suspicions of the Chancellor's most powerful enemies without gaining him new friends. Moreover, while the monstrous anachronism of the medieval Prussian franchise was, traditionally the great test question in German politics, no genuine "reform" was possible in Germany without changes in the Imperial Constitution which would give the Reichstag some real power and introduce Ministerial responsibility to Parliament. The Imperial Government showed no serious intention of effecting any real reforms whatever. The Reichstag set up a "Constitution Committee." Its proceedings were at first widely advertised for the benefit of "pacifists" all over the world, but they rapidly became a mere farce—hampered at every turn by the official in the Ministry of the Interior, Herr Lewald, whom the Government had selected to control them!

What of the Chancellor's "war aims" and

"peace" policy? After prolonged Party and Press controversies he made a speech in the Reichstag on May 15. He was now fighting hard for his own position, and assumed a Prussian militarist pose, banging his fist on the table, grasping his sword hilt, and—as the *Berliner Tageblatt* observed—delivering his principal passages in a "tone of command." A few quotations will suffice:

I thoroughly and completely understand the passionate interest of the people in our war-aims and the conditions of peace. I understand the demand for a precise statement. But in a debate on war-aims the only guiding line for me is an early and satisfactory conclusion of the war. Beyond that I cannot do anything, and cannot say anything. If the general situation obliges me to maintain an attitude of reserve, as is the case at present, I will maintain this reserve. . . .

Shall I immediately give our enemies an assurance which would enable them to prolong the war indefinitely without danger of losses to themselves? . . . Shall I nail down the German Empire in all directions by a one-sided statement which comprises only one part of the total peace conditions, renounces the successes gained by the blood of our sons and brothers, and leaves everything else in a state of suspense? No, I reject such a policy. . . .

Our military position has never been so good since the beginning of the war. . . . Time is on our side. In full confidence we can trust that we are approaching a satisfactory finish. Then the time will come when we can negotiate with our enemies about our war-aims, regarding which I am in full harmony with the Army Command. Then we shall attain a peace which will bring to us liberty to rebuild what the war has destroyed, in unimpaired development of our strength, so that from all the blood and all the sacrifices an Empire, a people, will rise again strong, independent, unthreatened by its enemies, a bulwark of peace and of work.

That was the conclusion of Herr von Bethmann Hollweg's last Reichstag speech. The Reichstag adjourned, and when it met again at the beginning of July a "crisis" immediately developed.

The formal issue before the Main Committee of the Reichstag when it met on July 5 was the voting of new war credits, and the first sign of trouble was the Committee's decision to postpone the vote until after a political debate. On July 6 Herr Erzberger, a member of the Catholic Centre Party, made a sensational speech. Although all reports of the proceedings were suppressed, it soon became known that he had violently attacked the Government. He had accused Ministers of misrepresenting the military situation, and he had insisted upon the fact that, when "unrestricted" submarine war was proclaimed at the end of January, the naval authorities had promised that in six months England would be forced to make peace. Now that the six months had passed, he challenged the Government to tell the truth. In view of the situation which he had described, he urged that immediate action must be

taken for the reform of the Prussian franchise, and that the Reichstag and the Government should agree upon a "war aims" formula, which would strengthen Germany at home, impress neutrals, and increase "paeifism" in enemy countries, especially in Russia. Erzberger had for years been regarded as a sort of *enfant terrible* of the Centre Party. Sometimes his actions were purely irresponsible; sometimes he was employed by the Party leaders as an agent whom it was easy to disavow; all the time he was an intriguer, equally ready to accept inspiration from Munich, Vienna, or Rome, or to carry out an international mission on behalf of the Prussian Government. The present plot was skilfully laid, and in a few days the Imperial Chancellor found himself deserted and alone. On July 7 he appeared before the Committee, and refused the demands of Erzberger and the Socialists. The Centre Party then openly supported Erzberger, and the Radicals joined the opposition, while the National Liberals—whose only object was to overthrow Bethmann in the interests of their annexationist policy—displayed a sudden passion for "reform." On the same day the Kaiser, Hindenburg, and Ludendorff arrived in Berlin, and there were

long discussions with the Chancellor. On July 9 a Crown Council was held, at which the Chancellor appears to have secured with difficulty approval of his "reform" proposals. On the following day he utterly refused to inform the Reichstag Committee of the Crown Council's decisions. On July 11 a second Crown Council was held, this time in the presence of Bethmann's old enemy, the Crown Prince, who had been summoned to Berlin for the purpose. The immediate result was the following rescript, addressed by the Kaiser as King of Prussia to Herr von Bethmann Hollweg as Minister President of Prussia:

Upon the report which my Government made to me, in obedience to my decree of April 7 of the current year, I herewith decide, in order to supplement the same, that the draft Bill dealing with the alteration of the electoral law for the House of Deputies, which is to be submitted to the Diet of the Monarchy for decision, is to be drawn up on a basis of equal franchise.

The Bill is to be submitted in any case early enough for the next elections to take place according to the new franchise.

I charge you to make all the necessary arrangements for this purpose.

At the same time it became known that it was proposed to create a sort of State Council, consisting of Parliamentary representatives, to cooperate with the Imperial Government. Suddenly Herr von Bethmann Hollweg dis-



FUNERAL OF COUNT ZEPPELIN AT STUTTGART, MARCH 12, 1917.

The King of Wurtemberg is prominent behind the coffin.



covered that his fate was in reality sealed. On the one hand, the *Bayrische Staatszeitung*, the official organ of the Bavarian Government, declared, on July 12, that Bavaria would have nothing to do with "Ministerial responsibility" to the Reichstag, and that all schemes to



**HERR GEORG MICHAELIS.**

German Imperial Chancellor July-October, 1917. graft a Parliamentary system on to the German Constitution must be condemned absolutely as an encroachment on the foundations of the federal character of the Empire. On the other hand, the Crown Prince entered into direct communication with the leaders of all the Reichstag parties, and was able to assure his father that Bethmann enjoyed no support and could well be dismissed at once. On July 13 the Kaiser offered the post of Chancellor to Count Hertling, the Prime Minister of Bavaria, who had undoubtedly contributed greatly to Bethmann's overthrow, both by the Bavarian resistance to "reform" and by his own immense influence with the Centre Party, of which he had for many years been the leader in the Reichstag. "After serious consideration"—Hertling disclosed these facts five months later in the Prussian Diet—he refused the post, and on the same day the Kaiser "accepted the resignation" of Bethmann Hollweg, and appointed an almost unknown Prussian official, Herr Georg Michaelis, to be Imperial Chancellor and Minister President of Prussia.

Herr von Bethmann Hollweg had been in office for exactly eight years; he had succeeded Prince Bülow on July 14, 1909. For the

second time the Kaiser announced the dismissal of his chief servant on the anniversary of the fall of the Bastille. He did so, he wrote, "with heavy heart," but he added only perfunctory words of recognition and the minor favour of the "Cross of Grand Commander of the Order of my House of Hohenzollern." As in the case of Prince Bülow, the Centre Party had arranged the Parliamentary setting. But it was the Crown Prince, inspired by Hindenburg and Ludendorff, who compassed Bethmann's fall. Upon Bülow, in 1909, the Emperor had taken revenge for the humiliation to which he had been subjected in the matter of the famous *Daily Telegraph* interview. Upon Bethmann the Crown Prince took revenge for the humiliation which he had suffered in the autumn of 1911, when he had made a public demonstration in the Reichstag of his disapproval of the Morocco treaty concluded with France. Thus the Crown Prince paid off an old personal score, but his action represented the triumph of the militarists and reactionaries, and the Kaiser, the Crown Prince, the Army leaders, and the Junkers, industrialists and Clericals all joined hands. Herr von Bethmann Hollweg, in spite of the stubbornness with which he had clung to office, proved in the end an easy victim.<sup>6</sup> He was a man of great industry and limited ability, whose good intentions bore no fruit. He had attempted to arrive at agreements with Great Britain in the years before the war, and had made the British declaration of war inevitable. He it was who, in the act of admitting the "wrong" that Germany was doing in the invasion of Belgium, told the Reichstag that "necessity knows no law," and who, in his last conversation with the British Ambassador, defined an international treaty as "a scrap of paper." He had resisted unrestricted submarine warfare, only to consent to it and to make the American declaration of war inevitable. He had displayed an apparent moderation without showing the least ability to give effect to his policy, and he had preached internal "reform" without showing the least ability to practice it. After three years of war, during which he had assumed the responsibility for greater crimes than any civilized Power had yet committed, he disappeared unwept and unsung.

As has been seen, Count Hertling—for the present—declined the succession, and Beth-

mann's victorious enemies seem to have been in some little doubt as to what they should do next. They did not venture to go the length of perfecting the military dictatorship by making Hindenburg himself, or some other general, Imperial Chancellor, and they decided to select some Prussian bureaucrat as their figure-head. The choice fell upon Michaelis because he had chanced to acquire a certain prominence during the past few months in the reform of the food control, and could be put forward as an embodiment of Prussian efficiency. At the beginning of the war Michaelis, after an uneventful bureaucratic career, had reached the position of an Under-Secretary in the Prussian Ministry of Finance. Early in 1917 he had made proposals for the reform of the food control organization, had himself been appointed to the new post of Prussian State Commissary, and had shown himself a vigorous and determined official. He was sixty years of age, entirely innocent of any experience in foreign affairs, and an utterly unknown figure in domestic politics. His appointment was a contemptuous rebuff to the Reichstag. "The leaders of the Reichstag parties," remarked the *Berliner Tageblatt*, "were told nothing about this appointment. Whether Herr Michaelis is merely a severe and strictly matter-of-fact bureaucrat or a democratic reformer, whether he recognizes the necessity of 'parliamentarizing' the method of government in the Empire, or is hampered by quite different tendencies and sympathies, the fact is that he is sent down to the people and the representatives of the people from the heights of Olympus, whence in quite ancient times fate came to mankind."

What remained of the "crisis" provoked by Erzberger, except the fact that Bethmann had been overthrown? Only the second Rescript concerning the Prussian franchise—to which it will be necessary to revert later—and the proposal that there should be some agreed declaration about war aims. While Bethmann's fate was being settled outside, the Reichstag proceeded with the drafting of a Resolution. On July 13 representatives of the Centre Party, the Radicals, and the Majority Socialists had a conference on the subject with Hindenburg and Ludendorff, and on July 14 there was a second conference, at which Michaelis, the new Chancellor, was present.\*

\* The part played by the military authorities was kept secret until January, 1918, when the facts were disclosed by the Radical *Freisinnige Zeitung*.

The Resolution ultimately took the following form, and on July 19 it was adopted by the Reichstag by 212 votes against 126:

As on August 4, 1914, so on the threshold of the fourth year of war, the word of the Speech from the Throne holds good for the German people: "We are not impelled by lust of conquest." For the defence of her freedom and independence, for the integrity of her territorial possessions (*territoriales Besitzstandes*), Germany took up arms.

The Reichstag strives for a peace of understanding and of permanent reconciliation of the peoples. With such a peace forced acquisitions of territory and political, economic, or financial oppressions are incompatible.

The Reichstag also rejects all schemes which aim at economic barriers and hostility between the peoples (*Absperrung und Verfeindung*) after the war. The freedom of the seas must be made secure (*sichergestellt werden*). Only economic peace will prepare the ground for a friendly intercourse among the nations.

The Reichstag will actively promote the creation of international law organizations.



MARSHAL VON HINDENBURG IN 1917.

So long, however, as the enemy Governments do not accept such a peace, so long as they threaten Germany and her Allies with conquest (*Eroberung*) and oppression (*Fergewaltigung*), the German nation will stand together like one man, and unshakably hold out and fight until its own and its allies' right to life and development is secured (*gesichert*). The German nation is invincible in its unity. The Reichstag knows that it is at one in this statement with the men who in heroic fights are protecting the Fatherland. The imperishable gratitude of the whole people is assured to them.

Comparison of the final text with drafts which had previously been published show how the military authorities had stiffened it.



The phrase "territorial possessions" was substituted for words (*Bestand*) which would have meant the German Empire alone. The reference to the Speech from the Throne in August, 1914, was made explicit—in order to disavow Bethmann's famous admissions and pledges about Belgium, in his Reichstag speech of August 4, 1914. The references to "freedom of the seas" and economic "hostility" were greatly strengthened. Finally, the whole sense of the original Resolution was altered by the substitution of the words "the

with the Government and with the military leaders, who had entirely controlled the "crisis." The facts were, indeed, perfectly clear. And yet the ruse had a remarkable success. For months the "Reichstag Peace Resolution," as it was called, affected foreign opinion, and it was of the utmost value to the German Government throughout the whole period leading up to the dictation of terms to the Bolsheviks.

Herr Michaelis remained Chancellor for three and a half months—from the middle of July,



SHORTAGE OF PAPER IN BERLIN: COLLECTING WASTE PAPER.

German nation will . . . fight until its own and its allies' right to life and development is secured," for the words "the German people is determined . . . to hold out *for the defence* of its own and its allies' right to life and development."

The minority which voted against the Resolution consisted of 57 Conservatives, 5 members of the Centre Party, 42 National Liberals, and 22 Minority Socialists. Herr Haase, the leader of the Socialist Minority, explained very fully that the Resolution was a meaningless piece of hypocrisy, and that the Reichstag was in reality conniving once more at the policy of annexations, in conspiracy

1917, to the end of November. He was utterly unfit for his post. His ignorance of affairs, his tactlessness, and, above all, the fact that he had merely accepted office in obedience to orders, as a soldier accepts a command, were very clearly shown. "Michaelis and I," said the Kaiser on one occasion, "must become Siamese twins, like Hindenburg and Ludendorff." But that partnership was never realized, and "the old fox," as Count Hertling was admiringly described in Bavaria, had not long to wait for the high office which he had momentarily refused. Michaelis's failure was the more remarkable because circumstances really favoured him. The hopelessness of the



SHORTAGE OF WOOL IN GERMANY: MAKING BLANKETS OF NEWSPAPERS.

Russian offensive showed itself immediately after his appointment, and in Germany there were no such acute difficulties as had troubled Bethmann's last days. The only important diplomatic development during his chancellorship was favourable to German schemings—the Peace Note which the Pope addressed to all belligerent Powers in August. But Michaelis made blunder after blunder, and was at no time likely to establish his position. When a bungled Government conspiracy brought him into conflict with the German naval authorities, there was no doubt about the result.

Michaelis met the Reichstag on July 19. Concerning the Prussian franchise, he briefly stated his acceptance of the Second Rescript, of July 11, and the subject did not seriously arise again during his chancellorship. Concerning the government of the Empire, he proposed the mild measure of "calling to executive positions men who, in addition to their personal qualification for the post concerned, possess also the full confidence of the great parties in the popular representative body." "I will not," he boldly affirmed, "permit the conduct of affairs to be taken from my hands." The "conduct of affairs" was in the hands, not of Michaelis, but of his

military masters, and it was they who dictated the following passage of his speech :

In the first place, the Fatherland's territory is inviolable. With an enemy who approaches us with the demand to take from us German territory (*Reichsgebiet*) we cannot negotiate. When we make peace we must primarily achieve that the frontiers of the German Empire shall be secured for all time. We must by way of agreement and bargaining guarantee the vital conditions of the German Empire on the Continent and overseas. The peace must provide the basis for a lasting reconciliation of the nations. It must, as your resolution puts it, prevent the further creation of hostility among the nations by economic barriers. It must provide a guarantee that the armed alliance of our enemies shall not develop into an economic offensive alliance against us. These ends are attainable within the limits of your resolution as I understand it.

"Your resolution as I understand it!" Such was the contemptuous attitude of the Government and the Army, after all the haggling and argument. Even the Reichstag majority could not in decency refrain from protest, and for weeks to come there was futile wrangling about the Government's attitude and the degree to which it had, or had not, endorsed the "Peace Resolution."

At the beginning of August the Ministerial changes were announced. Five Prussian Ministers who in the Crown Council of July 11 had refused to have anything to do with reform of the Prussian franchise, now retired; they were Herr von Beseler, Minister of Justice



Herr von Trott zu Solz, Minister of Education, Baron von Schorlemer, Minister of Agriculture, Herr Lenze, Minister of Finance, and Herr von Loebell, Minister of the Interior. A few reactionary deputies were given minor offices, and the Food Controller, Herr von Batecki—with whom Michaelis had had many quarrels—gave place to Herr von Waldow. More in-



HERR VON KÜHLMANN,

Appointed German Foreign Secretary July, 1917.

teresting was the removal of Herr Zimmermann from the Secretaryship of State for Foreign Affairs, and the appointment of Herr von Kühlmann to succeed him. Kühlmann had been for many years before the war Counsellor of the German Embassy in London, and he had undoubtedly been very largely responsible for the policy which led to the war. Clever, ambitious and unscrupulous to a degree, he had hitherto taken care to avoid full responsibility; he was now to play a very prominent part in the diplomacy of the war, and much more will be heard of him in these pages. He had for a time been German Minister at The Hague—a convenient post for observation of England, and, since November, 1916, he had been German Ambassador in Constantinople.

The Michaelis Chancellorship was essentially a period of transition, during which Kühlmann was feeling his way in foreign policy, while Russia was unhappily going from bad to worse.

Michaelis, in so far as he had any policy of his own, was more reactionary than Bethmann Hollweg, and if he had been able to establish his position he would pretty certainly have been disposed to rely upon Conservative support. When he paid his official visit to Vienna in August, the Austrians, according to the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, observed with relief that he "by no means justified the fears aroused by the firmness of his countenance; instead of appearing as an iron-eater and a man of extreme severity, he . . . declared an honourable peace by agreement to be the best thing to aim at." But after a few weeks' experience the Conservatives were pretty confident that Michaelis was on their side. At the end of August Count Schwerin, President of the Lower House of the Prussian Diet, described Michaelis as a "good Prussian" and "a fighter by nature, who would never lose sight of his fixed goal." The new Chancellor apparently intended to get round the terms of the franchise rescript, and his general point of view was accurately explained by Count Schwerin as follows:—

As a result of the horrible pessimist campaign of Erzberger, Scheidemann and others, which Bethmann did not know how to oppose effectively, the Reichstag majority had succumbed to a complete nervous collapse. In these circumstances the new Chancellor had to avoid, at any rate, the worst impression which this pusillanimity on the part of the Reichstag, although it by no means corresponded with feeling in the country, was bound to produce abroad. Whether he liked it or not, the new Chancellor had, therefore, to satisfy himself with making the manifestation as harmless and unimportant as possible. But he was entitled to say to himself that after a few weeks—after new successes for German arms, and when the greatest food difficulties had been overcome—feeling in the country would of itself prove to be quite different from the feeling which Erzberger and Scheidemann had described in the Reichstag; and so, in view of Germany's military achievements, the Reichstag demonstration would soon be forgotten.

After a conference with the Emperor and the military authorities, Herr Michaelis proceeded at the end of August to set up a so-called "free committee," consisting of seven members of the Reichstag and seven members of the Federal Council, which was to be consulted on broad issues of policy, especially concerning war aims, and to be advertised as a movement towards "democratisation." This committee was actually consulted to some extent concerning the reply to the Pope's Peace Note, but it soon disappeared, and the innovation had no practical effect whatever. The reply to the Pope was described by Herr von Kühlmann, in a speech in the Main Committee of the Reichstag on September 28, as "a well-cemented structure in which stone is so firmly clamped to stone that

any attempt to break out a single stone, or, in other words, to make detailed comment, would only weaken its effect." The object, as Herr von Kühlmann more truly observed, was "to create atmosphere." German policy was once more surrounded with a cloud of vague generalities, combined with an impudent eulogy of the Kaiser's devotion to peace throughout the whole course of his reign.\*

By the beginning of October reports began to appear in Pan-German journals that the Chancellor's "health" was unsatisfactory. His fall was imminent, and although he remained in office for another month it was only on sufferance. It was not understood at the time in England and other Entente countries that—so far from any real change of spirit taking place in Germany—reaction and militarism were more powerful than ever. The Michaelis "crisis" arose immediately from the fact that the Pan-Germans and Junkers, more arrogant and confident than they had been at any time since the first stages of the war,

\* The text of the Pope's Note, of the German reply, of a separate reply which was sent by Bavaria, and of President Wilson's reply, are printed in full at the end of the present chapter. The Governments of the Allies, while associating themselves informally with President Wilson's action, left the Pope's Note unanswered.

selected this moment for a general assault on the "Peace Resolution" policy of the Reichstag and upon the Socialist Minority—the only genuine democratic force in the country. Michaelis lacked the necessary experience and ability for dealing with such a situation. He was incapable even of expressing himself clearly in the Reichstag; on several occasions his speeches had, after delivery, to be altered for publication, and on at least one occasion the foreign telegraph service had to be suspended in order to prevent transmission of his indiscretions. During the first week in October the Reichstag debated the subject of Pan-German propaganda in the Army. It was shown that, under the auspices of the Fatherland Party, to which further reference will be made, the Pan-Germans were rapidly obtaining control of the whole organization of lectures and entertainments for the troops, and were spreading the most violent forms of military doctrine and denunciation of Parliament—the "rabble" and "traitors" who in the Reichstag dared to talk of "peace." Criticism was largely directed against Herr Helfferich, the very unpopular Vice-Chancellor. Instead of making such easy concessions as would have satisfied the wounded pride of the Reichstag, Herr Michaelis allowed himself to be involved in an absurd attempt



HINDENBURG'S SEVENTIETH BIRTHDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1917.  
School children scattering flowers in the path of the Field-Marshal.



to turn the tables upon the Socialists, and to represent "revolutionary" propaganda in the Navy as far more serious than any Pan-German propaganda in the Army. On October 9 a Minority Socialist named Dittmann raised the question of violent measures which had been adopted by the naval authorities for the sup-



HERREN SCHEIDEMANN AND EBERT,  
Leaders of the Socialist Majority.

pression of Socialist opinion, and he asked whether it was true that many sailors had been sentenced to long periods of penal servitude, and that sailors had even been shot "because they held Socialist opinions." Thereupon the Chancellor, after a warm defence of patriotic propaganda in the Army, called upon Admiral von Capelle, Tirpitz's successor as Secretary of State for the Navy. Capelle made the following statement:—

I must inform you of the lamentable fact that the Russian Revolution has turned the heads of some few people on board our fleet, and swollen revolutionary ideas within them. The crazy plan of these few people was to win confidential agents on all ships in order to mislead the whole crew into disobeying orders, and, in this way, in case of necessity with the use of force, to cripple the fleet and compel and enforce peace. It is the fact that these people had relations with the Independent Socialist Party. (Uproar. Dittmann: "Prove it.") It is established by documents that the chief agitator explained the plans here in the Reichstag building in the rooms of the Independent Social-Democratic Party to the deputies Herron Dittmann, Haase, and Vogtherr, who approved of them. (Tumultuous shouts of "Shame!" from the Right.) (Uproar on the extreme Left, shouts of "Transparent swindle" and "Incredible.") The deputies pointed out the dangers of such procedure and advised the greatest caution, but promised their full support by the supply of seditious material for the incitement of the fleet. (Repeated shouts of "Shame!" from Right.) In view of this situation, it was my first duty to prevent, as far as was in my power, that the promised material should find access to the fleet. I therefore instructed the naval authorities concerned to prevent by all means the circulation of this material. (Applause.) As regards subsequent occurrences in the fleet I can make no statement here. A few unprincipled and disloyal persons who committed a severe offence have met the fate they deserved, but nevertheless I want to state from a public platform that the rumours which are

current, and naturally also came to my knowledge, are immensely exaggerated. The preparedness of the fleet was not in doubt a single moment, and thus it shall continue to be. (Applause.)

The truth was that the Government had seized the opportunity to exploit, for its apparent political advantage, some comparatively insignificant disturbances which had taken place at Wilhelmshaven at least six weeks previously. Marvellous stories were published of a wide-spread "mutiny," in which many German officers were supposed to have been murdered; lurid details were freely borrowed from the terrible experiences in the Russian Baltic and Black Sea fleets. The only established facts were that two German sailors had been convicted respectively of mutiny and incitement to mutiny. One of them, named Reichnitz, was sentenced to death on August 30 and shot on September 5. It may be added that the naval authorities, so far from taking the view of the "mutiny" which Capelle now thought fit to take, had been chiefly concerned to conceal the execution of the unfortunate Socialist sailor, and it was only by accident that his parents were informed of his fate.

Even the Government soon discovered that it could not carry through its political con-



[From "Der Welt Spiegel."]

#### HAIG-SISYPHUS.

A German view of the British offensives.

spiracy, and that the attempt to convict the whole Socialist Minority of high treason was a failure. The Chancellor let it be said that Admiral von Capelle had exceeded his instructions, and it was announced that Capelle had

sent in his resignation. But it was Michaelis, not Capelle, who was to be sacrificed. For the second time the Kaiser offered the Chancellorship to Count Hertling. Hertling, according to his own subsequent account (see p. 298), regarded the political situation as "extremely complicated," and the circumstances as "still more difficult" than when he had refused office in July. He asked time for consideration, and then made his acceptance conditional upon his ability to reach a *modus vivendi* with the Reichstag Majority. Hertling knew very well that the Reichstag Majority only desired to save its face, and his chief difficulty was to reconcile any bargaining with the Reichstag at all with his own reactionary convictions and the reactionary basis upon which he meant to build his policy—whatever "Liberal" façade he might find it necessary to put upon the structure. "All my life long," he said in defending himself against subsequent Conservative criticism, "I have been a decided Monarchist, and as a Monarchist I will die. I repudiate just as absolutely the suggestion that I am giving my hand to the exercise of any influence upon the federal character of the Empire." As a matter of fact Hertling's negotiations—although prolonged, and ultimately concluded only by the intervention of Herr von Kühlmann—were extremely successful. While Herr Michaelis was still in office, the Centre Party, National Liberals, Radicals and Majority Socialists, addressed the following communication to the Kaiser, through his Civil Cabinet:—

Should His Majesty the Kaiser determine upon a change of Chancellors, it is of service to the highest interest of the State that a complete guarantee should be provided for tranquil development of domestic policy until the end of the war. Only so can the solidarity be established which is imperatively needed by the people in arms and at home. The way to this goal is a sincere agreement about the foreign and domestic policy of the Empire until the end of the war. The domestic difficulties of recent months must be attributed to the lack of such an agreement. We, therefore, pray His Majesty the Kaiser, before arriving at his decision, to instruct the personage selected for the Chancellorship to enter into conversations with the Reichstag.

To the timid German politicians this mild prayer seemed to be action of unparalleled audacity, and the letter was carefully concealed for some months.\* What it really meant was that the Reichstag was quite ready to give binding pledges of good behaviour for the whole duration of the war, in return for perfectly

\* The document was published by the Radical leader, Herr Conrad Haussmann, in January 1918. (*Frankfurter Zeitung*, January 7, 1918.)

harmless concessions. Naturally the Kaiser and Hertling, while displaying reluctance, accepted the proposals. The terms of the bargain were clear. On the one hand—although the Reichstag Resolution of July 19 was not openly disavowed; it still had its uses in enemy countries—Hertling pledged himself,



ADMIRAL VON CAPELLE,  
Tirpitz's successor as Secretary of State for the Navy.

not to the Reichstag Resolution, but to the vague generalities of the German reply to the Pope. Secondly, he consented to the appointment of Herr Friedberg, a chauvinist National Liberal, to be Vice-President of the Prussian Ministry, and of Herr von Payer, the Württemberg Radical leader, to be Vice-Chancellor. On the other hand, the Reichstag Majority formally agreed to prevent all serious debate on foreign or domestic affairs, to confine itself to brief statements in support of Count Hertling's





**COUNT HERTLING,**

Appointed Imperial Chancellor November 1, 1917.

policy, and then to vote supplies with the utmost possible speed. Any parties which might attempt to go outside the agreed programme were to be voted down "until after the war." Finally, the next meeting of the Reichstag was "to display to foreign countries and to Germany a picture of national unity." The

Reichstag had been effectually muzzled, and on November 1 Count Hertling was formally appointed Imperial Chancellor and Minister President of Prussia.

Thus for the second time in the history of the German Empire the offices of Imperial



**DR. FRIEDBERG,**  
Vice-President of the Prussian Ministry under Hertling.

Chancellor and Minister-President of Prussia were filled by a Bavarian. Prince Hohenlohe, when he succeeded Caprivi in 1894, was 75 years of age; Count Hertling, the seventh Chancellor, was in his 75th year. There was a great difference between the circumstances and meaning of the two appointments. Hohenlohe had regarded the creation of the German Empire as a Liberal gain, and to the best of his ability had represented "South German Liberalism" against the Prussian Junkers and their firm ally, the Catholic Centre Party. Hertling had for years been the leader of the Centre Party in the Reichstag, and he had fought all his life against "Liberalism"—even in opposition to South German Catholicism. Hertling was born at Darmstadt in 1843, and for 13 years, from 1867 to 1880, he was a mere *Privatdozent* at Bonn University, his promotion admittedly being impeded by his strongly ultramontane views. In 1880 he became a Professor at Munich. He had then already been a member of the Reichstag for some years, and he succeeded Dr. Lieber as chairman of the Centre Party, which he dominated until 1912, when he became Minister President of Bavaria. Hertling had an unrivalled knowledge and experience of German politics and German intrigue; but above all he had for nearly 40 years been the chief, although unofficial, representative of Germany at the

Vatican. For a generation he had conducted every important German negotiation with the Pope. His appointment to the Chancellorship was, in the existing situation, very natural. He had a sufficient knowledge of foreign affairs to avoid elementary blunders and to speak with at least an appearance of authority; the selection of a Bavarian was congenial to the non-Prussian States; and, most important of all, he could command the Centre Party in the Reichstag and so make it pretty certain that in all circumstances the Government should command a Parliamentary majority. According to circumstances, he could either keep together the so-called "Reichstag Majority," which consisted of practically the whole Reichstag except the Conservatives on the extreme Right and the Socialist Minority on the extreme Left; or, if it appeared desirable to drive the Radicals and Majority Socialists into opposition, he could rely upon the Centre Party, Conservatives and National Liberals. In the event, Hertling had not the slightest difficulty, during the period reviewed in this chapter, in keeping the "Reichstag Majority" together. Everything combined to ease the situation. First the striking military success of the invasion of Italy, and then the collapse of Russia, the dictation of "peace" in the East, and the



**HERR VON PAYER,**  
German Vice-Chancellor under Hertling.



preparation for a great onslaught upon the Western Powers, favoured reaction in Germany. The controversies which remained from the Bethmann "crisis" in July and the Michaelis "crisis" in October lingered on. But such trouble as there was was superficial and unreal.



[From "Lustige Blätter."

#### "THE TOBOGGAN."

The Reichstag which, while the outlook was anxious and uncertain, had clamoured so loudly for a share in the determination of policy, had no share in the policy ultimately pursued by Kühlmann and the Army leaders against Russia—no share except to approve and to applaud. Yet incessant debates served to keep up democratic appearances, and to provide material for "pacifism" in enemy countries.

As for the interminable Prussian franchise question, the Government at the end of November introduced three "Reform" Bills in the Prussian Diet. First, a Franchise Bill fulfilled, in the letter, the Kaiser's promises of a secret, direct and universal franchise, although the franchise was carefully hedged about and there was to be no redistribution of seats. Secondly, the franchise concession was balanced by an extraordinarily reactionary Bill concerning the composition of the Upper House, carefully devised to secure and entrench Junker domination. A third Bill went still farther, by enabling the Upper House to interfere in the control of finance. These measures provided the politicians and the Press with harmless occupation

during the winter. Their progress was blocked and hampered at every turn, and little progress was made with them, although it became clear that the Government intended ultimately to obtain legislation of some sort—postponing it as long as possible, in order in the end to grant it as a gracious reward to a "victorious" people.

In his first Reichstag speech, on November 29, Count Hertling was able not only to dilate upon the successes against Italy but to announce the Bolshevik proposal of an armistice and a "general peace." He stated his policy thus:—

Our war aims from the first day onwards were the defence of the Fatherland, the inviolability of its territory, and the freedom and independence of its economic life. On that account we could greet cheerfully the peace appeal of the Pope. The spirit in which the answer to the Papal Note was given is still alive to-day, but this answer signifies no licence for a criminal lengthening of the war. For the continuation of the terrible slaughter and the destruction of irreplaceable works of civilization, for the mad self-mutilation of Europe, the enemy alone bears the responsibility, and will have also to bear the consequences. . . .

The German watchword must be—to wait, to endure, to hold out. We trust in God, our righteous cause, our great army leaders. We trust in our fighters on the land, on the sea, and in the air. We trust in the spirit and the moral strength of our people at home. The Army and the country, in harmonious cooperation, will win victory.

At the end of January, 1918, Hertling embarked upon an elaborately hypocritical reply to a speech in which President Wilson had sketched "fourteen points" of peace policy. He expressed amiable devotion to the principle of open diplomacy and abolition of secret agreements, a readiness to discuss limitation of armaments "after the war," and a positive enthusiasm for "freedom of the seas"—especially if "claims to strongly fortified naval bases on important international routes, such as England maintains at Gibraltar, Malta, Aden, Hong-Kong, on the Falkland Islands, and at many other points, were renounced"! For the rest, it will suffice to record Hertling's insolent statements concerning Russia, Belgium and France:—

The Entente States having refused to join in the negotiations within the period agreed upon by Russia and the four allied Powers, I must decline, in the name of the latter, any subsequent interference. The question here involved is one which alone concerns Russia and the four allied Powers. I cherish the hope that, under the conditions of the recognition of the right of self-determination for the nations within the western boundaries of the former Russian Empire, it will be possible to be in good relations with these nations as well as with the rest of Russia, for whom we urgently wish a return of guarantees which will secure a peaceful order of things and the welfare of the country. . . .

As far as the Belgian question is concerned, it has been declared repeatedly by my predecessors in office that at no time during the war has the forcible annexation of Belgium by the German Empire formed a point in the programme of German politics. The Belgian question belongs to a complexity of questions, the details of which will have to be regulated during the peace negotiations. As long as our enemies do not unreservedly adopt the attitude that the integrity of the territory of the Allies offers the only possible foundation for peace negotiations I must adhere to the standpoint which, up to the present, has always been taken, and must decline any discussion of the Belgian question until the general discussion takes place. . . .

The occupied parts of France are a valuable pawn in our hands. Here also forcible annexation forms no part of the official German policy. The conditions and mode of the evacuation, which must take into consideration the vital interests of Germany, must be agreed between Germany and France. I can only once again expressly emphasize that there can never be any question of the separation of the Imperial Provinces. We will never permit ourselves to be robbed of Alsace-Lorraine by our enemies under the pretext of any fine phrases—of Alsace-Lorraine which, in the meantime, has become more and more closely allied internally with German life, which is developing more and more economically in a highly satisfactory manner, and where more than 87 per cent. of the people speak the German mother tongue.

It was at this time a feature of the policy of the Central Powers to allow Austria-Hungary to employ tones milder than those of Berlin, and Count Czernin, the Austrian Foreign Minister, speaking on the same day as Hertling, and in collusion with him, expressed sentiments which were thought to be to some extent more attractive to the Allies and especially to President Wilson. But the intrigue was too obvious, and although the exchange of speeches con-

tinued incessantly, the real situation remained unchanged at the end of three and a half years of war.

As has been said, the German Government made a great effort during the summer of 1917 to promote an International Socialist Conference. After the rejection of the official German "peace offer" at the end of 1916, it was the policy of Berlin to reach enemy countries through any or every "international" channel—Socialist, religious, humanitarian, or even financial. The object was to create "peace atmosphere," to promote peace talk, and to weaken the enemy's "home front." There were many attractions about the idea of a Socialist conference. There was a genuine desire in honest Labour circles everywhere to keep alive the idea of the international solidarity of Labour. Secondly, it was well known in Berlin that British and French opinion was deeply sympathetic to the liberation of Russia, so that it would be difficult to counter any German plan which could be pursued in the name of the Russian Revolution. Again, it admirably suited the German Government to conceal its aims and policy behind an apparently open-minded cooperation with Labour. In the German Socialist Majority the German Government had an excellent and trustworthy tool.

It has been seen (Vol. IX., p. 374) that in



ELEPHANTS FROM THE BERLIN ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS AT WORK FOR THE FATHERLAND



March, 1916, there was an open "split" in the Socialist Party, and that 18 influential Socialists, led by Herr Haase, broke away and formed the "Social Democratic Labour Union." The popular success of this movement was at once considerable, especially in Berlin and other large towns, and all efforts to reunite the Party failed. In September, 1916, a conference of all the Socialists was held in Berlin, the "Labour Union" taking part under protest, and the official party adopting a resolution in favour of continued support of Germany's "defensive war." The official leaders then proceeded to annex for the purposes of their policy practically the whole Socialist Press, which had hitherto, for the most part, adopted the attitude of the "Labour Union"; the Berlin *Vorwärts*, for example, rapidly became hardly distinguishable from any ordinary organ of the German Government. In January, 1917, the "Labour Union" held a rival conference in Berlin, and adopted resolutions which denounced German Socialist policy since the outbreak of war and demanded international cooperation in the interest of "a peace by agreement, in which there shall be neither victors nor vanquished." The official party committee thereupon announced that the members of the "Labour Union" had "separated themselves from the Socialist Party"; in fact, the members of the "Labour Union" were formally expelled. The gulf between the two groups then widened rapidly. The "Labour Union" members of the Reichstag drew up an independent political programme, which they presented to the Reichstag, in the form of a motion, at the end of March. During the first week in April the "Labour Union" convened a conference at Gotha, and the new party was then formally constituted under the name of "Independent Social Democratic Party of Germany." The old party and the new party were, however, commonly known as "the Majority" and "the Minority"—without regard to their actual strength in the country.

The future alone could show whether the "Minority" Socialists, led by Haase, Bernstein, Ledebour and Kautsky, could establish any really effective opposition to the German Government. During the period now under review the new party formed a not unimportant rallying point for what remained of genuine Socialism. But events for the time favoured the militarists, and the Socialist Majority, under Ebert and Scheidemann, having seized the

whole machinery of the old Socialist Party, and enjoying the thinly veiled support of the Government, was able to continue its support of the war without shedding the last pretence of cherishing "international" ideals. A sham Socialism could continue to be, in a phrase of Herr Bernstein's, "the Government's train-bearer." And, unfortunately, there were always some dishonest minds at work abroad ready to represent to the Entente peoples that Herr Scheidemann's base coins were really hard cash.

Almost from the beginning of the Russian Revolution the "Government Socialists" cherished the idea of profitable contact with the Revolutionaries. They were greatly assisted by the fact that, during April, 1917, strikes broke out among munition workers in Berlin and other large centres. To some extent the movement was due to the "infection" of events in Russia, but the chief cause of trouble was shortage of food, and the Government deliberately made the situation worse by a sudden reduction of the bread ration, which was subsequently found to have been quite unnecessary. The strikes were, in any case, a mere demonstration, and they were stopped at once by drastic military threats. But they served as an additional excuse for the Russians to enter into relations with their "German brothers." The introductory negotiations were conducted by a Danish Socialist, M. Borgbjerg, who conveyed messages and suggestions from Herr Scheidemann and his fellow conspirators to M. Kerensky in Petrograd. The subsequent proceedings were conducted under the auspices of a Dutch-Scandinavian Committee, the leading parts being played by the Dutch Socialist, Mr. Troelstra, and M. Camille Huysmans, who, although a Belgian subject, preferred his office as Secretary-General of the defunct Socialist *Internationale* to the more obvious duties of a Belgian citizen. On the other hand, the desire for peace and the desire to restore the international solidarity of Labour won the sympathy of the Ententophil Swedish Socialist, M. Branting, and the movement was greatly assisted, in their various ways, by Mr. Arthur Henderson in England and M. Albert Thomas in France—to say nothing of the "pacifist" leaders in all countries. Here, however, we are concerned only with the actual course of events, chiefly in its bearing upon German policy.

By the middle of May the "Stockholm



[By special permission of the proprietors of "Punch."]

### THE REAL VOICE OF LABOUR.

Tommy: "So you're going to Stockholm to talk to Fritz, are you? Well, I'm going back to France to fight him."

Conference" idea was fully launched, and it remained one of the great political factors during the whole period down to the Bolshevik submission to Germany. Early in July Herr Scheidemann gave an illuminating account in the *Vorwärts* of M. Borgbjerg's first conversations with the Soviet:

The first question which was put to him by the Russian comrades was whether the Imperial Chancellor was in agreement with our declarations. It then

appeared at once how incredibly wrongly people abroad are informed about the position of the German Social Democracy. Borgbjerg explained very thoroughly to the Russian comrades that we had nothing to do with the Chancellor, and that we are neither a Government Party nor a Majority Party.

A further question put by the Russians was whether other parties are of the same opinion as ours. Borgbjerg replied that beyond doubt not inconsiderable sections of the German people thought just as we did.

The Russians asked, further, whether there would be a revolution in Germany in the near future, and whether it was safe to reckon upon that. Borgbjerg replied that



according to his conviction, there would quite certainly be no revolution in Germany during the war. . . . He said that for the Western States only a social revolution could be in question.

Nevertheless the Soviet informed M. Borgbjerg that "his mission had succeeded!" Invitations to Stockholm were then duly issued, and the Allied Governments were faced by the question whether they would permit their subjects to attend. At the end of May the French Socialists decided in favour of accepting the invitation to Stockholm, where representatives of both the German Majority and German Minority had already arrived. But M. Ribot, who was then Prime Minister, promptly

National Seamen and Firemen's Union decided that no British ship should carry British delegates, and the Union's efficient organization actually captured Mr. MacDonald and Mr. F. W. Jowett at the port from which they hoped to sail, and sent them back to London. It was only in the middle of August, after "Stockholm" had produced a political crisis, and Mr. Henderson had resigned office, that the British Government definitely announced a final refusal to grant passports, and the final decision of Great Britain, France, the United States and Italy that peace terms should not be discussed with the enemy until they could



NEUTRAL ORGANIZERS OF THE STOCKHOLM CONFERENCE, 1917.  
Sitting, left to right: Van Kol, Troelstra (Netherlands), Albarda; standing, Stauning (Denmark) and Branting (Sweden).

announced in the Chamber that the French Government would refuse passports. "No," he said, "peace can come only through victory. All our energies must be directed towards hastening victory." The British Government, hampered by many considerations, but especially by the fact that Mr. Henderson was at the moment in Petrograd with almost ambassadorial powers, hesitated, and had actually given a passport to Mr. Ramsay MacDonald for a journey to Petrograd—not, indeed, to Stockholm, but Stockholm was on the way. The situation was saved by the British seamen, who had suffered more than any other single class or calling from German crimes. The

be discussed by the representatives of the whole nation.

Meanwhile the "Stockholm Conference" had dwindled down to a series of meetings between the Dutch-Scandinavian Committee and the delegations from the various Socialist parties and groups in the countries of the Central Powers. The German "Majority" produced a memorandum as full of amiable generalities as any Imperial Chancellor's speech, and distinguished by an emphatic refusal to restore Alsace-Lorraine to France. The German object was perfectly clear, and the German Press had been too excited to conceal it. In August, when it seemed for a

moment that British labour had been captured, the *Vorwärts* exclaimed triumphantly:

According to the utterances of Henderson and others, the English were to go to Stockholm only to champion the cause of the Entente, to shatter Germany's moral



#### RUBBER SHORTAGE IN GERMANY.

Steel springs as substitutes for rubber tyres.

power of resistance, and to facilitate the final victory. But the air of a peace conference is unhealthy for intentions of such a kind, and the opponents of participation were right from their point of view when they expressed the opinion that he who says A must also say B, and that he who goes to a peace conference will not find it easy to come out of it as the apostle of war which he was before.

Or, as an inspired Government writer put it in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* at an earlier stage of the German intrigue:

One must not overestimate the immediate importance of the Stockholm conversations between Labour leaders of the Central Powers and Labour leaders from Russia, and perhaps from other Entente countries. This Conference cannot arrive at decisions which will be politically binding. It could, however, affect feeling among the masses in a manner which will compel consideration on the part of the Governments.

Nor was any secret made of the fact that it was, above all, the British masses that the German Government and its "Socialists" were determined to "affect."

The whole labour situation in Germany was most clearly illuminated by the events which occurred at the close of the period under review. At the end of January, 1918, strikes again broke out in Berlin and in various parts of Germany—but not, it is important to observe, in the principal centres of the munitions industries, which held almost entirely aloof. This time the movement was continued, at any rate in Berlin, for more than a week, but the Government was mainly responsible. The strikes were doubtless promoted by the Socialist Minority, and they were sufficiently popular for the Majority leaders to hesitate about their attitude—or rather, after a little hesitation,

to decide that they should assume control of the strikes, with a view, on the one hand, to improving their Socialist prestige, and, on the other hand, to gaining fresh credit with the Government by putting a speedy end to the disturbance of war work. Meanwhile the Trade Union authorities formally declared their "neutrality"—which meant that there would be no "strike pay," and that prolonged cessation of work would be impossible. In Bavaria, and even at Cologne, for example, the authorities gladly accepted the Socialist leaders' help, and easily arranged matters. Berlin, however, preferred to give a display of militarist "firmness." The Chancellor and other Ministers refused to receive deputations, the police closed the strikers' headquarters and drove them into the street, and the utmost ruthlessness was shown in suppressing such slight disorders as were the natural results. Consequently the whole trouble was quite unnecessarily prolonged, and was triumphantly ended by the machinery of martial law. Once more the whole world rang with foolish stories



[from "Simpliſsimus."]

#### "JOHN BULL'S UNRULY DOGS"

John Bull: "Damn it! The more dogs on my leash the less respect they seem to have for me."

of impending revolution in Germany. Once more it was proved that German Socialism was impotent as well as insincere.

In so far as the strikes had a political meaning, they were due to the belief that the German Government's method of negotiating with the Bolshevists at Brest-Litovsk was imperilling





TO SAVE SHOE-LEATHER: BOYS ON THE WAY TO SCHOOL BAREFOOTED.

the much desired peace. Innocent, ignorant, and also some dishonest, people in Allied countries hastened, therefore, to declare that the German people was exhibiting its hostility to "annexations and indemnities." What happened? The German Government and the German militarists pursued their course. They parleyed with the Bolsheviks until a deadlock was reached. Then they again hurled the German forces against helpless Russia, and dictated an annexationist peace, to the delight of the whole German nation. The Socialist *Vorwärts* led the chorus of denunciation of the Bolsheviks and all their principles and actions, and Herr Erzberger, chief engineer of the crisis and "Peace Resolution" of July, 1917, declared in February, 1918, that the whole political operation had been carried out according to plan!

So much has been said in earlier chapters about the development of the economic situation in Germany during the war that it is not necessary here to discuss in detail the progress of the country's privations. The third winter of the war was extremely severe, and suffering was intense. The hard weather made matters much worse, and, in particular, produced a transport crisis. Diminished man-power and worn out railways meant shortage of coal and

the addition of cold to hunger. But during 1917 the situation as regards food reached a sort of dead level, prophecies that Germany would not be able to hold out until the new harvest were completely falsified, and, if anything, life in Germany as a whole became rather more tolerable. The mild winter of 1917-18 was an immense boon to Germany. Bad though the whole situation was, the sufferings of the people did not become an effective factor which could be capable of upsetting the calculations of the Army Command and the determination of the Government. The result of the Government control was that the burden of suffering was thrown upon the shoulders of the poorest classes in the largest towns, who were least able to bear it, but also least able to rebel. It was the deliberate policy of the Government to provide first for the Army, then for the munitions and other "war" industries, and to leave the municipal authorities to provide, as best they could for the ordinary population of the towns; meanwhile the power of the agrarians always prevented a really exhaustive control of food production at the source. In the winter of 1917-18 the food control broke down badly. The municipalities were forced themselves to break the law and to engage largely in secret trading—buying supplies wherever, and at whatever prices, they could

be obtained, and so playing into the hands of the profiteers. A secret memorandum prepared by the municipal authorities of Neukölln (Berlin) at the end of 1917 shed much light on the prevailing chaos. "The same state of things," it observed, "is to be found, in greater or less degree, in every municipality and in every industrial district. A competition is taking place between the industries and the municipalities, and it is ruthlessly exploited by the profiteers. The profiteers have the special advantage that the parties concerned hide their methods from one another, because they are illegal."

Indeed, one of the most remarkable developments was the general collapse of public and private morality. During the fourth winter of the war crime increased enormously, and in Berlin and most other large towns the police had to be reinforced by a regular service of military patrols. Everybody was trying to make as much as possible out of the war, and the murderers and burglars vied with the more respectable profiteers. The bureaucracy became more and more corrupt, the postal and railway services more and more insecure. As a competent economic writer, Herr Heinz Potthoff, wrote in *Die Hilfe* in January, 1918:

The chief of the crooked paths is bribery. Throughout

broad areas of our economic life bribery of employees has become a recognized trade custom, without which it is impossible to obtain either an order or the delivery of goods. A second method is embezzlement or theft. I should not like to go so far as to say that embezzlement and theft are already recognized as a trade custom, but anybody can see that respect for the property of others has been badly shaken. If a wagon is left for a short time unguarded in the street or on the railway, it is certain to be half plundered. Consignments of food, fuel, and all necessities of which there is a shortage are reckoned as "fair game."

The results of the first four German war loan issues have already been stated—the total being £1,825,705,000. (See Vol. IX., p. 384.) The fifth loan, issued in September, 1916, produced subscriptions to the total amount of £532,000,000. The sixth and seventh war loans, which were issued in the spring and autumn of 1917, together produced £1,281,500,000. Thus the nominal amount of the war loan subscriptions from the beginning of the war down to the end of 1917 was £3,639,205,000. For propaganda purposes great stress was laid upon the apparent consolidation of over 75 per cent. of the German war debt. But even in Germany there were a few critics honest enough to admit the total failure of the German Empire to devise any effective system of taxation or to show any prospect of putting the finances of the Empire on a sound basis: everything depended on the restoration of



REPAIRING BOOTS WITH WOOD.



credit by "winning the war" and forcing enemy countries to accept German commercial dictation. The economic clauses of the "peace" treaties concluded with the Ukraine and with the Bolsheviks were eloquent enough, and after the conclusion of "peace" in the East German statesmen again began to talk openly of the extortion of indemnities in the West.

It has been seen that in the course of 1916 the value of the mark declined in neutral countries by about 30 per cent. The fluctuations in 1917 were extraordinary. They really depended upon the variations in the military

throughout the period under review. Germany was labouring incessantly, in order to throw her whole combined strength, financial, industrial and commercial, into the scales on the very day after the conclusion of the war. A remarkable development in 1917 was the passage of the Bill for the Restoration of the Mercantile Marine. It amounted to the direct grant to the ship-owning companies of the sums necessary for rebuilding Germany's merchant navy. Government representatives candidly stated that this procedure was preferred to the establishment of a direct State monopoly, in order to preserve the apparent



FOOD SHORTAGE IN BERLIN: QUEUE AT A MUNICIPAL POTATO DEPÔT

fortunes of the Central Powers. Bottom was touched in October, 1917, and there was then a sharp recovery as the result of the successes in Italy and the negotiations with Russia. The following interesting table shows the values of the mark in Holland, Denmark, and Switzerland respectively:

	100 florins.	100 kronen.	100 francs.
July 14, 1914 ...	169	112.15	81.30
December 31, 1916 ...	239	163.25	117
March 31, 1917 ...	248	170.25	123.50
October 31, 1917 ...	315	230.25	157
November 30, 1917 ...	290	220.25	158.62
December 22, 1917 ...	226	170.25	125.62

Capitalist and industrialist concentrations and fusions continued on a remarkable scale

independence of the companies with a view to international negotiations. The legislation caused great activity in the shipbuilding industry, and many new yards were established. Germany proposed, so far from paying the penalty of her piracies and murders, to recommence competition on the most advantageous terms for the carrying trade of the world!

As has been shown, German opinion as a whole was characterized during the period under review by a great increase of militarist chauvinism. "Unrestricted" submarine war brought Germany a host of new enemies, but

it relieved her of the need to make further pretence, and, so long as the new enemies were unable to alter the military situation, a position of defiant isolation was stimulating. The overthrow of Russia, Germany's most powerful neighbour, exercised a tremendous effect upon German opinion. Again, heavy blows were struck at Italy, one of the former Allies by whom Germany had been deserted, and the other delinquent, Rumania, was crushed as Belgium and Serbia had been crushed. The result of it all was an intoxicating sense of power, which found expression in countless schemes of conquest, east and west, north and south.

The Pan-German propaganda assumed extraordinary proportions—leagues and associations of all sorts, politicians of every colour, from Conservative and National Liberal to Majority Socialist, poured out endless plans for a German domination of the world. The most remarkable organization, perhaps, was a so-called Fatherland Party, which was headed by the former Secretary of State for the Navy, Grand Admiral von Tirpitz, and backed by unlimited funds. It was the centre of a vast

scheme of Pan-German bribery and corruption, built by the Junkers and industrialists upon their huge profits from the war. They bought many newspapers and bribed many others by means of industrialist advertisements, and they carried on a powerful propaganda in all parts of the country. They advocated German expansion and penetration in all parts of the world, but concentrated especially upon the destruction of Russia, the annexation of Belgium, the seizure of a large colonial empire, and the overthrow of British naval supremacy.

The whole militarist campaign was persistently based upon idolization of Hindenburg and Ludendorff, which assumed forms ever more extravagant. Occasionally the Kaiser was brought forward out of the seclusion to which he was relegated whenever German fortunes seemed doubtful. Take, for example, the productions of a certain Herr Max Beyer, who in the autumn of 1917 was presented to the public as "the German poet." Beyer's avowed ambition was to do for the Kaiser what Goethe had failed to do for Frederick the Great, and to perpetuate the life of the German



FOOD DISTRIBUTION BY THE MILITARY IN A BERLIN SUBURB.



heroes in terms worthy of Homer, the Northern Skaals, or the Bible!

Hindenburg and Ludendorff, Mackensen, the Bavarian Lion of Arras, the heroes in the air and on the sea, ascended like a wreath of stars about our Kaiser's head. When I saw him at the Great Headquarters, he was encircled by iron crosses and airmen's crosses, flashing and scintillating on uniforms of field-grey and sea-blue.



[“Simplissimus,” Oct. 16, 1917.

“ENGLAND’S ANSWER TO THE POPE’S NOTE.”

John Bull: “It is not an Angel of Peace but a Devil of Death that we want to send to Germany.”

To look upon the Kaiser is like looking upon a wonderful autumn day. Think of fields and woods in all their brown fulness, while up above, on the tops of the mountains, there is the first bright, clean, white snow, and above the snow the flashing, blue sunny sky of a wonderful day. Thore from the hand of Nature, you have the faithful picture of the Kaiser as he looks with his great, blue, flashing, but still good-natured, eyes upon a life that has ripened in fulness of work, and looks blameless into the mists of the war.

The full snowy hair is parted boyishly; in freely curling waves it moves as if the sea wind from the Kaiser’s cruises on the seas and at regattas were still playing in it. The forehead is broad, free and high, and burnt in the field up to a line where helmet and field cap have left the lighter shading. Through the brown cheeks often passes a healthy rosy colour. The lips are fine and firm, not too full and not too thin, and the moustache is clipped somewhat shorter than in time of peace. The powerful cut of the cheeks and an energetic chin, adorned, however, with an attractive dimple, complete this Kaiser head, beautiful as a picture, which, side by side with the patriarchal heads of Charles the Great and Barbarossa, will preserve for ever in German Kaiser-history its young-Germanic type.

What this remarkable Byzantine did for the Kaiser, Herr Dernburg, forgetful of his record of espionage and intrigue in America, attempted about the same time to do for the German people:

Steadfastness and righteousness are the qualities which the German people values in the highest degree,

which it has tried to develop most thoroughly, and which have brought it a good and honourable reputation in the whole world. Thus those arts do not fit us which enjoy high appreciation in the war—lies and deception, ambiguity and hypocrisy, intrigue and cunning. When we make experiments in these things we suffer hopeless and brutal failure. Our lies are coarse and improbable, our ambiguity is pitiful simplicity, and our intrigues are without salt and without grace. The history of the war proves this by a hundred examples. That is the very least that must be said of our employment of these immoral weapons which are foreign to our character.

When the war broke out and our enemies poured all these things upon us like a hailstorm, and when we convinced ourselves of the effectiveness of such tactics, the tactics rose in our estimation, and we tried to imitate them. But these tactics will not fit the German. We are rough but moral, we are credulous but honest, we are adroit but inexperienced.\*

Herr Dernburg’s article was one of many indications that the Germans, having exhausted every resource of crime and cunning during the war, were preparing—as a German traveller in Switzerland observed—to “organize sympathy.” When they talked of “peace by understanding,” they meant a peace which would merely throw a thin veil over an actual German victory. A well-known Socialist deputy in the Reichstag, Dr. Paul Lensch, writing in *Die Glocke* in the autumn of 1917, candidly observed that the Central Powers “will be counted the victors if they succeed in preventing any diminution in the extent of their former frontiers, in keeping Alsace-Lorraine, the colonies, and Trent and Trieste, and in refusing their enemies any indemnity.” And he added:

The consequences which such a peace would have for English world-power we have often explained. It would be for Great Britain the greatest defeat in its history and the beginning of its ruin. It is just because people in England are well aware of that that they are resolute for the war and will hear nothing of a peace by understanding. . . . For that very reason, on the other hand, the Central Powers will and can press all the more persistently for such a peace. . . . *Germany will have won the war if she does not lose it, but England will have lost the war if she does not win it.*

So much for the prolonged German “peace” intrigues, which loomed so large in the period from the autumn of 1916 to the spring of 1918. They failed, but German successes in the East increased German appetites and ambitions, and the battles for the freedom of the world were resumed on a still more gigantic scale.

The Pope’s proposals for peace were addressed from the Vatican, August 1, 1917, “to the Heads of the Belligerent Peoples.” The following is a translation of the French text:—

Since the beginning of our Pontificate, amid the horrors of the terrible war let loose on Europe, we

\* From *Deutsche Politik*, September 28, 1917.



1. Captain Kleine, commander of raiding squadron.
2. Putting on life-saving jackets.
3. Packing before the journey.
4. Testing weather and wind.
5. One of the bombs.
6. The squadron at starting-place.



PREPARING FOR AN AIR RAID ON ENGLAND.

*[From German photographs.]*



have kept in mind three things above all: to maintain perfect impartiality towards all the belligerents, as become him who is the common father and who loves with equal affection all his Children; to strive constantly to do to all the greatest possible good, without exception of persons, without distinction of nationality or religion, as is enjoined upon us both by the Universal Law of charity and by the supreme spiritual charge confided to us by Christ; finally, as our pacifying mission equally requires, to omit nothing, as far as might be in our power, that could help to hasten the end of this calamity, by essaying to bring the peoples and their Heads to more moderate counsels and to the serene deliberations of peace—a peace "just and lasting."

Whoever has followed our work during the three sad years just elapsed has been able easily to recognize that, if we have been ever-faithful to our resolve of absolute impartiality and to our beneficent action, we have never ceased to exhort the belligerent peoples and governments to resume their brotherhood, even though all that we have done to achieve this most noble aim has not been made public.

Towards the end of the first year of war we addressed to the nations in conflict the liveliest exhortations, and pointed out, moreover, the path along which a peace, stable and honourable for all, might be attained. Unfortunately our appeal was not heeded, and the war went on desperately, with all its horrors, for another two years; it even became more cruel, and spread, on land, on sea—nay, in the very air; upon defenceless cities, quiet villages, and their innocent inhabitants, desolation and death were seen to fall. And now none can imagine how the sufferings of all would be increased and intensified were yet other months, or still worse, other years, added to this bloody triennium. Shall, then, the civilized world be nought but a field of death? And shall Europe, so glorious and flourishing, rush, as

though driven by universal madness, towards the abyss, and lend her hand to her own suicide?

In a situation so fraught with anguish, in the presence of so grave a peril, we, who have no special political aim, who heed neither the suggestions nor the interests of either of the belligerent parties, but are impelled solely by the feeling of our supreme duty as the common father of the people, by the prayers of our children, who implore from us intervention and our word of peace, by the very voice of humanity and of reason, we raise again a cry for peace, and renew a pressing appeal to those in whose hands lie the destinies of nations. But in order no longer to confine ourselves to general terms, such as were counselled by circumstances in the past, we desire now to come down to more concrete and practical proposals, and to invite the Governments of the belligerent peoples to agree upon the following points, which seem as though they ought to be the bases of a just and lasting peace, leaving to their charge the completion and the more precise definition of those points.

First, the fundamental point should be that the moral force of right should replace the material force of arms; hence a just agreement between all for the simultaneous and reciprocal diminution of armaments, according to rules and guarantees to be established, to the extent necessary and sufficient for the maintenance of public order in each State; then, in the place of armies, the establishment of arbitration with its exalted pacifying function, on lines to be concerted and with sanctions to be settled against any State that should refuse either to submit international questions to arbitration or to accept its awards.

The supremacy of right once established, let every obstacle be removed from the channels of communication between peoples, by ensuring, under rules likewise to be laid down, the true freedom and common enjoyment of the seas. This would, on the one hand, remove



BELLS OF A BERLIN CHURCH TO BE MELTED DOWN FOR MUNITIONS.



**SHORTAGE OF LABOUR IN BERLIN.**  
A Count and his family clearing snow from the road.

manifold causes of conflict, and would open on the other, fresh sources of prosperity and progress to all.

As to the reparation of damage and to the costs of war, we see no way to solve the question save by laying down as a general principle, complete and reciprocal condonation, which would, moreover, be justified by the immense benefits that would accrue from disarmament; all the more, since the continuation of such carnage solely for economic reasons would be incomprehensible. If, in certain cases, there exist, nevertheless, special reasons, let them be weighed with justice and equity.

But these pacific agreements, with the immense advantages they entail, are impossible without the reciprocal restitution of territories now occupied. Consequently on the part of Germany there must be the complete evacuation of Belgium, with a guarantee of her full political, military, and economic independence towards all Powers whatsoever; likewise the evacuation of French territory. On the part of the other belligerent parties, there must be a similar restitution of the German colonies.

As regards territorial questions like those at issue between Italy and Austria, and between Germany and France, there is reason to hope that in consideration of the immense advantages of a lasting peace with disarmament, the parties in conflict will examine them in a conciliatory spirit, taking account, in the measure of what is just and possible, as we have before said, of the aspirations of the peoples, and, as occasion may offer, co-ordinating particular interests with the general weal of the great human society.

The same spirit of equity and justice must reign in the study of the other territorial and political questions, notably those relating to Armenia, the Balkan States, and to the territories forming part of the ancient Kingdom of Poland, to which, in particular, its noble historical traditions and the sufferings endured, especially during the present war, ought justly to assure the sympathies of nations.

Such are the principal bases upon which we believe the future reorganization of peoples should be founded. They are such as to render impossible a return of similar conflicts, and to prepare the solution of the economic question, so important for the future and the material welfare of all the belligerent States. Therefore, in laying them before you, who guide at this tragic hour the destinies of the belligerent nations, we are inspired by a sweet hope—the hope of seeing them accepted and thus of seeing ended at the earliest moment the terrible struggle that appears increasingly a useless massacre. Every one recognises, moreover, that, on the one side and on the other, the honour of arms is safe. Lend, therefore, your ear to our prayer, accept the paternal invitation that we address to you in the name of the Divine Redeemer, the Prince of Peace. Think of your very heavy responsibility before God and men; upon your resolves depend the repose and the joy of innumerable families, the life of thousands of youths, in a word, the happiness of the peoples to whom it is your absolute duty to assure these boons. May the Lord inspire in you decisions in accord with His most holy will. May Heaven grant that, in deserving the plaudits of your contemporaries, you will gain also for yourselves the name of peacemakers among future generations.

As for us, closely united in prayer and penitence with all faithful souls who sigh for peace, we pray that the Divine Spirit grant you light and counsel.

The President of the United States sent the following reply to the Pope; it was published on August 30, 1917:—

Every heart that has not been blinded and hardened by this terrible war must be touched by this moving appeal of his Holiness the Pope, must feel the dignity and force of the humane and generous motives which prompted it, and must fervently wish that we might take





STARS, ORDERS AND MEDALS OF THE ENTENTE POWERS OFFERED FOR SALE IN BERLIN ON BEHALF OF THE GERMAN RED CROSS.

the path of peace he so persuasively points out. But it would be folly to take it if it does not in fact lead to the goal he proposes. Our response must be based upon the stern facts and upon nothing else; it is not a mere cessation of arms he desires; it is a stable and enduring peace. This agony must not be gone through with again, and it must be a matter of very sober judgment what will insure us against it.

His Holiness in substance proposes that we return to the *status quo ante bellum*, and that then there can be a general condonation, disarmament, and a concert of nations based upon an acceptance of the principle of arbitration; that by a similar concert freedom of the seas be established; and that the territorial claims of France and Italy, the perplexing problems of the Balkan States, and the restitution of Poland be left to such conciliatory adjustments as may be possible in the new temper of such a peace, due regard being paid to the aspirations of the peoples whose political fortunes and affiliations will be involved.

It is manifest that no part of this programme can be successfully carried out unless the restitution of the *status quo ante* furnishes a firm and satisfactory basis for it. The object of this war is to deliver the free peoples of the world from the menace and the actual power of a vast military establishment controlled by an irresponsible Government, which, having secretly planned to dominate the world, proceeded to carry the plan out without regard either to the sacred obligations of treaty or the long-established practices and long-cherished principles of international action and honour; which chose its own time for the war; delivered its blow fiercely and suddenly; stopped at no barrier either of law or of mercy; swept a whole continent within the tide of blood, not the blood of soldiers only, but the blood of innocent women and children also and of the helpless poor; and now stands balked but not defeated, the enemy of four-fifths of the world. This power is not the German people. It is the ruthless master of the German people. It is no business of ours how that great people came under its control or submitted to its temporary zest, to the domination of its purpose; but it is our business to see to it that the history of the rest of the world is no longer left to its handling.

To deal with such a power by way of peace upon the plan proposed by his Holiness the Pope would, so far as we can see, involve a recuperation of the strength and renewal of the policy; would make it necessary to create a permanent hostile combination of the nations against the German people, who are its instruments; would result in abandoning the new-born Russia to the

intrigue, the manifold subtle interference, and the certain counter-revolution, which would be attempted by all the malign influences to which the German Government has of late accustomed the world. Can peace be based upon a restitution of its power or upon any word of honour it could pledge in a treaty of settlement and accommodation?

Responsible statesmen must now everywhere see, if they never saw before, that no peace can rest securely upon political or economic restrictions meant to benefit some nations and cripple or embarrass others, upon vindictive action of any sort, or any kind of revenge or deliberate injury. The American people have suffered intolerable wrongs at the hands of the Imperial German Government, but they desire no reprisal upon the German people, who have themselves suffered all things in this war, which they did not choose. They believe that peace should rest upon the rights of peoples, not the rights of Governments, the rights of peoples, great or small, weak or powerful, their equal right to freedom and security and self-government, and to a participation upon fair terms in the economic opportunities of the world, the German peoples, of course, included, if they will accept equality and not seek domination.

The test, therefore, of every plan of peace is this: Is it based upon the faith of all the peoples involved or merely upon the word of an ambitious and intriguing Government on the one hand and of a group of free peoples on the other? This is a test which goes to the root of the matter; and it is the test which must be applied.

The purposes of the United States in this war are known to the whole world—to every people to whom the truth has been permitted to come. They do not need to be stated again. We seek no material advantage of any kind. We believe that the intolerable wrongs done in this war by the furious and brutal power of the Imperial German Government ought to be repaired, but not at the expense of the sovereignty of any people—rather in vindication of the sovereignty both of those that are weak and of those that are strong. Punitive damages, the dismemberment of empires, the establishment of selfish and exclusive economic leagues, we deem inexpedient, and in the end worse than futile, no proper basis for a peace of any kind, least of all for an enduring peace. That must be based upon justice and fairness and the common rights of mankind.

We cannot take the word of the present rulers of Germany as a guarantee of anything that is to endure, unless explicitly supported by such conclusive evidence of the will and purpose of the German people themselves

as the other peoples of the world would be justified in accepting. Without such guarantees, treaties of settlement, agreements for disarmament, covenants to set up arbitration in the place of force, territorial adjustments, reconstitutions of small nations, if made with the German Government, no man, no nation, could now depend on. We must await some new evidence of the purposes of the great peoples of the Central Empires. God grant it may be given soon, and in a way to restore the confidence of all peoples everywhere in the faith of the nations and the possibility of a covenanted peace.

The German Imperial Government sent the following reply, dated from Berlin on September 19:—

Herr Cardinal, your Eminence has been good enough, with your letter of August 2, to transmit to the Kaiser and King, my most gracious master, the Note of his Holiness the Pope, in which his Holiness, filled with grief at the devastations of the world war, makes an emphatic appeal for peace to the heads of the belligerent peoples.

The Kaiser and King has deigned to acquaint me with your Eminence's letter and to entrust the reply to me.

His Majesty has been following for a considerable time with high respect and sincere gratitude his Holiness's efforts in a spirit of true impartiality to alleviate as far as possible the sufferings of the war and to hasten the end of hostilities. The Kaiser sees in the latest step of his Holiness a fresh proof of his noble and humane feelings, and cherishes a lively desire that for the benefit of the entire world the Papal appeal may meet with success.

The effort of Pope Benedict XV. to pave the way to an understanding amongst the peoples might the more surely reckon on a sympathetic reception and whole-hearted support from his Majesty, seeing that the Kaiser, since taking over the Government, has regarded it as his principal and most sacred task to preserve the blessings of peace for the German people and the world. In his first speech from the throne at the opening of the German Reichstag on June 25, 1888, the Kaiser promised that love of the German Army and his position towards it should never lead him into the temptation to cut short the benefits of peace unless war were a necessity forced upon us by an attack on the empire or its allies. The German Army should

safeguard peace for us, and, should peace nevertheless be broken, be in a position to win it with honour. The Kaiser has, by his acts, fulfilled the promise he then made in 26 years of happy rule, despite provocations and temptations. In the crisis which led to the present world-conflagration his Majesty's efforts were, up to the last moment, directed towards settling the conflict by peaceful means. After war had broken out, against his wish and desire, the Kaiser, in conjunction with his high allies, was the first solemnly to declare his readiness to enter into peace negotiations.

The German people supported his Majesty in his efficacious desire for peace. Germany sought within her national frontiers free development of her spiritual and material possessions, and outside imperial territory unhindered competition with nations enjoying equal rights and equal esteem. The free play of forces in the world in peaceable wrestling with one another would have led to the highest perfecting of the noblest human possessions. A disastrous concatenation of events in the year 1914 absolutely broke off the hopeful course of development, and transformed Europe into a bloody battle arena.

Appreciating the importance of the declaration of his Holiness, the Imperial Government has not failed to submit the suggestions contained in it to earnest and scrupulous examination. The special measures which the Government has taken, in the closest contact with the representatives of the German people, to discuss and answer the questions raised prove how earnestly it desires, in unison (*Einklang*) with the desire of his Holiness, and with the peace resolution adopted by the Reichstag on July 19, to find a practical basis for a just and lasting peace.

The Imperial Government welcomes with especial sympathy the leading ideas of the peace appeal, in which his Holiness clearly expresses his conviction that, in the future, the material power of arms must be superseded by the moral power of right. We also are convinced that the sick body of human society can only be healed by the fortifying moral strength of right. From this would follow, according to the view of his Holiness, the simultaneous diminution of the armed forces of all States, and the institution of obligatory arbitration in international disputes. We share the view of his Holiness that definite rules and certain safeguards for the simultaneous and reciprocal limitation of armaments on land and sea and in the air, as well as for the true freedom and community of the high seas



THE BUREAU FOR THE PURCHASE OF GOLD AT HANOVER.



are the things in treating which the new spirit that in future should prevail in international relations should find its first hopeful expression. The task would then immediately arise of deciding international differences of opinion as they emerge, not by the use of armed forces, but by peaceful methods, especially by way of arbitration, the great peace-producing effect of which we, together with his Holiness, fully recognize. The Imperial Government will, in this respect, support every proposal which is compatible with the vital interests of the German Empire and people. Germany, owing to her geographical situation and her economic requirements, has to rely on peaceful intercourse with her neighbours and distant countries. No people, therefore, has more reason than the German people to wish that, instead of universal hatred and battle, a conciliatory and fraternal spirit should prevail between the nations.

If the nations, guided by this spirit, will recognize to their salvation that the important thing is to lay more stress upon what unites them, than upon what separates them in their relations, they will also succeed in settling individual points of conflict which are still undecided in such a way that conditions of existence which will be satisfactory to every nation will be created, and thereby a repetition of the great world-catastrophe would appear to be impossible. Only on this condition can a lasting peace be founded which will promote a spiritual rapprochement and a return of human society to economic prosperity.

This serious and sincere conviction encourages our confidence that our enemies also may see in the ideas submitted for consideration by his Holiness a suitable basis for approaching nearer to the preparation of a future peace under conditions corresponding to the spirit of reasonableness and to the position of Europe (*die Lage Europas*).

The King of Bavaria sent the following separate reply, dated from Munich on September 21:—

Most holy Father! Your Holiness, in your Note of August 2 of the current year, addressed a solemn appeal to the heads of the States of the countries at war, with the object of ending the horrors of this fearful war by a just and lasting peace and of restoring peace to the world. Your Holiness has shown me the high favour of allowing this deeply significant document to reach me also, for which I beg to tender my most sincere thanks.

I read the words of your Holiness with the deepest emotion. In every sentence of this Note, dedicated to the preparation of peace, there speaks the burning and earnest zeal of your Holiness, as the representative of the divine Prince of Peace, to restore to suffering humanity

the blessings of peace. In this way your Holiness is crowning in the noblest manner the work which your Holiness has set before yourself from the first day of your pontificate; namely, by all-embracing fatherly love and impartiality as far as possible to shorten the horrors of this conflict of the peoples and to mitigate the sufferings of the war. Your Holiness may certainly count on the everlasting thanks of all humanity for this indefatigable noble work. Every step which your Holiness has undertaken for the preparation of a peace lasting and honourable for all parties has been followed with the most heartfelt sympathy by me and by His Majesty the German Kaiser and King of Prussia, and all the other German Federal Princes, as by the whole German people. History proves that the German nation, since the founding of the German Empire, has had no other and no more eager wish than to cooperate in peace and honour in the solution of the highest tasks of human culture with all its might, and to dedicate itself to the unhindered development of its economic life. Nothing could lie farther from the peace-loving German nation and its Government in pursuing this task, than the thought of an attack on other nations and the effort to extend its territory by violence. For no victory and no gain of territory could in its eyes, even in the most distant degree, counterbalance the fearful horrors of a war and the annihilation of ethical and economical values necessarily connected with it. The policy of the German Kaiser and of the Imperial Government, conducted in entire agreement with the German Federal Governments, which always had in view the preservation and assurance of peace often to the very limit of what was compatible with German interests, therefore met always with the fullest approval of the German nation and its chosen representatives. Not until Germany was obliged to consider her very existence threatened, when the German nation saw itself with its loyal allies attacked on all sides, there was no other choice but to fight with the exertion of all its forces for honour, liberty, and existence.

But even during this unexampled war which was forced on us, and which has now been raging for more than three years, the German Government has given unequivocal proofs of its readiness for peace, and, indeed, quite especially by the solemn challenge addressed to our enemies in union with our allies as long ago as the end of the year 1916, to enter on peace negotiations. If this first serious attempt at making an end to the horrors of war failed, the responsibility for the failure falls on our enemies, who entirely refused to consider the proposal. All the more earnest are the wishes which I, as well as the German Kaiser, and as well as the whole German nation, cherish for the success of the step now undertaken by your Holiness, so that by it a lasting peace, honourable for all parties, may be prepared in the interests of the whole world. I have the honour to sign myself the entirely obedient son of your Holiness.



## CHAPTER CCXXXI.

# THE THIRD BATTLE OF YPRES (I.).

PREPARATIONS FOR THE COMBINED ALLIED OFFENSIVE—AIR AND COUNTER-BATTERY WORK—THE NEW SYSTEM OF DEFENCE—"PILL-BOXES" AND CRATERS—GOUGH'S FIFTH ARMY—THE GERMAN FRONT FROM THE LYS TO STEENSTRAAT—THE FRENCH FRONT—OPENING OF THE BATTLE ON JULY 31, 1917—INITIAL GAINS—PILKEM CAPTURED—ST. JULIEN—POMMERN REDOUBT—THE SECOND ARMY'S ATTACK—RESULTS OF FIRST DAY—BAD WEATHER—FURTHER OPERATIONS TO AUGUST 15—THE THREAT TO LENS—HILL 70.

**B**Y the middle of July, 1917, the arrangements for the Allied advance from their left flank, in which British, French and Belgian troops were to cooperate, were nearing completion. The preliminary steps which were to prepare the way for the offensive advance were therefore begun.

The first of these was, as usual, to overwhelm the lines to be assaulted by artillery fire. For under modern conditions it is impossible for infantry to carry by frontal attack the enemy's trenches unless the access to them has been cleared of the wire entanglements placed before them and his artillery fire has been largely diminished. Both these tasks need accurate and destructive fire. The modern artillery position is not an open one from which the gunner lays his gun directly on the target; it is a covered one, defiladed from view, so that the guns are not directly exposed to hostile fire. Guns in such positions must, to correct their fire, know exactly where each projectile falls. Forward observing positions on the ground may, if circumstances be favourable, do something to help the gun-layers. But obviously the number of such positions must often be relatively small. The country will not always afford sufficient of them, and they are liable to be snuffed out by hostile fire. But in the aviator modern artillery possesses a coadjutor who is far better than any groundling

observer. The man in the aeroplane has a purview which embraces a wide range of country, and looking down on the hostile guns he can note their position, and even if they are silent nearly always ascertain their emplacements from various indications which clearly disclose them to the trained observer. He can watch the fall of the shells from his own side's guns and by wireless telegraphy send back information as to range and deflection which will enable the gun-layers to correct their aim.

This alone will enable the latter, in the words of Sir Douglas Haig, "to carry out successfully a methodical and comprehensive programme." But before all this can be undertaken, the enemy's aeroplanes must be mastered to a large extent, so as to allow our own fairly free passage over the hostile lines. This task was successfully accomplished, and so effective did it make our fire that the Germans commenced to draw many of their guns back to more retired positions of greater safety. And it must be remembered that every retirement of this kind reduces the efficacy of the fire of the guns, for they cannot so well act in support of their infantry from the increased ranges.

July 25 had been originally selected for the assault. To give the opportunity to our airmen to locate exactly the German new gun positions and also allow time for our



artillery to bring their weapons to closer, and therefore more effective, ranges, a delay of three days was granted. But unexpected difficulties arose in bringing some of the artillery forward, and for some days the visibility was so bad as to interfere materially with aerial observation. The opening day for the infantry was therefore postponed till the 31st. During this time the enemy was freely subjected to raids and to extensive gas attacks.

On July 27 our airmen engaged till dark in very earnest fighting and obtained many successes. With a loss to ourselves of only

railways, and an ammunition depôt were successfully bombed. July 29 was not favourable to work in the air after 10 a.m., when a severe and sudden thunderstorm prevented further flying. Nevertheless, four German aeroplanes were shot down and two others were seen to fall out of control. But many of our aviators were caught in the storm and six of our machines failed to return, of which four owed their fate to the weather. The next day there was, owing to atmospheric conditions, very little work done in the air. Still, on the whole, we had accounted for 67 aeroplanes and 20 obser-



*[Belgian official photograph.]*

#### BELGIAN ANTI-AIRCRAFT MACHINE-GUNS ON THE DUNES.

three machines, 15 of the Germans were driven headlong to the ground and 16 more were seen to descend out of control. During the night important railway stations and two aerodromes were bombed. During daylight a number of bombing raids were carried out and much photographic and observing work for the artillery accomplished. The aerial combat was continued without interruption. Sixteen of the enemy's aeroplanes and two observation balloons were destroyed and 14 more driven to the ground out of control. On the other hand, 13 of our machines failed to come back. During the night operations were carried on behind the German lines. An aerodrome, two important

observation balloons, incurring a loss of 22 of our own machines.

Raids also had been continuously and successfully carried on during the period of preliminary bombardment. On July 25 the German headquarters reported that the artillery fire had increased to the greatest intensity. Under its cover on the previous day four British raids brought in 114 prisoners. On the 25th further raids at many points brought a considerable number more. Against this the Germans could only set off the capture of a few advanced posts on Infantry Hill, east of Monehy. The 26th was marked by a successful raid near Armentières and the

capture of La Basse Ville near Warneton, in which 29 prisoners were taken. But a counter-attack of the Germans against the last named point compelled our advanced detachments to retire to their old positions. The village was not definitely captured by us until the forward movement of the 31st. On the 27th and 28th there was considerable British raiding activity, especially around Ypres and in the Hindenburg line south of the Scarpe. Near Roeux 30 prisoners were captured. Altogether in the neighbourhood of Ypres over 200 German prisoners were taken during the week. July 29 saw a raid near the Belgian coast and some patrol encounters near Arras. The minor operations were slackening off to make room for the great endeavour which was to begin on July 31.

During the preliminary measures, careful observation was kept on the Germans lest they should endeavour to withdraw to a rearward position before the Allies had delivered their stroke against their front line. The object of the Allied Commanders was not merely to occupy an abandoned position but to kill and capture the enemy in it before he could evade the blow.

On July 27 it was discovered that he had given up a portion of his forward defences opposite the northern end of the Fifth Army front and behind the Yser Canal, either because they afforded but feeble shelter from our artillery or because he feared that we were

again going to move our armies against him. British Guards and French troops were therefore pushed forward over the canal and took firm hold of the enemy's first line and its support trenches on a front of about 3,000 yards east and north of Boesinghe. The German counter-attacks all failed and our troops were able during the night to complete 17 bridges over the canal, which rendered it easy to reinforce our troops holding the newly conquered position and greatly simplified any further advance, ensuring the easy passage of the canal, which had hitherto been a formidable obstacle.

The German lines at the section to be attacked—viz., from the valley of the Lys across the eastern slopes of the Messines-Wytschaete ridge to the Yser canal, a distance roughly of 15 miles—were mostly constructed on a different system from that with which our troops had hitherto had to deal. The result of the fighting during 1916 and the first six months of 1917 was held by the Germans to prove the vulnerability of the method of placing their dug-outs for the garrisons of the front trenches immediately under the parapets. One of two things constantly happened; either they were destroyed by the preliminary artillery fire when not deep down, or, if they were not, they formed mere traps for the men, who often would not come out of them to man the parapets and were subsequently taken prisoners. Nothing is more common in the description of our



FRENCH OBSERVATION BALLOON PREPARING TO ASCEND.



assaults than the account of some dug-out from which part of the garrison came out with hands up while the rest who did not surrender were destroyed by bombs thrown down among them.

The deductions made from their experience by the German Commanders were embodied in an Army Order published on June 30. It began by laying down as a general principle that the value of the defences depended largely on success of the precautions taken to cover them from observation, especially by the hostile aviators. In place of the old system of continuous lines which clearly marked out the position, it was laid down that the ground held should be organized in a deep zone of several lines, the most advanced of which was to be broken up into sections with spaces between them. It was to be based on the shell craters or other unobtrusive cover, affording little centres of resistance, in which were ensconced a few men with machine-guns.\* It was thought that these were not so open to view as a trench line, and being disposed more or less chequer-wise would form a number of points from which not only direct but also a flanking fire could be brought to bear on hostile troops attempting to

\* In German these are called *Trichternester*—i.e. crater nests.

penetrate between them. These organizations might be extended to a depth of a thousand to two thousand yards. The front of this portion of the German position was to be covered by a continuous and powerful wire entanglement of irregular form, and this was also constructed in parts of the line of defence in directions more or less perpendicular to the front, so as to check troops breaking through the front obstacle and compel them to move in directions in which they would be exposed to fire. Any existing shelters were to be made use of to cover infantry intended to act as supports or to be used for counter-attacks. Where no shelters were available these troops were to find cover in shell craters, woods, and hollows, or in any place which would give them cover from view.

The Germans appear at this time to have made the discovery known in England since the War of 1870 that villages were not suitable for obstinate defence. They form easily visible targets, while their comparatively solid structured houses of brick or stone are excellent for ensuring the bursts of high explosive shells with percussion fuses. The Germans hoped that their advanced line of defended shell craters would serve to split up the Allies' assaults and render easy the concentration of counter-



OLD GERMAN LINE IN A CANAL BANK.

[French official photograph.]



TYPES OF GERMAN CONCRETE DEFENCES.

attacks against the divided party. But it did not constitute their main line of resistance. This was to be composed of at least three lines of continuous trenches roughly about 500 yards or somewhat less apart, established whenever possible on the reverse slope of the crest line occupied by the advanced line. The front of the whole of this organization was to be protected by a deep and powerful wire entanglement with intervals here and there to allow the reserves to come up through them for counter-attack. Of the three lines of trenches the first was only provided with shelters, shallow in character and at fairly wide intervals, for about one-sixth of the garrison. In the second and third lines the dug-outs were to be more numerous and much deeper. This threefold line of trenches formed a strong position for the troops holding it and served to cover the artillery stationed behind it. If thought necessary, a second similar position might be established still farther back, in case the Germans were driven out of the first one. This system of defence was largely employed in Flanders and there were found scattered along the three lines those "pill-boxes" which formed security for machine-guns and which, so long as they were not destroyed, constituted formidable points difficult to be dealt with by infantry alone.

It will be seen that the new system was based mainly on the idea that it was not well to depend on a highly organized rigid front-line, which experience showed was always annihilated by artillery fire, but to employ a plan which would

break up the attacking force when it was advancing into separated masses and then overwhelm these by counter-attacks of superior number before our troops had time to organize the position won for defence.

The whole system was not very successful and the reason is clear. Once the wire entanglements which covered the lines of held craters were destroyed the little groups in the latter were not likely to offer any prolonged resistance. Numbers give a feeling of confidence and the small pockets of men were often too much engrossed with their own safety to offer the determined resistance expected of them. Moreover, the advanced line troops had very little cover from fire even if they had fair cover from view, and a heavy shrapnel fire thrown over the zone they occupied, and which was certain to be more or less revealed to the Allied artillery by the observing aeroplanes and balloons, generally sufficed to take the heart out of them.

A large proportion of the advanced line garrison was therefore killed or wounded and in fact became incapable of great resistance. It was a difficult thing for the Commanders of the main line to judge when to send up reserves to counter-attack; when they did they were liable to the heavy losses involved in moving over open ground. If they did not, the arrival of the demoralized refugees from the advanced line did not tend to improve the *moral* of the troops who witnessed the arrival of the defeated units. General Haig's observation on their new method of defence was that early in the



autumn the Germans had already recognized its failure and "were endeavouring to revert to their old practice of holding their forward positions in strength." It was doomed to failure from the first because it assumed that a small part of the infantry would suffice to stop the assault, whereas it is certain that to beat off an attack it is absolutely necessary to employ superior rifle-power, whether this be obtained from rifles or machine-guns.



#### PLAN OF GERMAN DEFENSIVE ORGANIZATION

As carried out in Flanders.

The assailant to win must drive the enemy out of his position and hold it. This can only be done by infantry. No matter how great the effect of the artillery fire is, there always comes a time when the infantry must crown the fire-engagement by its own power. This can only be done by superior numbers. From first to last in all fighting it is, in the language of Sir Charles Napier, "the stern determination to close with the bayonet" which finally settles the issue of the fight. The theory of the Germans sounds plausible because if it were successful it would have been less costly in life. It was, however, a failure because men are men

and not automata, and when our troops obtained their initial success, the counter-attacks were rarely strong enough to stop them. The assaulting troops had the advantage of first blood and were, to use a colloquialism, "bucked up" by it; the counter-attacking troops had to retrieve a defeat and were therefore not so eager in the fray and were often employed too late to do much good. It requires a very wise Commander to feel the pulse of battle so accurately as to be able to seize the exact psychological moment to pass from the defensive to the offensive.\*

The sketch given herewith shows the arrangement of the position for defence theoretically. It will be observed that not all the shell craters were garrisoned. When unoccupied they were usually girdled with entanglements of barbed wire to render it impossible for the attacking troops to find shelter in them. Local supports were kept close up, available at once to deal with the on-coming assailants. Other reserves (not shown on the map) were kept farther back. Briefly put, the organization was in depth to allow of repeated counter-attacks, on which the main strength of the defence was to rest. It was also intended to hide as much as possible from our aviators the position held by distinguishing its front elements as little as possible from the aspect of No Man's Land.

The "pill-box," of which mention has already been made in Chapters CCIX. and CCXXIV., was destined to play a much larger part in Flanders than it had in previous operations. In a country where water was found so close to the surface, deep trenches were very often impossible, and the flanking constructions which were so constantly seen on the ridges near the Ancre could not be constructed. Recourse was therefore had to the so-called pill-box, a structure of concrete (some of reinforced concrete), with wide horizontal loopholes, which swept the ground to the front and to the sides. Of considerable thickness on the sides liable to attack, and with soil drawn up almost to the level of the loopholes, they formed scarcely visible objects which were difficult for the artillery to hit. Their domed roofs would deflect many shells, and although it was true that a direct hit from a large shell would demolish them or sometimes overturn them when small, still shells of small calibre had very little effect on the larger structures.

\* The greatest exponent of this difficult tactical operation was undoubtedly the Duke of Wellington.

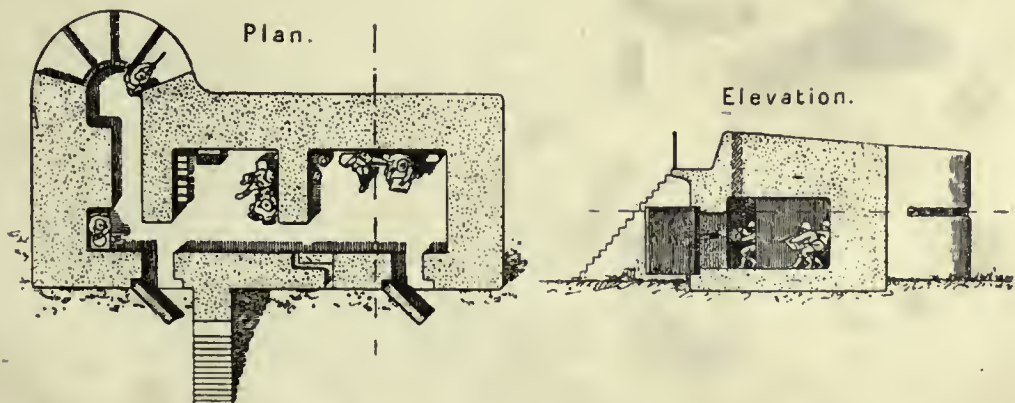


GERMAN CONCRETE "PILL-BOX" IN FLANDERS, WITH NARROW HORIZONTAL LOOP-HOLE GIVING A WIDE FIELD OF FIRE.

But another point militated against these erections—viz., that even the garrisons of the larger, when exposed to really heavy artillery, were, when still alive, often terribly demoralized by the heavy concussions of the impinging shells. In the smaller structures they suffered more than in the bigger. The high explosive shells inflicted such terrible blows that the garrisons were, after a prolonged period of successive hits, so unnerved that they could no longer work their machine-guns and were often found lying about with expressionless faces, bleeding from nose and ears.

The plan of one of the larger structures is given below.

In practice the pill-boxes were not found to be so impregnable as the Germans hoped. They were often put out of action by artillery fire and were not very difficult to capture by parties of good marksmen, stalking them and keeping up an accurate and rapid rifle-fire on the loopholes, while others worked round to the rear and bombed through the bolt holes provided in them. But they had to be taken when so placed that they flanked the British lines of approach as they stopped the advance till this was done. On the other hand, when the



PLAN AND ELEVATION OF A GERMAN "PILL-BOX" OF THE TYPE REPRESENTED ABOVE.





MAP OF THE COUNTRY AROUND YPRES.





[Official photograph.]

## YPRES IN 1917.

German counter-attacks came up, the accurate fire of the British infantry constantly told with such effect that their formations were dissolved and beaten back before they were able to close, and this, too, often without the aid of an artillery barrage.

The German artillery was also reorganized to meet the new methods. Numbers of emplacements were constructed in addition to those primarily occupied by the guns, to which the latter could be moved during the fighting, or which served for batteries brought up from the rear.

The proportions of the various guns employed were approximately as follows :

HORSE OR TRACTOR BATTERIES.	Per cent.
15 cm. howitzers ... ..	53
21 cm. mortars ... ..	20
10 cm. guns ... ..	17
12 cm. „ ... ..	3
13 cm. „ ... ..	4
15 cm. „ ... ..	3
POSITION BATTERIES.	
15 cm. howitzers ... ..	53
21 cm. mortars ... ..	20
10 cm. guns ... ..	8
12 cm. „ ... ..	8
13 cm. „ ... ..	3
15 cm. „ ... ..	10
LONG RANGE BATTERIES.	
Howitzers or mortars ... ..	25
Guns ... ..	75

It will be observed how large a proportion of the first two categories consists of 15 cm. (5·9 in.) howitzers, which have so often come into notice. It fires combined shell, *i.e.*, one which, to some extent, plays the part of both shrapnel and high explosive common shell. Of the long range batteries no such precise details can be given; they were composed of many descriptions of heavy weapons up to those of 16-in. calibre.

For each 1,000 yards of front to be defended the High Command should have had at its disposal an average of between five and seven batteries for barrage purposes, several of these,

if possible, being composed of heavy guns, and between four and six heavy batteries (one or two of which, at least, were to be long-range gun batteries), for purposes other than that of the barrage. This worked out at about one gun to every 20 yards. The front given to the infantry division (roughly 10,000 men) was one of 2,500 to 3,500 yards, or between three and four men per yard for active defensive purposes.

The duties of German artillery were defined as follows when an attack was anticipated :

- (1) Counter-battery work throughout the period of the artillery preparation.
- (2) Sniping fire every night during the same period on roads, railways, camps, etc.
- (3) On the last night but one before the supposed day of the attack heavy fire of gas shells on certain groups of batteries.
- (4) On the morning of the attack very heavy counter-preparation fire for half an hour on the trenches where the attacking troops were assembled.

In the case of the fighting in Flanders the German practice did not come up to German theory; they failed to hold our batteries, which obtained a distinct superiority and kept down by their fire that of their opponents.

In the following pages the descriptions given will show the German system under the test of action.

The total front to be attacked by the Allies measured some 15 miles, and stretched from the River Lys opposite Deulement northwards to Steenstraat. But the whole of this line was not equally strongly attacked; the main assault was the task allotted to the Fifth Army along the line from the Zillebeke-Zandvoorde road to Boesinghe inclusive. This front measured seven and a half miles, and to deal with it General Sir Hubert Gough, who commanded the Fifth Army, was given four Army Corps—*viz.*, the XIVth, the XVIIIth, the XIXth and the IInd.



Born on August 12, 1870, Sir Hubert was turning 47 years of age. He came of a fighting family, the most illustrious member of whom had been Field-Marshal Viscount Gough, the Peninsular veteran and conqueror of the Punjab. He himself was the eldest son of



*Official photograph.*

#### THE KING OF THE BELGIANS AND GENERAL GOUGH

At the entrance of an old German dug-out.

General Sir Charles John Stanley Gough, an eminent Anglo-Indian soldier who had fought in the Sikh War of 1848-9 at the desperately contested Battles of Chillianwallah and Goojerat, and who in the Indian Mutiny had gained the V.C., served in the trenches before Delhi and assisted at the capture of Lucknow. Subsequently Sir Charles Gough had distinguished himself in the Bhootan Expedition of 1864-5 and the Afghan War of 1878-80. Educated at Eton, Sir Hubert, like his brother John, adopted his father's profession. Having passed through Sandhurst, he joined the 16th Lancers in 1889. It was natural that he should be a cavalryman. His father in the Indian Mutiny had won the V.C. for leading two daring

cavalry charges and engaging in personal combat with the leaders of the rebel horsemen. Appropriately enough, Sir Hubert first saw service in the field in India. Promoted Captain in 1894 he was attached to Brigadier-General Gaselee, commanding the 2nd Brigade of the 1st Division of the Tirah Field Force during the campaign of 1897-8. He was present at the capture of the Sampagha and Arhanga Passes and in the operations against the Khani Khel Chamkanis and the Afridis of the Bazar Valley.

When the South African War broke out, Gough, still a captain, proceeded to the seat of war as a Special Service Officer. He took part in the actions of Colenso and Spion Kop. A few days after Buller's failure at the last-named position, Gough was given the command of a regiment of Mounted Infantry. He fought in the actions of Vaal Kranz, the Tugela Heights, and Pieter's Hill. Scouting ahead of Dundonald he was one of the first to enter Ladysmith when it was relieved. Subsequently he accompanied Buller in his advance through Natal. He and his mounted infantry were engaged in the actions of Laing's Nek (June 6-9, 1900), and of Alleman's Nek two days later, which led to our forces from Natal entering the Transvaal a week after Roberts had occupied Pretoria. At the beginning of 1901 Gough's mounted infantry, 280 strong, formed part of Brigadier-General Dartnell's column, one of the five columns operating under French against Botha in the Eastern Transvaal. Increased to 600, his regiment in the summer was attached to Colonel Bullock's column. During September he was brought back by General Lyttelton from Kronstad to the Natal frontier at De Jager's Drift. At this moment Botha was threatening to make an incursion into Natal.

On September 17, 1901, Gough attempted to surprise a body of Boers at Blood River Poort. When the surprise seemed certain to succeed, he was suddenly attacked by 500 Boers who had lain concealed. They galloped across the British front, gained open ground, wheeled and charged down upon the flank and rear of Gough's right-hand company. Gough lost his guns. Six officers and 38 men were killed or wounded, and six other officers and 235 men were taken prisoners. "This," observes Mr. Amery in *The Times History of the War in South Africa*,\* "was the first occasion

\*Vol. V., pp. 340-1.



[Official photograph.]

AMMUNITION GOING UP TO THE GUNS THROUGH THE OLD GERMAN LINES  
IN FLANDERS.

on which the Boers of the Eastern Transvaal used their new charging tactics with decisive effect."

Gough, who had been severely wounded in the course of the campaign, was mentioned four times in dispatches for his services and received the Queen's medal with five and King's medal with two clasps. On returning home he was appointed Brigade-Major of the 1st Cavalry Brigade of the 1st Army Corps at Aldershot. In 1904 he became an Instructor at the Staff College. Two years later (1907) he succeeded to the command of the 16th Lancers. In 1911 (January 1) he received the command of the 3rd Cavalry Brigade at the Curragh, where he diligently trained his troopers for the exigencies of European warfare. His name was prominently before the public during the Home Rule crisis immediately preceding the outbreak of hostilities in August 1914.

When the Expeditionary Force landed in France Gough was at the head of his Brigade. During the retreat from Mons he routed a column of German cavalry led by the Uhlans of the Prussian Guard. Before the Battle of the Marne he was given the command of the 3rd and 5th Cavalry Brigades. Therefor-

ward his promotion was rapid. At the Battle of Loos the 1st Corps was under him and at the Battle of the Somme he directed the 5th Army, which in May 1917 had the onerous task of assaulting, in company with Allenby's right wing, the enemy's positions round Bullecourt.

Gough's Fifth Army was, in the operations now under consideration, to be supported by General Plumer's Second Army, composed of the Xth, the IXth and the II<sup>nd</sup> Anzac Corps. Its task was limited; it was only to advance a short distance, but by doing so it would shield the right flank of the Fifth Army, and by lengthening the line attacked by the British, would render it more difficult for the enemy to determine where the main blow was to be delivered. It would weaken the artillery fire against the Fifth Army by causing the Germans to divert part of it to deal with the Second Army.

The objective of the opening attack was intended to be the crest of the high ground east of Ypres, which would form a strong position for the flank in subsequent operations and would cover the bridges over the Steenbeek. The French First Army was to advance on the left of the British Fifth Army, and in close



contact with it, thus protecting it from counter-attack from the north. This operation involved a prolonged movement over difficult country and would involve the capture of the whole peninsula lying between the Yser Canal and the flooded country of the St. Jansbeek and Martje Vaart. The advance of the British Fifth and the French First Armies was to be by a series of bounds from one defined line to another, having regard to the lines of German defences and the configuration of the ground.

The front held by the French before the attack only extended some five miles from the north of Nordschoote to Boesinghe. The ground to the north of this formed an impassable morass which had been made by the Belgians as described in Volume III., Chapter LXIII. The paved *chaussée* of Reninghe-Nordschoote-Drie Grachten ran on a bank which kept above the water level. Into this marsh ran the Kemmelbeek, the Yperlee, and the Martje Vaart. Between Nordschoote and Maison du Passeur the hostile lines were a considerable distance apart, being separated from one another by ground which was mostly under water. At the Maison du Passeur there was an outpost on the east side of the Yser Canal connected with the west bank by a footbridge. From this point to Steenstraat the hostile trenches were about 200 to 300 yards apart. From Steenstraat to Boesinghe the canalized Yser, running from Ypres, formed the dividing

line. Here the German trenches, although constructed on fairly dry ground, were but little above the water level. Hence the parapets had had to be constructed entirely as epanlements. Nor was it possible to construct the shot-proof observation stations from which to regulate the fire to the front. The position was, therefore, one which was peculiarly liable to surprise.

Facing the British attack the Crown Prince Rupprecht had the 4th, 6th Reserve, the 10th and the 16th Bavarian Divisions, the 3rd Guard, the 23rd Division, and seven others, including the 25th (Hessian) Division and the 235th.

During July 30 the weather, which had hitherto been fine, broke. After heavy thunderstorms in the morning, rain fell almost continuously during the day, and at night there was still a slight drizzle at intervals.\* When the troops advanced there was a thick mist and an overcast sky which obscured the landscape. At the appointed moment the artillery, which had died down somewhat, redoubled its fury, and a continuous bombardment was carried on over a long stretch of country by no means limited to the actual length attacked. The incessant flashes and the fire-light from the bursting shells, the coloured rockets and flares thrown up by the

\* There was only one fine day between July 30 and August 6, and that was misty.



“BURSTING SHELLS, ROCKETS, AND FLARES.”



[Official photograph.]

## BRITISH TROOPS CROSSING A CANAL IN FLANDERS.

enemy feverishly demanding reinforcements, gave a pale and flickering illumination over the scene. The attack was timed to commence at ten minutes to four on the morning of July 31, but before the troops started a volley of oildrums and thermit to set them on fire was discharged against the first German line, while an accurate artillery barrage covered the assaulting infantry. Little difficulty was met with in carrying the defended craters, which presented no great obstacle to a determined attack. Occasionally it was found that some had been inadvertently passed by, and that when our troops had moved on the machine-gunners in them would take the assaulting troops in rear. It was as a rule neither a long nor difficult matter to snuff these out.

To the north of Ypres French and British troops carried the whole German first line without a check, and then pushed on towards the enemy's second line in accordance with orders. At this part of the line the advance was complicated by the Yser Canal which had to be passed. But on the 27th, as we have seen, it had become possible to occupy the far bank of the canal, and in the next two days the French threw 39 and the English 17 bridges over it, many of them under fire. Passing over these the French, with the British Guards and the Welsh regiments on their right, hardly hindered by the swampy low-lying ground which seriously hampered the men, carried Steenstraat and

the German first line with little difficulty and then moved forward. The Guards aimed at Pilkem and its defence to the north, the Welsh regiments advanced against the south and south-west of the village.

The village of Pilkem was a position of considerable strength. Outside it there was a trench 10 feet wide and 12 feet deep, with solid concrete shelters of a very powerful kind, while the wreckage of the village had been transformed by concrete into strong works which afforded considerable shelter even from heavy shells, and in which were collected large supplies of ammunition for the use of the garrison. South of the village and connected with it by trenches were two advanced posts known as Gallwitz Farm and Maekensen Farm. East of Pilkem was another called Zouave House. All these points were strongly held and heavily fortified and their capture was no light task.

The garrison of Pilkem consisted of the Guard Fusilier regiment with some other units. All three battalions of the Guard Fusiliers were in the village—the first in the front line, the second in support, and the third in reserve behind. They had only been in two days and were fresh, yet the two foremost battalions were completely crushed by our guns and by the Welsh attack and offered scarcely any resistance. The third did little better. Of the 630 prisoners whom the Welshmen took, over 500 were "Coekchafers," the nickname for the





THE CROSSING OF THE YSER CANAL BY THE FRENCH: THE ATTACK ON THE ENEMY'S POSITIONS.

Guard Fusilier Regiment, the remainder coming chiefly from the 9th Grenadiers, and the 3rd battalion of the Lehr Regiment, with a few from other units.

Two Welsh battalions, one of the Welsh Fusiliers, attacked from the south and south-west, while another of the Welsh regiment was on the right of the Fusiliers. More to left of this attack the British Guards moved to the attack of the defence of Pilkem, springing from the north of the village. The attack was made with great vigour, and being of a somewhat encircling nature, the Germans found the Welshmen spreading round their flank and rear, thus threatening their line of retreat. The artillery barrage guided the men in the semi-darkness. At Mackensen Farm they captured some prisoners and a large store of ammunition, rockets, Vérey lights, and trench mortars. On the left the Welsh Fusiliers, fighting along the south side of the railway line to Thorout, found some resistance but captured the "Zouave House" and took a few prisoners. But there was no really serious check all the way to Pilkem village, which was itself captured without great difficulty.

The actual number of the Guard Fusiliers in action was probably about 2,400 men or a few more and a fifth of its strength was taken. The losses in killed and wounded of such a crack corps, bent on acting up to its traditions, must have been greater, and probably not more than 500 or 600 of the whole regiment remained upright at the end of the day. It was a very heavy defeat for the Kaiser's pets. The regimental headquarters also were captured, but the Colonel and his staff made good their escape.

The British Guards engaged comprised parts of all the five regiments composing them. They went forward, keeping touch with their countrymen on the right and with the French on their left. Their advance was continued without much hindrance, carrying point after point, including the defences north of Pilkem, and capturing 600 prisoners. Three lines of German trench positions were taken and eventually the line of the Steenbeek was reached. The French had kept level with our men and even gone beyond the zone they had been ordered to take, seizing Bixschoote and carrying Kortekeer Inn, which formed the point of junction with the British troops. The Welsh regiments which had taken Pilkem pushed on to the right of the Guards on the

Steenbeek. The infantry was supported by some of our field batteries, which, notwithstanding the difficulty of the soddened ground, managed to come up into line. A counter-attack in considerable force was made against the northern part of the Steenbeek line in the forenoon, but it was driven back with heavy loss.

This manœuvre was evidently in accordance with the idea previously alluded to, that the soul of German defence was to be found in the counter-attack after the assaulting troops had been broken up in their efforts to push through the line of defended craters. But the Allies had been allowed to penetrate too far and the Germans did not properly carry out their plan, or, what is more likely, could not persuade their troops to do it. The German official account of the fighting was that the English Army had been repulsed, adding, however, that "after varying and bitter fights on a large scale the enemy, who attacked with superior forces many ranks deep, had to content himself with the possession of a crater position in our defensive zone." This shows that on this day we had to deal with a German position of the new style. From the ease with which our troops carried it and from the failure of most of the counter-offensives it may not unfairly be deduced that the system was not the success that had been hoped for.

The position gained by the French on the left of the line was not a strong one from the defensive point of view, consisting largely of craters half full of water, any attempt to connect which simply resulted in the construction of a rivulet of liquid mud. Communications to the rear were extraordinarily difficult, for they had to pass over ground which was a large chess-board of holes, many of them wide and some of great depth. The men holding the front had brought provisions for four days with them and contrived to make hot coffee, which with a little wine and brandy and the hard food served them to keep body and soul together.

The Germans knew the ground, knew how poor must be the newly occupied crater position, and thought, not unnaturally, that a strong flank attack might turn the French out and throw back the Allies from the Steenbeek. A division of the Prussian Guard was therefore brought through the Forest of Houthulst, without being informed that it was being taken into action. Believing that it was a



mere practice march the men went forward. What was their surprise to learn when they emerged from the wood and could hear the roar of battle and see its smoke that they were now to attack. As they neared the point where they were to deploy their courage began to fail, gradually the men slowed down and began to seek refuge in any available cover. A prisoner taken from this force stated that in his company of about 150 men hardly 50 reached attacking distance, and of those who did so the majority took refuge in shell-holes, only a mere handful being left to attack. A counter-stroke conducted in this fashion was doomed to failure, and the French drove it back with loss and the capture of some prisoners.

In the central attack of the Fifth Army the obstacles in the path of our men were greater than on the left. The ground was more cut up, the soil was nearly everywhere water-logged. The German defences from Shrewsbury Forest through Inverness Copse and Glencorse Wood were strong and protected a good deal from artillery fire by their position. The left flank was supported by the village of Zandvoorde and the whole system formed a formidable position. It was rendered more so from the

fact that the rain prevented our troops from seeing the German movements behind the ridge, while the same cause stopped our aviators from making their usual reconnaissances and spotting for our guns. Thus, beyond a simple barrage covering the advance of the infantry, our artillery was not able to render much assistance during the battle, and even this not always. It was true that our heavy guns kept under fire the roads along which the enemy's supports had to come up. Nevertheless, these contrived to assemble behind this portion of the field in such numbers, moving slowly across the fields, as to accumulate a very considerable force for counter-attack.

The German resistance was a determined one, especially in front of the Inverness Copse and Glencorse Wood, but in both cases the Germans were ousted from their trenches by Territorials and Highland units, though not without strenuous efforts and considerable loss. North of Glencorse Wood (on the road to Becelaere from Ypres) the advance was, however, continued without waiting for the fall of these points, and Westhoek was taken and held for a time. In Shrewsbury Forest the enemy clung



[Official photograph.]

**IRISH GUARDS WEARING GERMAN BODY-ARMOUR.**

Examining a captured German machine-gun.



[Official photograph.]

LOOKING TOWARDS INVERNESS COPSE AND GLENCORSE WOOD.

to a strongly organized work, nor was he turned out of it till the morning of the next day.

On the left of our central attack the Hertfordshire Territorials with other troops of the same class led the way towards St. Julien, extending the assault of Welshmen and Guards against Pilkem and the Steenbeek beyond. The regiment pressed gallantly on towards Alberta Farm till it was brought up by an uncut wire entanglement. Fortunately a tank had accompanied the movement and it at once proceeded to flatten out the obstruction and forced the enemy in position behind it to fall back on the farm itself. Once more the tank came to the rescue, and pushing its way into the farm soon induced the garrison to bolt or surrender. Sixty prisoners were the result. The Territorials now found the way to St. Julien fairly open to them, and, pressing onward with troops of other battalions, captured the village. Here were several German 5·9-in. howitzers, which fell into their hands, and a considerable dump of ammunition. The enemy when once he saw the village was lost turned a heavy artillery fire on to it, which, besides damaging the village and causing considerable losses to our men, blew up an ammunition dump, which did further mischief to the village and its defenders.

Incidentally, a good many German prisoners were killed and wounded.

In spite of the German barrage the Hertfords and the battalions associated with them pressed on beyond against another enemy trench. In front of this was a considerable length of uncut wire placed below the trench, in which were many machine-guns. Pushing and cutting their way, part of the gallant men got through and went straight for the Germans, while others worked round their flanks. Finally they captured the position. While some of the men, who had lost nearly all their officers, set to work to consolidate their holding, others went forward to receive a further number of Germans who had held up their hands in token of surrender. But the advance had been too rapid and not in sufficient force, the flanks were quite unprotected, and some machine-guns had even got in rear of our men. The rattle of these gave fresh courage to the Germans—the lately captured prisoners rose and struggled with their captors, while the party which had thrown down its arms in token of surrender snatched them up again and opened fire. However, these were soon shot down in sufficient numbers to stop their endeavours, while the prisoners who had





[Official photograph.]

**THE THIRD BATTLE OF YPRES: A BIG BATCH OF PRISONERS ON THE WAY TO RAIL-HEAD.**

attacked their guards were disposed of by shot or bayonet. But a still more formidable foe had to be dealt with. A considerable counter-attack was led against our gallant men from the supporting troops which had been brought up for counter-attack. It was beaten off; but the position was untenable, and in the afternoon the troops holding it cut their way back to St. Julien, their retreat being facilitated by troops sent up to help them. This village had also to be abandoned owing to the severe counter-attacks and heavy artillery fire brought against it. But we maintained a bridge-head over the Steenbeck, just north of the village, which was retaken on August 3, with the exception of an insignificant portion of the eastern end. The prisoners taken at and about St. Julien amounted to over a thousand, in addition to which the Guards had captured some six hundred.

While all this was happening fighting had been going on to the south of St. Julien, on the right of the Territorials. Here a number of Lancashire battalions had advanced from the neighbourhood of Wieltje against the German position from Pommern Castle to the south, along the Hannebeck brook. The defences

here were very strong, and had been by no means entirely crushed by our artillery fire. The ground was extremely cut up, undulating, and covered in parts with the remains of woods and liberally endowed with concrete defences. The numerous farm houses, or rather their shattered remains, had been used as bases, and on them had been reconstructed very powerful redoubts. These were protected by extensive wire entanglements. In advance of these points the Germans had, as usual, had a first line of shell craters and light trenches, and, as usual, had been driven out of them by our artillery. But the supporting points of this line were still more or less intact, and it was a by no means easy matter to deal with them.

It may here be well to allude especially to the work done by the tanks in aiding the attack on these defences. The ground they had to traverse could not have been worse. Some of them got stuck fast in the mud or became temporarily embedded in the German defences, but not until they had driven well beyond the first line, and even then they continued to render valuable service to the infantry they supported, although they suffered some

casualties ; but they had immensely aided the advance.

It had been no light matter to bring them up into the front of action, where they took up their positions for the advance. In places the crews had to pilot them in the darkness. They had come through miles of roadside camps filled with sleeping men, threading their way in and out through long lines of lorries taking ammunition and stores to the front. Their progress was not unmarked by incident. One tank did not notice some wagons standing on a railway siding it had to cross, and passed through the train as though it had been a sheet of paper, doing much damage. Another showed its strength in equally disconcerting fashion. It came upon a lorry ditched at the side of the road and tried to pull it out. Chains were adjusted, and the tank heaved slowly on. The lorry was emerging from the ooze when a sudden jerk showed that the tank had pulled free the forward axle of the lorry and the engine, but left the rear half still sticking !

But little incidents like these did not in any way diminish the ardour of the tankmen or even much disturb those upon whom they had acted with such vigour. At Plum Farm

and Apple Villa, and in stronger, more elaborate fortified points, like the Frezenberg, Pommern Castle and Pommern Redoubt, the enemy's machine-gunners held out when everything about them was chaos and death, and poured volleys of bullets on our advancing men. Platoons and half-platoons attacked them in detail at a great cost of life, without gaining any considerable success. In such cases the tanks rendered, as we shall see, invaluable aid in disposing of obstacles which infantry alone could hardly have tackled, and which the weather had prevented the artillery from destroying.

The country over which the Lancashire lads had to advance, starting from Wieltje, against a succession of trenches to the south of St. Julien and left of Frezenberg, was dotted with concrete forts covering German machine-gunners. Many of these had been destroyed by artillery fire, but many were still left. Whenever our line was checked by machine-gun fire from one of them it had to be taken before the advance could proceed. So the attack became a succession of petty sieges, in which our men had developed consummate skill and showed the utmost hardihood. Some



[Official photograph.]

THE THIRD BATTLE OF YPRES: WEARY PRISONERS GET A WELCOME REST.





ATTACK BY HIGHLANDERS NEAR YPRES.

times Lewis gunners would pour in such a fire through the loopholes that the Germans could not fire their machine-guns. At others the same result would be obtained by the fire of expert marksmen. Then a bomber would wriggle up until he reached a point where the machine-gun could not hit him, and then throw bombs into the pill-box. Or a party would contrive to get round to its rear and throw bombs through the bolt holes. In this way two strong points were taken, even while the assaulting men suffered from the enfilade fire from another fort till this was rushed and over a hundred prisoners taken.

In these conditions the Lancashire men had gone forward. Nothing stopped them for long, though they suffered severely. They reached each point of their advance within the time allotted them, as they went along methodically. There were certain points in the second-line trenches, strongly fortified and stoutly held, which were reduced by the first attacking troops. Five batteries of German field guns fired upon our men until they were within close range. But the gunners were shot down and our men went through the guns in perfect order just as though on a field day. Then other Lancashire men came along and carried on the good work, and not only went on to the ultimate limit of the general advance but even beyond it. Some went beyond the Steenbeek as far as Wurst Farm.

It was not possible to hold those forward posts. The Germans concentrated a very heavy artillery fire against them and counter-attacks in strength developed, so that it was necessary to withdraw, but the withdrawal was effected fighting every inch of the way. As the German waves came on these men inflicted casualties on them far exceeding their own numbers.

But the attack had expended its force and had its northern flank exposed beyond the Hertfords\* at St. Julien. Against it the enemy developed a powerful attack from his accumulated reserves. Preceded by a powerful artillery fire the strength employed was sufficient to drive the Lancashire men back. An attack on their right was not so successful.

At Pommern Castle, which was also attacked by Lancashire men, the tanks did very well. This strongly built work, with Pommern Redoubt, formed one system of defence behind the Hannebeek, a little south of Fortuin.

\* The Hertfordshire and Herefordshire regiments were Territorials not forming part of an infantry regiment.

Our men were fighting hard for the castle and suffering loss. The tanks advancing on the Pommern group had to cross this brook, which had banks of soft, clinging mud. They moved steadily on while machine-gun bullets rattled on their heads and flanks, and anti-tank guns, directed by observers behind the redoubt, tried to get a direct hit. One tank, which had cleaned up the wreckage of a farm, came upon Pommern Castle from the west. The German soldiers did not like the look of their visitor, which was firing hard, and fled to the cover of the Pommern Redoubt beyond. The tank worked its way through the Castle, and the occupants of Pommern Redoubt, seeing a tank threatening them from the rear, ran back into the Castle, and actually retook it from our men. But our men fighting round about called to the tank to help them; it came back, with the infantry on its flanks, and made another assault, so that the enemy fled again. Pommern Redoubt was attacked in the same way, with good help from the tank.

The Highlanders attacked somewhat farther south than the Lancashire battalions. They also had in front of them well fortified farms, woods, and concrete defences of every kind. At one of these the men holding it in front got round behind, and so broke in. At another the bayonet served the purpose. There was one farm where the Scotsmen got 130 unwounded prisoners. The Scotsmen still pressed on, but eventually, owing to the forward movement of the Lancashire men leaving a gap on their right, they had to retire before a German attack delivered against it. However, they fought their way up to the Frezenberg Redoubt, coming under a blast of machine-gun fire from a neighbouring farm until they captured its garrison and then they went against two other German redoubts.

Two tanks which had been aiding the advance had the misfortune to get stuck in soft ground near Frezenberg. Believing they were helpless the Germans tried to capture them, but the tanks turned all their guns on the line of grey figures moving towards them, and, Scottish infantry coming up, the combined effect of cold steel and fire beat back the enemy. Tanks more than once were brought to a standstill on such ground, and on several occasions their crews brought out the machine-guns into the open and used them against the enemy.





[Official photograph.]

## A SCENE ON CAPTURED GROUND NEAR HOOGE.

The Scottish troops below the Langemarek-Zonnebeke road were attacked in the afternoon and their line of advanced posts gradually withdrew. At six o'clock, after a furious machine-gun fire, the enemy slightly penetrated the line, driving the Scots back a hundred yards; but a body of the Cameron Highlanders came up and the sight of the new men made the Germans hesitate. Then the Camerons went for them shouting. The Germans did not wait for the shock and fled back before it reached them. The Highlanders advanced again and the whole force once more occupied the line from which they had fallen back.

The troops attacking towards Hooge and Westhoek had to deal with a strong point known as Stirling Castle, formed of massive concrete works erected on the ruins of a stately château. The trenches in front of it were taken by Scottish and North English troops, and eventually the castle itself was captured by Manchesters and Royal Scots. Against it a powerful counter-attack was delivered, chiefly by young German troops, who fought well.

The capture of Hooge and the trenches round the château did not prove a very difficult task, as the artillery had bombarded them out of

existence. But the garrisons had retreated into a chain of strong posts on the east side of Bellewaarde Lake. It took the Sherwood Foresters and Northhamptons some time to master these, but in less than an hour the German support trench had been captured and there our troops established themselves. The position, however, was difficult. Owing to the weather there was not sufficient artillery support, and our men, therefore, did the correct thing, and dug themselves in and occupied shell craters. The Germans recaptured a part of the ground we had taken by Clapham Junction and Inverness Copse, and thus secured for a time the German line running back by Westhoek.

North of this part of the field the troops concerned in this central attack had also severe fighting. They had the serious obstacle of the Bellewaarde Lake and also some woods, of which part were standing, to go through, before getting at the Germans on the Westhoek ridge. Here the Sherwood Foresters and the Northhamptons did good service. There was a good deal of actual hand to hand fighting, for the nature of the ground allowed the assaulting troops to get rapidly up to their opponents' positions. The Northhamptons drove the Ger-

mans out of one trench with their bayonets, taking nearly 100 prisoners, while 40 more were captured when a concrete fort, built on the remains of a country house, fell into their hands. A similar erection when stormed by the Northamptons yielded 40 more German soldiers who preferred captivity to death.

Connecting these troops with the Scottish moving against Frezenberg were men from the English Midland Counties, and these were sent against the railway embankment running towards Roulers which had been made into a formidable work by means of concrete machine-gun emplacements. They made a considerable advance, and while their right, joining on to the Sherwood Foresters and Northamptons, moved on with them in the direction of Westhoek their left kept connection with the Scottish troops marching on Frezenberg. The railway bank was taken. The left of this attack had a more difficult task after the first phase, when it was continued against Westhoek. Siehen House proved to be a serious obstacle, a heavy mass of concrete powerfully armed with machine-guns. But the British managed to surround it and the fire they brought to bear from

rifles, machine-guns, and bombs, convinced the garrison that further resistance was inexpedient. Forty live men surrendered, and besides these there were many killed and wounded.

A further advance by the British to the outskirts of the village of Westhoek was now made. In the latter there was a strong point round what had been a public-house, now concrete covered; this was carried and 40 prisoners taken. It was not, however, found possible to do more than cling to the outer skirts of the village, and the men had to be content with holding a line of shell craters half filled with water. Here they were severely handled by the German artillery and by several counter-attacks. When day broke the Germans were seen to be assembling for fresh counter-attack, this time in force. They were seen emerging from Polygon Wood while others were observed moving down from Zonnebeke. The great attack was delayed till after two o'clock in the afternoon although a certain amount of artillery fire had been previously brought to bear on the British infantry. For some unexplained reason our artillery did not



[Official photograph.

ON THE HEELS OF THE ENEMY: CROSSING A PONTOON BRIDGE.



begin the barrage till after the commencement of the counter-stroke, and thus the infantry was left to its own resources. But with the help of machine-guns our men managed to crush it, as they did subsequent attempts. But in these our guns took part.

The attacks of the Germans from Frezenberg down to Westhoek were stopped. But as has been already mentioned they had managed to cling on to Clapham Junction and Inverness Copse, which, with the village of Westhoek, still formed a barrier to our further advance.

The men who attacked over ground to the east of Zillebeke had a rough time. It was almost pitch dark, for daybreak was dull, when they went forward, and because of this fact and the nature of the ground, the troops lost order. Moreover, the barrage, doubtless regulated by time, went ahead of them, so that they had to struggle onward unsupported by its fire, while the Germans took them in front and on their flanks. Two lines of trenches were captured without much difficulty as far as the enemy was concerned, about 80 prisoners being taken in them, but with enormous difficulty on account of the

boggy ground. The men, loaded with packs and rifles and often carrying sandbags and shovels, slipped continually into the frequent shell craters, which were full of mud, water, and wire. Some stopped to help their comrades, but were dragged in by them. It took them three-quarters of an hour to get over two lines of almost abandoned trenches, whole platoons getting stuck in them or slipping back when they tried to climb out. Thus it was that two and a half hours were taken to get to the second objective in Sanctuary Wood, and the enemy's riflemen who had been firing at close range then ran back.

The Menin road from Ypres runs through the high ground and the Wood. It was here that the hardest time came for our troops because of the machine-gun fire which struck them in front and on the flanks from positions which could only be located imperfectly by the fire emanating from them. There was a tunnel under the Menin Road. An officer sent up by the Brigadier to ascertain the exact position, gathered together a number of men and found the western end of it. He captured the only Germans whom he found there, four in number, and as the eastern end of the tunnel had



REPAIRING A LOCK.

*Official photographs.*

already been cleared the whole was now in our possession.

The tanks had a hard task in the wooded tracts on both sides of the Ypres-Menin road. In the largest of these patches the trees were still thick and it was defended by numerous machine guns. When the tanks and infantry, having captured the German redoubt in front of it, advanced on both sides they were received by a heavy fire. Although this patch and another fragment of woodland near it were beyond the line now taken up by our troops, it was undesirable to leave them in the hands of the Germans, to whom they afforded shelter for counter-assaults. The tanks, therefore, went on, and searched out its hidden defences with their guns. Before the German artillery put the tanks out of action by direct hits the woods were full of dead and wounded Germans, and prisoners stated that the casualties had been very severe.

Severe fighting had been going on all day on the right of the British attack past Hollebeke, and over the ground between Oostaverne and Warneton. Here the Second Army was taking part in the struggle. Opposite Hollebeke the assault was made by English county troops. In the darkness it was impossible to locate accurately all the craters occupied by the German machine-gunners; some of these lay quiet, and when our troops had passed by opened fire on their rear. But they were discovered soon after daylight broke and were appropriately dealt with.

The ruins of Hollebeke were full of concrete-covered strongholds held by the Germans, who, however, offered very little resistance. Without much difficulty our men bombed them out, and then proceeded to capture the railway that ran by the Comines Canal and down from Battle Wood—this had been strongly fortified with many concrete posts. But these too were stalked by some Middlesex bombers, and captured, and the ground north of the bend of the Ypres-Comines Canal and east of Battle Wood secured. Below Hollebeke there were two streams, the Roozebeek and the Warnbeek, divided by a spur on which Oostaverne is situated. Against the wooded spurs between these two streams the Australians advanced with the New Zealanders on their right. The former after a very severe struggle made good a considerable advance. La Basse Ville was also captured by the New Zealanders as the result of smart fighting.

No further advance was attempted on this wing; it was intended by Sir Douglas Haig to be more in the nature of a demonstration.

During the night of the 31st and the next



[Official photograph.

#### A MUDDY ROAD.

following days the enemy delivered many counter-attacks, some pressed with great vigour, others without any serious effort. His main endeavours were made with a view to dislodge our troops from the commanding ground north of the Menin road stretching up to the Steenbeek; especially did he seek to recover his second line system between Frezenberg and St. Julien. But his attempts were made entirely in vain, the sole success being our withdrawal from St. Julien, as already alluded to (*ante* p. 342).

The description of the first day's fighting would be incomplete without some account of the work of our airmen. We have seen that the weather had put a stop to effective reconnaissance and to observation of the result of our artillery fire. But this did not prevent our gallant aviators from rendering excellent, if more limited, services in the preceding fighting and during the battle. The following is





[Official photograph.]

#### A GERMAN AEROPLANE BROUGHT DOWN BY OUR FIRE IN FLANDERS.

extracted from *The Daily Telegraph* of August 3:

These airmen of ours attacked the German troops on the march and scattered them, dropped bombs on their camps and aerodromes, flying so low that their wheels skirted the grass, and were seldom more than a few yards above the tree-tops. The narrative of one man begins with his flight over the enemy's country, crossing canals and roads as low as 30 feet, until he came to a German aerodrome. The men there paid no attention, thinking this low flier was one of theirs, until a bomb fell on the first shed. Then they ran in all directions panic stricken. The English pilot skimmed round to the other side of the shed and played his machine-gun through the open doors, then soared a little and gave the second shed a bomb. He flew round and released a bomb for the third shed, but failed with the fourth, because the handle did not act quickly enough. So he spilt his bomb between the shed and a railway train standing still there. By this time a German machine-gun had got to work upon him, but he swooped right down upon it, scattering the gunners with a burst of bullets, and flew across the sheds again, firing into them at 20 feet. His ammunition drum was exhausted, and he went up to a cloud to change, and then came down actually to the ground, tripping across the grass on dancing wheels, and firing into the sheds where the mechanics were cowering.

Then he fired of this aerodrome and flew off, overtaking two German officers on horses. He dived at them and the horses bolted. He came upon a column of 200 troops on the march, and swooped above their heads with a stream of bullets until they ran into hedges and ditches. He was using a lot of ammunition, and went up into a cloud to fix another drum. Two German aeroplanes came up to search for him, and he flew to meet them and drove one down so that it crashed to earth. German soldiers gathered round it, and our

fellow came down to them and fired into their crowd. A little lower he flew over a passenger train and pattered bullets through its windows, and then, having no more ammunition, went home.

Another pilot went up in a rainstorm. He saw a German motor-car with two officers and gave chase. He saw it turn into side roads, and followed. Then he came low and used his machine-gun. One of the officers fired an automatic pistol at him, so our boy thought that a good challenge and, leaving go of his machine-gun, pulled out his own revolver, and there was the strangest duel between a boy in the air and a man in a car. The aeroplane was 50 feet high then, but dropped to 20 just as the car pulled up outside a house. The young pilot shot past, but turned and saw the body of one officer being dragged indoors. He swooped over the house and fired his machine-gun into it, and then sent a Verey light into the car, hoping to set it on fire. Presently he was attacked by a bombardment from machine-guns, "Arehies," and light rockets, so he rose high and took cover in the clouds. But it was not the last episode of his day out. He saw some infantry crossing a wooden bridge and dived at them with rapid bursts of machine-gun fire. They ran like rabbits from a shot-gun, and when he came round again he saw four or five dead lying on the bridge. From the ditches men fired at him with rifles, so he stooped low and strafed them, and then went home quite pleased with himself.

The weather during the first four days of August was extremely bad, rain coming down without a stop during the whole period. The condition of the ground which our men held was almost unendurably bad. The whole surface of the ground became one vast quagmire, unpassable except by a few well-

defined tracks swept by artillery fire. To move on these was dangerous, to leave them meant very often death by suffocation in the mud. In these circumstances no general offensive was possible, and the British Commander-in-Chief had to wait till the ground dried before he could go on with large-scale operations. To this unfortunate fact was due the failure to secure what might have been a very important victory. As at Arras, the delay caused by the weather was of enormous advantage to the Germans. Their troops had time to recover from the effects of defeat; they were able to bring up fresh men, more guns and much ammunition to replace the wear and tear of the fighting.

But our men were still able to do something, and their energies were directed to strengthen the line they had captured and to a few small tactical successes to improve it. Thus we retook St. Julien on August 3, and so connected our line below it with our line on the Steenbeek farther north. A week later Westhoek was completely captured. The French, too, captured a number of fortified houses lying in front of their position near Kortekker Cabaret.

On the whole, the results were satisfactory. The depth of our advance was between three thousand and four thousand yards. The Fifth

Army front had carried the German front line south of Westhoek. At this village they held only the outskirts. But otherwise they had won the whole ridge aimed at, and thus prevented the enemy overlooking the Ypres plain. North of this the German second line had been taken as far as St. Julien; beyond this they had passed through the German second line and held the line of the Steenbeek to the French right at Kortekker Cabaret. The French had been equally successful, their advance had been rapidly carried out, and with slight loss. German prisoners to the number of 6,100, including 133 officers, had been taken by us alone, with 25 guns and much other booty. To this our Allies had added more.

We had taken exactly what we aimed at, and the result confirmed what the fighting on the Somme and the Ancre, at Vincy and Messines had already shown—viz., that there was no position which the Germans chose to hold and fortify which our men could not take, even by frontal attack, when the guns had exercised their full power in the preparatory stage of the battle.

The Germans had fought well, and this must be largely attributed to their iron discipline. But there can be no doubt that at the opening



NEW ZEALANDERS ON THE ROAD TO THE TRENCHES.

[Official photograph.]



of the battle many were in a state which was not conducive to hard fighting, as the following extracts from the diary of a well-educated prisoner of the 455th Infantry Regiment show. On Monday, July 30, twenty-four hours before the advance, he wrote :

At last we arrived in the second line. Scarcely had we got in, about half past six in the morning, when a maddening drumfire was opened by the English. An airman had observed the movement in our trench. The worst of it was that our artillery perpetually fired short. One gun fired into our trench continually.

fire on the roads. The harrage prior to the attack absolutely prevented the Germans from manning their trenches, and they had to remain in their dug-outs, where our men found them. Four non-commissioned officers of the Lehr Regiment, who had served from the beginning of the war, have admitted that the British bombardment before and during the attack was the worst they had ever had to endure. While the majority of the prisoners are still extremely bitter against their own gunners for not giving them better support, many of them realize that it was not due to lack of desire but to opposition which they could not overcome.

The experience of the crew of the seventh battery of one field artillery regiment, which was sent up to take over four 77's near St. Julien on the Sunday night



[Official photograph,

**GREAT SERVICE HELD TO MARK THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE FOURTH YEAR OF WAR.**

What a disgrace to be compelled to sit still in the middle of our own artillery fire! Many of my company have cleared out or have never come into the line at all. The only sergeant left in the company has reported sick. Everybody does his utmost to get out of the way. The rations will last till to-morrow morning, but food and coffee cannot, of course, be wariaed up in the midst of all this artillery. When there is nothing left to eat I shall go back on my own responsibility.

On the same day another soldier wrote: "We have the same filth and drill until we are crazy. Every morning I have a painter's breakfast. You know what that is, surely. It is a cigarette and coffee."

A German corporal of the 29th Machine-gun Marksman Detachment wrote in an unposted letter: "Matters have come to such a pass that our artillery moves forward in the night and lets loose some thousands of gas shells and retires before the dawn."

Prisoners from the region of St. Julien made a number of interesting statements about the completeness of our harrage. No food, water, or munitions, they said, reached the front line for three days owing to our

before the attack, is worth noting. They found all the ammunition buried in the earth, and our shells dropping all round the gun pits. They took cover in some concrete dug-outs, where our infantry found them, and the battery in question was unable to fire a single shell from the time the crew reached the position until they and their guns were captured.

The quality of the fare served to the German troops at present is shown by the following scale of rations of one battalion in the Sixth Bavarian Reserve Regiment: Breakfast, coffee and dry bread; mid-day, one litre of soup with boiled or cold tinned meat, no potatoes and no vegetables; evening, dry bread and cheese, or bread and butter, or bread and jam. They also have a drink of brandy now and then. The daily bread ration was 750 grammes, and the bread was of poor quality. The meat was served in generous slices. The same fare was served in the front line trenches when it was possible to bring it up, save that an additional quantity of cheese was substituted for the soup. The men received two cigarettes and two cigars daily and about 25 grammes of tobacco a month. A captured officer of the 221st

Division thought our men more cheerful and "wide-awake" than the German troops, who are "now very tired of the war and who have by no means the same enthusiasm that they had even a year ago." \*

On Saturday, August 4, in spite of the wet and stormy weather, the French and British continued to progress. Anthoine's troops pushed east of Kortkeer Cabaret and occupied a couple of farms west of the road from Steenstraat to Woumen. Meantime Gough's left established some more posts across the Steenbeek stream between St. Julien and the road from Pillein to Langemarck, Gough's next objective. In the afternoon the rain, which had had such untoward consequences on the Allied operations, diminished to fitful showers. At nightfall it vanished in a drizzle.

Anticipating that the cessation of the rain precluded fine weather, during which the ground would dry and the Allies be able to resume their advance, Sixt von Arnin promptly counter-attacked. At 11 p.m. a large number of his batteries concentrated their fire on the ruins of Hollebeke, and for six hours a deluge of gas and other shells descended on the steaming tangle of shattered buildings. To mask his intentions, the bombardment extended from the Ypres-Comines Canal to Messines. About 5 a.m. on Sunday, August 5, rockets went up from Hollebeke signalling that the enemy was advancing along the western bank of the canal. So murky, however, was the atmosphere that the stars from the rockets do not seem to have been perceived by our gunners. At all events, detachments of the German 207th Division, which had been badly punished at Bullecourt, got ahead of our barrage and, slipping and staggering through the mud, entered the village, and our garrison had to retire.

The autumn sun shone fitfully, drawing up mist from the sappy, blood-stained ground. Preparations were made for a counter-attack. The morning mist had become a malodorous fog which was torn into wisps by the torrents of bursting shells discharged at Hollebeke by our guns. Headed by their officers, the British on receiving the order charged forward. There was a brief struggle and the ruins were again ours. Some German prisoners were captured. When in the evening Sixt von Arnin launched a second attack, it was brought to a standstill by the British artillery. An assault on our positions at Westhoek, on August 5, met with the same

fate. In the course of the day five German aeroplanes had been put out of action and three others driven down out of control. Only one of our machines was reported to be missing.

August 5 was the first day of the fourth year of the war. In an Army Order Sir Douglas Haig, with the recent battles of Arras-Vimy, Messines and Ypres in his mind, voiced the feelings of his men.

"To-day," he said, "we enter the fourth year of war with a firm confidence based on what we and our gallant Allies have already done. This recollection of the past three years can leave no doubt in our minds that the British Armies in France and the workers in the Empire, upon whom they depend, have the power and will to complete the task which they have undertaken, and that they will continue it until their labours are crowned by certain and definite victory."

The terse and confident words of Sir Douglas may be contrasted with the more boastful language of the following telegram sent by Hindenburg to the German Chancellor on the same day:

At the beginning of the fourth war year I greet your Excellency, looking back on a time full of incomparable achievements by the nation, the Army, and the Fleet, with deep gratitude for all the sacrifices made for the protection and honour of the Fatherland. These sacrifices, which cannot be appreciated enough, have not been in vain. Firmly consolidated in the interior and unshaken on all the fronts, Germany braves the exasperated thrusts of her old, and new enemies. The German Army is fighting far in the enemy's country and is marching with unbroken strength to new successes. It enters the fourth year of war supported by confidence as firm as a rock that our home spirit of union and perseverance will remain alive, which is the guarantee of victory and honourable peace to our nation.

The German hero forgot to observe that most of "the incomparable achievements" of the German nation, Army and Fleet were the result of methods which had disgraced them for all time, and that another was the "incomparable" nature of "the strategic retreat" of Hindenburg when he had been forced back by British troops.

August 6 and 7, apart from artillery and aeroplane activities, were in Flanders uneventful. Dense white fog shrouded the surface of the ground and it was not till the afternoon of the 7th that it was pierced by the sun's rays. That day our aeroplanes, one of which was lost, flew 40 miles behind the German lines, bombing railways, sidings and trains. Heavy rain again fell on the 8th, when the French progressed north-west of Bixchoote, as they also did on the following day. Though

\* *Morning Post*, August 8.





CROSSING THE STEENBEEK UNDER SHELL-FIRE.

a strong westerly wind and thick clouds impeded our airmen on the 9th, they managed to wreck five German aeroplanes, drive down as many more out of control, and to destroy and damage six observation balloons. Our losses in these operations were four machines. After sunset the Royal Naval Air Service took a hand in the struggle for the Belgian Coast. The naval aviators bombed Ghistelles aerodrome, near Ostend, set fire to the railway sidings at Znidwege, a station between Bruges and Thourout, and bombed the junction at Thourout, which was also attacked by gun-fire from the air.

Climatic conditions having improved and the soil being less sodden, Generals Anthoine and Gough decided to resume the offensive. The new operation was to prepare the way for the capture of the bridge-head of Drei Graehten (just north of the confluence of the Steenbeek and Yser Canal), Langemarek, and the German positions from Langemarek through Zonnebeke to Gheluvelt. Accordingly, at daybreak (August 10), the French from the Bixschoote region pressed forward between the Yser Canal and the lower reaches of the Steenbeek. The west bank of the flooded region was secured and, at places, the Steenbeek was crossed. Five guns abandoned by the enemy were captured. With the French in the vicinity of Merekem and over the Steenbeek in the St. Janshoek region, the German hold on Drei Graehten and Langemarek, which was now being turned from the north-west, became precarious.

Simultaneously on a front of about 3,000 yards—(not five miles as the Germans alleged)—between the Ypres-Roulers railway and the Ypres-Menin road Gough had thrust eastwards in the direction of the Passchendaele Ridge. All through the sultry night the German guns and ours had been churning up the ground on both sides of that highway so celebrated for the feats performed on it by the "Old Contemptibles" in the First Battle of Ypres. At 4.45 a.m. our artillery increased its fire, until the incessant reports produced that sound which has been compared by the Germans to the continuous rolling of drums. On the left Lancashire Fusiliers, East Lancashires, and Cheshires awaited the order to complete the capture of Westhoek and to storm the ridge of that name. To the Bedfords and Queen's West Surreys had been assigned the task of clearing the enemy from the straggling piece of woodland known as Glencorse Wood, or Schloss Wood, as the Germans called it, which crowned the highest part of the eastern spur of the ridge. Since the ground here was 30 feet higher than that at its east end it formed the key of this part of Sixt von Armin's position. It had been carefully rewired, and regiments of the 54th Reserve Division had been inserted into Nonne Boscho and Polygon Woods to its north and Inverness Copse to its south ready to counter-attack, if Glencorse Wood were lost.

The hurricane bombardment moved forward about 5 a.m., and our men, following at the

heels of the barrage, advanced. The Germans in the concreted cellars of Westhoek fought stubbornly. Amid the explosions of grenades the British shot and stabbed the brave defenders. Round the "pill-boxes" which had been missed by our guns knots of Lancastrians could be seen flinging bombs at the doors and firing with rifle and machine-gun through the narrow embrasures of these concrete works. One at the southern end of the ridge held out for three hours. Finally it was stormed by detachments of East Lancashires and Lancashire Fusiliers, but not till it had been severely shaken by trench mortars hastily brought up.

While the North Countrymen were securing Westhoek and its ridge, Glencorse Wood on the spur jutting eastward from it was the scene of a stern and bloody action. The Bedfords and Queen's West Surreys had at first carried everything before them. They traversed the shattered wood, smashing their way through the uncut wire and reducing the nests of snipers and machine-gunners. Emerging from the eastern outskirts they cleared the ground for 200 yards beyond. Unfortunately their comrades astride the Ypres-Menin road had not made a corresponding advance. Bedfords and West Surreys were left in the air. Upon them descended a tornado of shells, and wave after wave of the German 27th Infantry Regiment counter-attacked them from the Polygon and Nonno Borsche Woods and from Inverness Copse. Gradually our men were forced back into the wood. The recapture of a part of Glencorse Wood was a solitary success for the Germans. No less than six counter-attacks were delivered by the enemy between dawn and 10 p.m., the most violent of them in point of artillery preparation being that at 6.40 p.m., but the remainder of Westhoek Ridge and the ruins of the village remained in our possession. We had captured 240 prisoners and inflicted as well as received heavy losses.

During August 10, for the first time for over ten days, a full day's flying was possible. Ten German machines were destroyed, and six others driven down out of control. Our losses amounted to 12 machines, but against such losses had to be set the fact that our airmen, in addition to winning some 16 duels, had dropped 6½ tons of explosives on aerodromes, ammunition depôts, and other points of military importance, and also engaged enemy infantry with machine-gun fire

and taken a large number of photographs. After sunset the French aeroplanes went up and bombed enemy barracks north of the Forest of Houthulst and the railway stations of Cortemarek and Lichterwælde. At the latter place a fire and violent explosions were observed.

The presence of the British in Glencorse Wood and on the Westhoek Ridge endangered the hold of Sixt von Armin on the southern end of the Passchendaele Ridge. Acting in accordance with the best Prussian traditions, he did



[French Official photograph.]

#### A FRENCH LINE OF DEFENCE IN FLANDERS.

not hesitate to make desperate efforts for the recovery of the lost positions. Every battery within range was turned on the Westhoek region. The wide and deep belt of fire flung by the German guns impressed even those who had witnessed the battles of Arras-Vimy and Messines. Nevertheless, our heroic infantry stuck to their improvised shelters. When, in the morning, the first of Sixt von Armin's five counter-attacks on Saturday, August 11, was delivered, the Germans were beaten back except in Glencorse Wood, where they made some further headway. At midday our aeroplanes saw a great gathering of enemy troops in the Nonno Borsche and Polygon Woods. The news was at once sent back to our artillery. Guns and howitzers promptly



discharged an avalanche of shells of all description from 15 ins. downwards. Hundreds of Germans lying in the craters were killed.

A British airman flew to see the result of the salvoes. He perceived nothing but mangled or dismembered corpses, mixed up with fragments of rifles and spades. Some of the grenades and ammunition carried by the dead or wounded men were still exploding. Yet—such is the force of tradition and discipline—the German infantry again and again responded to the calls of their officers. At about 6 p.m. bodies of the enemy, estimated at two battalions, were reported to be mustering opposite the Westhoek Ridge in the depression down which flows the streamlet of the Hannebeek on its way to St. Julien. Our barrage this time did not catch the Germans in masses, but in waves marching up the slopes. When the storm of shells burst, the lines of the enemy flung themselves flat on their faces or melted into craters. Few escaped death or wounds.

The net result of the desperate fighting in which both sides displayed amazing courage was that, though we were pressed back to the western edge of Glencorse Wood, the rest of our gains on the 10th were retained. Six guns had been taken by us, and the total prisoners captured in the action amounted to 454, among whom were nine officers. One of them, who before the war had been the partner of an English business man, expressed his astonishment at the quality of the New Armies. "Were we fighting together," he said, "we—England and Germany—should be masters of the world!"

Against our slight reverse in Glencorse Wood was to be set an advance near the Ypres-Staden railway between the Steenbeek and the southern environs of Langemarek. The next day, Sunday, August 12, the weather again became wet and stormy. A strong westerly wind blew, which favoured the enemy's aircraft. Notwithstanding, we brought down three and drove down four machines at a cost of five of our own. In the afternoon, so far as visibility was concerned, the weather improved. From points in the British lines the sand dunes around Ostend and the belfry of Bruges could be easily seen. The forward movement, however, had, for a time, degenerated into a gigantic gun duel, which was not ended till August 16, when the second phase of the battle opened. Two days before (August 14)

Sixt von Armin had attacked our line east of Westhoek, but his troops, meeting with heavy artillery and rifle fire, were repulsed. We improved the same day our positions on the right bank of the Steenbeek. On the 15th General Anthoine moved forward north-west of Bixschoote, and German raids east of Klein Zillebeke and against our positions in the neighbourhood of the Pilkem-Langemarek road were beaten off.

In the interval between the 12th and the 16th the aircraft on both sides had been active. Seven German aeroplanes were wrecked on the 13th and two driven down out of control, we in our turn losing but two. On the 14th there was severe fighting, in the course of which nine German machines were brought down, and five others driven down out of control. We lost seven, two of which were overtaken by a violent storm when working over the enemy's lines.

While the first phase of the Third Battle of Ypres was in progress, and up to the eve of the second phase, Sir Douglas Haig kept tapping at the German lines between the Lys and the Upper Somme. Considering the comparatively narrow front on which the great battle was being delivered, it was of the utmost importance to prevent the enemy from reinforcing Sixt von Armin with guns and men. To keep him, therefore, fully employed in other sectors was correct strategy. Although these minor sections, with the exception of that at Lens of August 15-16, subsequently to be narrated, may appear to the reader to be insignificant, they must not be overlooked, as they formed an essential part of the plan of the British leader. The story of them should be followed attentively on the map.

The first of these minor actions occurred on the evening of the opening day of the battle itself. It consisted of a successful raid east of Bois Grenier and south of Armentières. This might, though it did not, portend that the battle front would be extended south of the Lys. The next night (August 1-2) parties of our men broke into the enemy's trenches north-east of Gouzeaucourt—*i.e.*, south-west of Cambrai—inflicting heavy casualties. Early on the night of August 2-3 the enemy in his turn took the offensive east of Arras. After a heavy bombardment of our positions on Infantry Hill, German troops, estimated at a battalion strong, attacked on a front of about half a mile and entered our trenches. Within

24 hours all the intruders had been evicted, killed, wounded, or captured. On Saturday, August 4, we raided the enemy's lines east of Vermelles. The next day troops of Horne's Army advanced slightly west and south-west of Lens.

So far the British threats had been directed south of the battlefield of Ypres, but on the night of August 7 one of our detachments attacked near Lombartzyde, on the Belgian coast, capturing a few prisoners and a machine-

the same day British troops on a wide front east of Monehy-le-Preux burst into the enemy's trenches and blew in his dug-outs. Severe casualties were inflicted on him and a counter-attack was repulsed, two machine-guns and 86 prisoners being captured. The German version of this action was as follows :

During the evening the English, in deep masses, attacked from the Monehy-Pelves road as far as the Arras-Cambrai road. Our destructive fire fell with overpowering effect at the points where they had assembled; the advancing storming waves, which



[Canadian War Records.]

LIEUT.-GENERAL SIR A CURRIE, K.C.M.G., COMMANDING THE CANADIAN FORCES IN FRANCE.

gun. How this feint against Prince Rupprecht's extreme right was regarded by the enemy may be surmised from the German *communiqué* of August 8. "On the coastal sector," ran the *communiqué*, "the British, after drumfire, pressed forward with strong forces from Nieuport in a northerly and north-easterly direction."

At daybreak on the 9th Horne carried out several successful raids in the Lens region. Our troops poured into the enemy's positions at all points attacked, and after destroying his dug-outs and wrecking his defences returned to their posts. The British losses were slight, those of the Germans heavy. At nightfall on

suffered the most severe losses under our defensive fire and in the hand-to-hand fighting with our experienced regiments, were everywhere repulsed.

Evening: The strong attacks of the English delivered this morning in Flanders between the Ypres-Roulers Railway and Hollebeke have failed.

It was the old, old story. A raid from which the assailants naturally retire, when they have gained their object, as we had, was counted as a German victory.

On the night of August 11-12 there was some fighting for the possession of a mine crater east of Givenchy-les-La Bassée. Our troops established themselves on the rear lip of the crater and drove off a counter-attack. A German raid a few hours later south of



Armentières was repulsed by the Portuguese with bombs and rifle-fire.

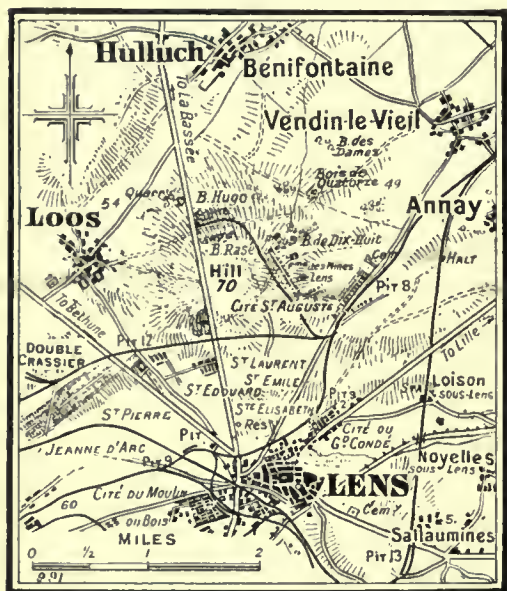
The moment was now fast approaching when Sir Douglas Haig and General Anthoine were to make their second attempt in the Ypres salient. Our activity between the Lys and the Somme consequently became more intense. On the night of the 13th-14th we raided two points east of Vermelles, securing a few prisoners, and entering the German lines north-east of Gouzeaucourt. Hostile raids east of Laventie and Neuve Chapelle were repulsed.

The feint of Sir Douglas on Wednesday, August 15, more nearly resembled a battle than

seeking to break out between La Bassée and the Scarpe. Layers of concrete 15 ft. or so thick had been superimposed upon the remains of the former buildings. Beneath such a mass of concrete the Germans were secure from gunfire. The streets were barricaded, and the



[New Zealand official photograph.  
A LEWIS GUN.



#### LENS AND SURROUNDING COUNTRY

a minor action. For a feigned attack calculated to immobilize German reserves Sir Douglas Haig could have chosen no better objective than Hill 70—the Hill 70 of the Battle of Loos—and the northern suburbs of Lens. Since the Battle of Arras-Vimy the troops of Horne's First Army had been pushing forward into the southern and western suburbs of the city. A blow from the north might well mean that the British, content with their successes achieved east of Ypres, had decided to resume the offensive in Artois by the reduction of Lens. Now the importance to the Germans of Lens for purposes of defence or offence could scarcely be overestimated. The Hindenburg line was pivoted on it. Its subterranean galleries, 60 or 70 ft. below the roofless houses, afforded an admirable assembly place for an army

public squares were dotted with low redoubts almost level with the pavement. At the Battle of Arras-Vimy we had proved what an advantage it was to an assailant to muster his forces in the caves of a large city. Lens at some future date might be to the Germans what Arras had been to the British. If Lens were menaced the Bavarian Crown Prince would be, therefore, likely to keep his reserves in Artois rather than to send them to Sixt von Armin's assistance in Flanders. That the British Higher Command attached peculiar significance to the capture of Hill 70 had been proved by our efforts to take it at the Battle of Loos in September 1915.

To the Canadian Corps was deputed the very difficult task of storming, on a front of 4,000 yards, Hill 70, the whole of Bois Rase, the western half of Bois Hugo (east of the road from La Bassée to Lens), and the mining suburbs of Cité St. Elizabeth, Cité St. Emile, and Cité St. Laurent. These villages and the summit of Hill 70 had become subterranean mazes, in comparison with which the Labyrinth of the Battle of Artois (April, 1915), would have seemed childishly simple. Moreover, it had been resolved that the preliminary bombardment was to be short, if heavy. The Canadians were to be asked to reach their objectives at one rush.

A thin crescent moon was fading in the sky when, towards 4 a.m. on Wednesday, August 15, guns, howitzers, and trench mortars fired at the German positions. Oil drums discharged

cataracts of flame over the holes up which the enemy were likely to ascend with their machine-guns, rifles and grenades. The German artillery soon responded, and a fresh south wind blew clouds of smoke over the ridge and stumps of villages. At 4.25 a.m. the Canadians went over the top. Above them one of the German "Travelling Circuses" was battling hard and ineffectually with our airmen. At Hill 70 the garrison consisted of young, raw troops who put up a poor fight. Elsewhere the enemy fought stubbornly, but the first trench system was speedily carried, and the Canadians advanced a mile up to the western defences of Cité St. Auguste. From Hill 70 they looked straight along the valley to the heights of Sallaumines and beyond. On the western face of Cité St. Auguste, however, a deep chalk cutting swarming with Germans and machine-guns kept them from moving into that suburb.

Between 1 and 2 p.m. the Canadian outposts opposite the cutting saw masses of Germans forming up in the ruins of Cité St. Auguste. The 4th Prussian Guards Division had been ordered at all costs to recapture Hill 70. Suddenly from them a wave of men emerged and breasted the ridge. It was destroyed by the Canadian artillery and machine-guns. Immediately afterwards a second wave appeared, officers shouting to the men in front of them to go forward. Shell and rifle fire blasted the line and the few survivors fled back. The third wave, thinning rapidly, broke some 70 yards from the Canadians. Later in the day the latter resumed their advance and descended into the chalk cutting, where, after a hideous mêlée, 90 prisoners were captured. Two more German counter-attacks were repulsed. Nearly 300 prisoners (including 15 officers) had been taken. The triumph of the Canadians was, of course, not communicated by the German leaders to the German public. The official account in the German *communiqué* of August 16, a travesty of what had really occurred, reads as follows:

In Artois the English attacked yesterday morning between Hulluch and Lens with four Canadian divisions. After the strongest fire they forced their way into our first position and sought, by the continual bringing up of fresh forces, to deepen the gap created on both sides of Loos. According to orders found, the objective of their attack was the village of Vendin-le-Vieil, which is situated four kilometres [ $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles] behind our front.

In desperate fighting lasting all day our troops, by means of counter-attacks, pressed back beyond the third line of our first position the enemy troops who had broken into our lines. The English gain is small.

In fresh attacks, which were repeated as many as 11 times, the stubborn enemy again tried his fortune in the evening. The enemy storming waves collapsed before our battle line.

South of Hulluch and west of Lens the attacker, who had suffered extremely heavy losses at all points of the battlefield, was repulsed.

On Thursday, August 16, when the second phase of the Third Battle of Ypres opened, the German 220th Division was sent to the support of the Prussian Guards. It, too, was repulsed. On the evening of Friday, August 17, another effort was made by the enemy at the north-west of Lens. Our positions were deluged with



[Canadian War Records.]

#### NOT SORRY TO BE CAPTURED:

A young German officer taken prisoner at Hill 70.

gas shell and a number of pioneers with flame-throwers preceded the charging masses of Germans. The Canadians, with rifles and Lewis guns, shot down the pioneers and riddled the surging crowds behind them. Later in the night Cité Emile was assaulted and a determined attack was made on the Canadians in the Bois Hugo. All these attempts and another one at 1.30 a.m. on Saturday, August 18, failed. The positions captured on the 15th had not been wrested from our transatlantic countrymen. The Germans had suffered very heavy losses





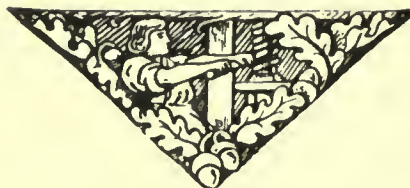
[Canadian War Records.]

#### GERMAN PRISONERS CAPTURED BY THE CANADIANS ON HILL 70.

and 1,120 prisoners, including 22 officers, from three of Prince Rupprecht's Divisions had been secured.

The persistence of the enemy and the violence of his counter-attacks were excellent evidence that Sir Douglas Haig had judged correctly when he selected Hill 70 and the northern suburbs of Lens as the scene for the chief feints before his and Anthoine's renewal of the Third Battle of Ypres. The result of the action, in which the Canadian losses were light, was—to use Sir Douglas's own words—that “the threat to Lens itself was rendered more immediate and more insistent, and the enemy was prevented from concentrating the whole of his attention and resources upon the front of

the Allied main offensive.” The victory of the Canadians was the more gratifying because it occurred a week after the arrival in Paris of M. Basly, the Mayor of Lens. This Labour Deputy, who had been repatriated, had pointed out on one occasion to the German local commander, a certain Major Klotz, that the Hague Convention forbade some of his enactments. “The Hague Convention,” answered Klotz, “is for us and not for you.” One day Klotz had complained that a German soldier had been wounded, not—as was the fact—by a British bullet, but by a shot fired at him by an unknown citizen of Lens. In vain M. Basly had protested. “The town,” Klotz said, “is fined £800.”



## CHAPTER CCXXXII.

# THE THIRD BATTLE OF YPRES. (II.)

ANTHOINE AND GOUGH ATTACK IN THE NORTH, AUGUST 16, 1917—THE GERMAN "FIELD FORTS"  
—THE DRIE GRACHTEN BRIDGE-HEAD—THE FRENCH ADVANCE—BRITISH ADVANCE ON LANGEMARCK  
—MISFORTUNES AND THEIR CAUSES—PREPARATIONS FOR ATTACK ON WIDER FRONT—MINOR  
ACTIONS DURING AUGUST—THE FIGHTING NEAR YPRES ON AUGUST 22—INVERNESS COPSE AND  
GLENCORSE WOOD—THE FIGHTING NEAR LENS—WORK OF THE CANADIANS—OPERATIONS ON THE  
FRENCH FRONT.

THE Canadians of General Currie's Corps who, as described in the last chapter, had on August 15, 1917, wrested Hill 70 from the Germans, were entering the outskirts of Lens itself when, at 4.45 a.m. on Thursday, August 16, Anthoine's and Gough's troops again struck at the entrenched zone between the confluence of the Yperlee and Steenbeek on the left and the Ypres-Menin road at Inverness Copse on the right. This, the second phase of the Third Battle of Ypres, was preceded as usual by a very intense bombardment.

The impossibility of making deep-mined dug-outs in soil where water was often only a couple of feet below the surface of the ground had led the enemy to erect a number of redoubts of reinforced concrete. This was often of considerable thickness, up to as much as 10 feet, constructed round cages of iron bars, about half an inch in diameter and divided from each other by varying distances, sometimes no more than 7 inches. The entrance door was of steel sufficiently thick to stop rifle or machine-gun fire or ordinary bombs. Their shapes varied considerably and were made to suit the needs of each situation, though a good many were of the ordinary pill-box shape. These "field forts," as Sir Douglas Haig calls them, were

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heavily armed with machine-guns and manned by picked men. Only direct hits from our heavy guns or howitzers were capable of battering them to pieces, and the garrisons were quite secure from any attack by tanks.

In the earlier fighting we had reached the outer edge of the formidable chain of concrete redoubts which formed the backbone of Sixt von Armin's defensive system. We had now to fight our way through it, opposed by furious counter-attacks, on which the Germans had come to place their chief reliance. Many British successes had shown the enemy that his infantry were unable to hold the strongest defences when these were suitably attacked, and that increasing the number of his troops in his forward zone merely added to his losses. He had therefore adopted a more elastic scheme of defence, in which forward trenches were held only in sufficient strength to disorganize the Allied attack, while the bulk of the German troops were kept in reserve, ready to deliver a powerful and immediate blow which might recover the positions overrun by our troops before we had time to consolidate them. This system, which was described in detail in the last chapter, had been used on the German front attacked on July 31 and subsequent dates and had been partially successful. On August 16



these winter-attack tactics were again employed and under favourable conditions which gave them some further good results.

Bad weather hampered our aviators; they were often unable to observe the movements of the German troops, with the result that no warning was received of the German counter-



GROUND ROUND DRIE GRACHTEN.  
Showing inundations.

attacks. The same reason rendered it impossible to assist the ranging of the artillery, so that our infantry obtained but little help from the guns while contending against the masses hurled at them when assaulting the line of German posts. But still, on the whole, the new German method was not a success, as documents captured on October 4 showed that the German Higher Command at that date was endeavouring to revert to

the old practice of holding the forward positions in strength. But on August 16 the new tactics were still adhered to.

The French on Gough's left operating in or on the edge of the inundated region between the Noordschoote-Luyghem road, which crossed the Yperlee at Drie Grachten, and the south of St. Janshoek, a hamlet on the east bank of the Steenbeek, north of Bixschoote, had a somewhat easier task than the British.

Fully to appreciate what had been and was to be accomplished by the French and British struggling to break out from the Ypres salient, one must remember that, difficult as had been the task when Joffre and French, in the third week of October 1914, had contemplated a thrust through Thourout on Ostend, Bruges, and Ghent, it had become, by August 1917, an infinitely more complicated problem for the Allies to advance in the Belgian plain. Foch's judicious employment of the information given him by the Belgian authorities and the resulting inundations had largely contributed to the favourable result of the Battle of the Yser. The Germans in their turn had resorted to similar methods. With further inundations they had secured as far as was possible their right flank between Dixmude and Bixschoote. In addition to these they had constructed a system of fortifications calculated to stop an adversary endeavouring to traverse or circumvent the flooded area. The bridge-



SCENE NEAR LUYGHEM.

(Belgian official photograph.)



PLAN OF THE WORKS AT DRIE GRACHTEN, PHOTOGRAPHED FROM AN AEROPLANE.

head of Drie Grachten formed an important point in these works, constructed largely by forced labour, to render the German front impregnable.\* It blocked the Noordschoote-Luyghem road where it crossed the Yperlee Canal just north of its junction with the flooded Steenbeek, which—after it receives the waters of the Kortebeek—is called the St. Jansbeek. From Luyghem a road ran south-eastwards to Verbrandemis and the chaussée which proceeded from Zudyschoote and Lizerne over the Yperlee at Steenstraat to Dixmude. To secure Luyghem and Merckem and reach the chaussée was necessary for the French if any attempt was to be made by them to reduce the vast fortress of the Forest of Houthulst lying south of Dixmude and north of Langemark.

The bridge-head of Drie Grachten also gave the Germans the power of debouching over the canal if they wished to counter-attack across it. By August 15 the French from Noordschoote to its south-west and from Bixchoote to its south-east were facing this bridge-head.

West of the Yperlee Canal it consisted of a semi-circular work which, from the nature of the soil, water being found immediately below the surface, had to be built above ground. It was mainly composed of reinforced concrete shelters connected by a raised trench composed of concrete, earth, and fascines, with a communication trench leading back to another shelter, where the commander of the

\* Drie Grachten means three ditches, *i.e.*, the three catchwater drains which served to carry off the water drained into them from the Polder land through which they ran.

post was located. Some hundred yards in front of this work, on the causeway, was a small blockhouse joined to the work by a communication trench dug in the north side of the road. Barbed wire entanglements—both standing out above the water and below it—extended in front of post and blockhouse. The post and blockhouse were athwart the road from



DRIE GRACHTEN BRIDGEHEAD.

Noordschoote to Luyghem. To the north of them was a redoubt, called "l'Eclurette" Redoubt, and another on the south, both west of the Yperlee. These redoubts corresponded with the ends of the defences on the eastern bank of the canal, and flanked them. They were identical in shape, being bastions 7 ft. above the inundations. Platforms aa, bb (see plan on p. 364) permitted the machine-guns to command a wide arc over the ground in front. The platforms had for their foundations bases of

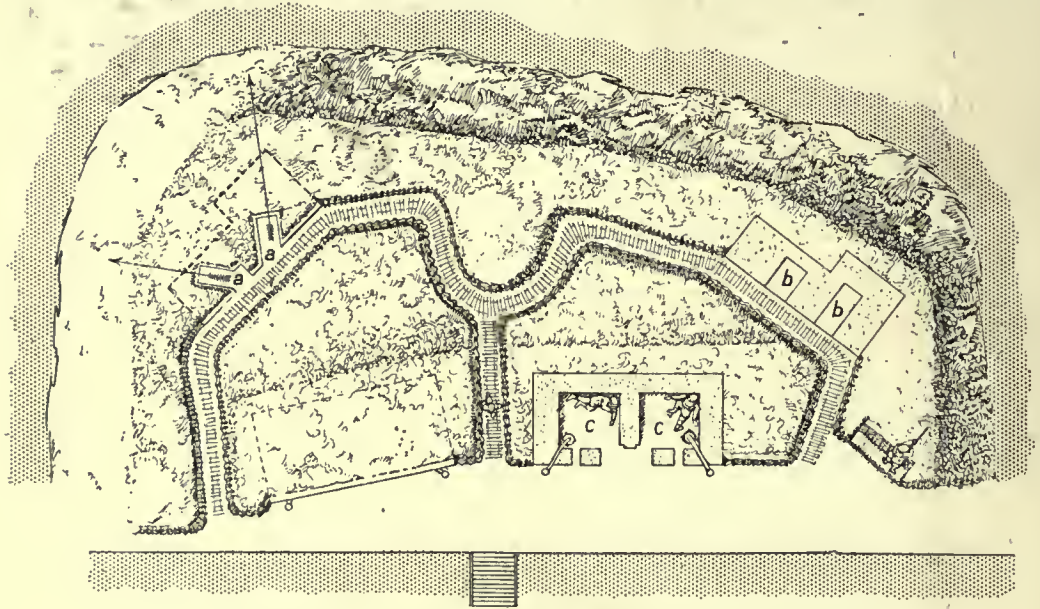


reinforced concrete in which were two chambers; one to contain the machine-gun and its cartridges, the other stores of grenades. Behind were two dug-outs, *cc* (see plan), for the garrison. They contained bunks, etc., and were connected by tunnels with the chambers and the platforms. The sides of these tunnels were wattled, their floors covered with mattresses.

Across the Yperlee on its eastern bank was a rampart of concrete or reinforced concrete running behind and parallel with the canal from a point opposite the Eclusette work to

through the floods, one to the north, the other to the south, of the road. On the causeway the Germans had constructed a light tramway, which, in places, ran through a tunnel made in the foundations of the road. Every 35 to 50 yards were traverses with reinforced concrete shelters, as refuges against fragments of bursting shells. Elaborate as all its arrangements were, it fell without very great difficulty on August 16.

The German redoubts in this part of the field were, indeed, better defined targets for the French guns than those in the morasses and



"L'ECLUSETTE" BLOCKHOUSE AT DRIE GRACHTEN.

the redoubt south of the blockhouse. The canal formed, as it were, a ditch to this rampart. At both ends and in the centre were a number of footbridges over the canal. The inner side of the rampart was every few yards provided with steps leading to the parapet, and its terreplein was a concrete platform on which the garrison stood when firing over the parapet. At intervals hollow traverses, formed by low-pitched concrete cabins, covered with earth, ran back from the rampart to protect it from enfilade fire. It was impossible to burrow in the water-logged soil; while to have raised the walls of the cabins higher would have rendered them a conspicuous mark for the French gunners.

The communications between this concrete rampart and the defences of the Luyghem peninsula consisted of the raised road from Drie Grachten to Luyghem, and of two footbridges

woods from the south of St. Janshoek across the Ypres-Staden and Ypres-Roulers railways to the road from Ypres to Menin, and more easily destroyed as they were almost entirely above ground. Owing, moreover, to the floods the enemy had difficulty in mustering his reserves near the threatened points, and the country being more open than it was opposite the British the French aircraft were, notwithstanding the weather, able to observe the position and during the night of the 15th-16th and on the morning of the 16th to bomb them, and the German bivouacs and cantonments north and east of Houthulst Forest as well as Lichtervelde railway station, 12 miles east of Dixmude. While the battle proceeded they and their Belgian colleagues, flying at a very low altitude, attacked with bomb and machine-gun fire enemy troops, railway trains and aviation grounds. Two German machines



[Belgian official photograph.]

## RUINS OF NOORDSCHOOTE.

were brought down and two driven down by the French; one was brought down by a Belgian airman over the Houthulst Forest. It was in that very considerable mass of still intact woodland that Sixt von Armin had concentrated the bulk of his reserves between Dixmude and Langemarck. Naturally, the French long-range guns gave particular attention to the forest. So effective was their fire that only dribbles of German infantry succeeded in debouching from it against Anthoine's right and Gough's left.

Anthoine's objectives were the Drie Grachten bridge-head and the whole triangular spit of land between the Lower Steenbeek and the Yperlee Canal. His right was to cross the Steenbeek and, in touch with Gough's left, to assist the British to clear the enemy from his positions north-west of Langemarck and south of the Broenbeek stream, which joins the Steenbeek just south of St. Janshoek. The Steenbeek at this point was some seven feet broad and five feet deep. It widened and deepened in the reach between St. Janshoek and the Steenstraat-Dixmude road, and from the Martjewaart reach to the Yperlee Canal it was some 20 feet broad and 13 feet deep.

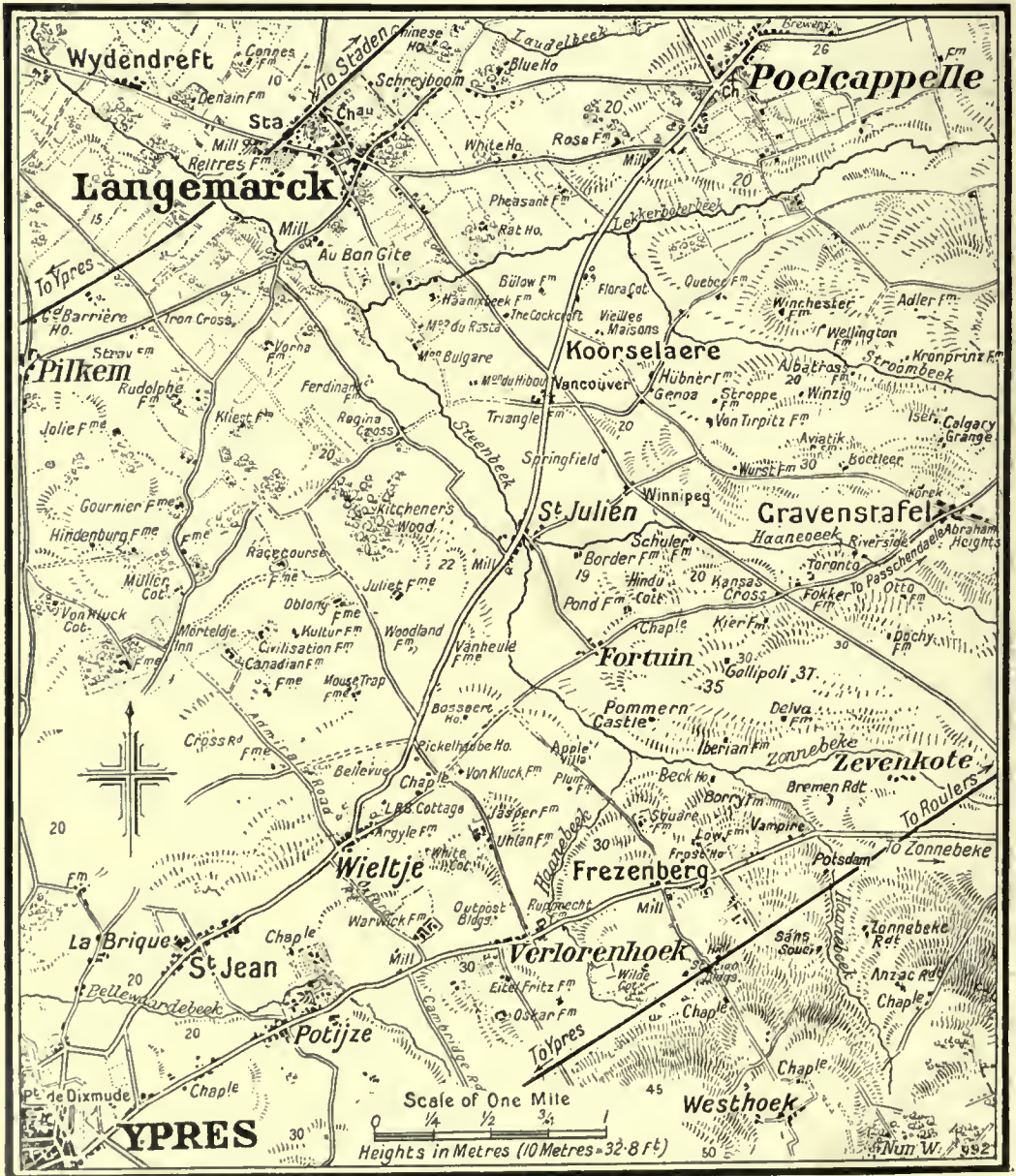
The French had already crossed the Yperlee

a little to the north of the Drie Grachten bridge-head, and N.W. of Bixschoote had driven the Germans out of a part of the marshy Poelsele peninsula, but numerous pill-boxes—mostly in the ruins of farmhouses—had yet to be reduced. North and north-east of Bixschoote the ground sloping to the Steenbeek was sprinkled with redoubts. A third of a mile west of the junction of the Broenbeek and Steenbeek was a steel and concrete fort, "Les Lilas," and in the angle between the two streams was "Mondovi," a similar obstacle. The French artillery, which had for some days previous to the attack bombarded the Drie Grachten bridge-head, had reduced it to impotence, the exposed concrete works being easily rendered untenable. Our Allies, on the 16th, waded through the submerged area and established themselves in the ruined works. In the Poelsele peninsula the enemy gave more trouble but by nightfall had been dislodged from all their strong points. The west bank of the Martjewaart reach of the Steenbeek was thus gained. North and north-east of Bixschoote the French also arrived at the west bank of the St. Janshoek reach, but the garrison of the Les Lilas fort continued to hold out, though surrounded on all sides.



The Upper Steenbeek was crossed by the French between a point west of Wydendreft and a bend in the stream south-west of St. Janshoek. Keeping in line with Gough's extreme left, they advanced to the south bank of the Broenbeek. The fort of Mondovi, however, at sunset, was still firing. Pivoting on it, the Germans counter-attacked during the night in the hope of penetrating between the French and British. The attack completely failed, and the next morning the French and our men lay side by side looking across the narrow valley of the Broenbeek. Apart from the resistance of the Les Lilas and Mondovi forts,

the French had achieved their objects on the 16th without much difficulty. There had, indeed, been some hard fighting at Champaubert Farm and Brienne House, two isolated groups of ruins, but the French guns were promptly turned on them. Brienne House at once, Champaubert Farm shortly afterwards, hoisted white flags. The day's take of prisoners amounted to over 300 (including four officers). Numerous guns, trench mortars and machine-guns had been captured by our Allies. During the night of August 16-17 French airmen set fire to the railway station buildings of Cortemarck, 10 miles east of Dixmude. On Friday,



YPRES, LANGEMARCK AND COUNTRY ROUND.

August 17, Anthoine completed his operations. The Les Lilas and Mondovi forts, against the concrete sides and roofs of which the lighter shells burst ineffectually, were not reduced until heavy howitzers were brought up. These opened fire in the morning and by nightfall both of these strong points were breached and then were surrendered by their garrisons. Some 23 Germans and two officers were captured at Les Lilas. The total of prisoners now exceeded 400 and some 15 German guns had been taken.\*

From the southern edge of the inundations and stretches of treacherous swamp between Dixmude and Drie Graecten the French line had been pushed forward to the western bank of the Steenbeek as far as the south of St. Janshoek. South of the Mondovi fort the Steenbeek had been crossed and the extreme right of Anthoine's army had swung northwards to the south bank of the Broenbeek. Consequently Gough's left wing was no longer in danger of being taken in reverse. Anthoine by his handling of his troops, guns and aircraft had further enhanced his great reputation. He had shown that he could manœuvre in the marshes of Flanders as skilfully as he had manœuvred on the hills of Moronvilliers. An especial tribute must be paid to the French engineers. Under heavy shell fire, in swamps and morasses they had repaired roads, bridged streams and constructed wire entanglements.

Simultaneously with the French advance to the Lower Steenbeek and the Broenbeek, the British 5th Army was set in motion. On the extreme left English troops abreast of the French stormed the hamlet of Wydendrecht, reached the southern bank of the Broenbeek and assisted their comrades on the right to storm Langemarck. The German 214th Division retired before them. In Langemarck on the Ypres-Staden railway and its environs the German 79th Reserve Division put up a fair resistance. The troops of this division had been terribly tried by the preliminary bombardment during the night of the 15th-16th. The 202nd and 261st Regiments belonging to it had been ordered to drive us back over the Steenbeek. But neither of them could be induced to face the British barrage.

\* French *communiqué* of August 17. The British *communiqué* of the same date stated that "24 German guns, including a number of heavy guns, had been captured by the Allies." See the map in the last chapter for the general lie of the country.

With grim satisfaction the Rifle Brigade, the Somerset Light Infantry, Cornish and other English county battalions, who had silently crossed the bridges over the Steenbeek and were lying in the muddy and water-logged region beyond, watched the ceaseless rain of shells from our guns. During the night the air was



[French official photograph.]

#### PRUSSIAN GUARDS OFFICERS RECEIVE THEIR BREAD RATION AS PRISONERS OF WAR.

clear and dry and the explosions of the projectiles lit up the foreground and threw into relief the hummocks of *débris* which marked the site of Langemarck, the shattered farms in its vicinity, and the squat, ugly, concrete redoubts established over the water-logged countryside. At intervals gusts of German shells burst among our men, churning up the mud, and poisoning the atmosphere with gas.

Towards dawn of the 16th a heavy mist came up and obscured the view. Then began the final, the intense bombardment, and the British, rising to their feet, and slipping or wading at every step, moved forward behind the creeping barrage. "It was a grand barrage," said a Gloucester man who took part in the advance. "The shells were laid out just in front of us as though a man was dropping them from a basket as he walked." Excellent, however, as was the artillery preparation in this sector of the battlefield, the physical and moral effort that was needed for





[Official photograph.]

#### CUTTING UP TREES FELLED BY SHELL-FIRE NEAR ZILLEBEKE.

The timber was used to strengthen trenches, make roads, etc.

the reduction of Langemarck was extraordinary. The approaches to the village were bogs or ponds. In some places the fields were flooded, and the roads had disappeared in the waste of shell-craters. Floundering in the mud which clung to boots and leggings, our troops visibly melted away under the jets of bullets fired from innumerable machine-guns.

Near the eastern bank of the Steenbeek was a broad, drab mass of reinforced concrete, ironically named "Au Bon Gîte" (The Good Shelter), on the site of an erstwhile estaminet for the refreshment of peasants returning from Langemarck railway station to their farms. A huge shell had failed to smash in the sides of this redoubt, which still kept up firing at our men. The steel door was fast bolted and nothing could be done but to fire at the slits in the walls. A group of our men encircled the work and kept up a fusillade, waiting to bomb the garrison if by chance the door were to be opened. Beyond the "Bon Gîte" the remainder of the English wave perceived on their left a similar fort, Reitres Farm, commanding all the ground between the Steenbeek and the village. It rose in front of a patch of green water, the lake of a demolished

château. Farther to the left, from gun pits on both sides of the Ypres-Staden railway, and from Langemarck railway station, German machine-gunners were firing with frantic haste at the left flank of their foes approaching Reitres Farm. Away to the right two lines of blackened trunks marked where the road from Pilkem through Langemarck to Poelcappelle had once run. Sinking up to their thighs in mud, our surviving men steadily pressed on. One of them with a Lewis gun crawled up to the redoubt and managed to thrust the muzzle through a loophole and fire. Shrieks and oaths followed the discharge, and, immediately afterwards, through another hole fluttered a strip of white cloth. The Prussian garrison surrendered, and Reitres Farm was ours. In the meantime the defenders of Bon Gîte, feeling themselves isolated, had opened its steel door and attempted to escape. Bombs flung in the doorway had killed several of them, and the rest, wounded or unwounded, had been taken prisoners.

The advance on Langemarck had begun at 4.45 a.m. The ruins of the village church, the gun pits along the railway, the station and other strong points were not secured till



[French official photograph.]

**FRENCH FIRST-AID STATION ESTABLISHED IN A CAPTURED GERMAN BLOCKHOUSE.**

8 a.m. The English troops on the right of the French having stormed Wydendref had attacked gun pits and station from the north, while their comrades round Reitres Farm were assaulting them from the south. The next step was to attack the trench system running crescent-wise behind the village. To the support of the disordered 79th Reserve Division was being sent the 24th Württemberg Division, a body of tough and seasoned troops. The Somersets advanced along the road towards Schreyboom, a hamlet on the northern of the two roads connecting Langemarck with Poelcappelle. At Pont Point were, along the side of the road, two redoubts with loopholes and steel doors. A lieutenant with 20 men made for the first. He reduced it with bombs and captured 30 prisoners. Though only six unwounded men were left with him, the lieutenant proceeded to assault the second of the strong points. He flung two grenades through the loopholes but the garrison still resisted. Then he threw his bombs at the steel door. They failed to explode. Beating at the door with his fists he shouted "Come out, you —, come out!" To his surprise the door opened and 42 Germans with a Yorkshire-

man whom they had taken emerged, holding up their hands. It is pleasant to relate that the Yorkshireman had been well treated by his captors. A third blockhouse armed with eight machine-guns, which worked on a hydraulic lift, was then reduced, and the lieutenant, firing with his automatic pistol, chased a number of the enemy up the road. He and his men went on and joined a group of Somersets, King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, and Rifle Brigade men. This was but one of the many heroic incidents which resulted in the transfer to the British of the whole of the crescent-shaped defensive system behind Langemarck with the exception of a short length of trench north-east of the village. Two counter-attacks of the Germans on August 16 were easily repulsed.

The capture of the line of the Lower Steenbeek and the Broenbeek and of Langemarck by Anthoine's right and Gough's left wing secured the British from the danger of being attacked in the rear while they were engaged in dislodging the enemy from the Passchendaele Ridge. That danger had been a very real one, for under cover of the Forest of Houthulst it was possible for Sixt von Armin to assemble



large forces without being perceived and, as the Germans had done at the Second Battle of Ypres, to launch them through Bixschoote and Langemarek on Ypres. The French position stopped this. So far, then, the operations of August 16 were a distinct success for the Allies, as along the left half of the battlefield they had been almost everywhere victorious. Unhappily between the eastern environs of Langemarek, across the Ypres-Roulers railway to the road from Ypres to Menin, the day went badly for Gough. It was here that the British were faced by the network of large concrete forts before referred to and were also exposed to the



*(Australian official photograph.)*

#### THE GATEWAY OF THE BATTLEFIELD.

heaviest shell fire. Sixt von Armin, not being attacked that day by Plumer's Second Army, was able to concentrate against Gough's centre and right wing a vast number of guns and to employ extra battalions in counter-attacks. Consequently Gough, despite the courage and dash of his men, on the centre and right suffered a decided reverse. West Lancashire Territorials and troops from other English counties, indeed, managed to advance 1,000 yards east of Langemarek and to establish themselves on a line running from the old German third line due east of the village to the north of St. Julien, thereby protecting our garrison in and around Langemarek from a flank attack. Incidentally they stormed a powerful work near the road from Ypres to Poelcappelle. another pill-box farther north

near Koorselaere, and a third one 700 yards or so east of St. Julien. But the enemy on the Mt. du Hibou, in Triangle Farm to its south, in Winnipeg Farm on the Langemarek-Zonnebeke cross-road, and in Wurst Farm north of the latter strong point, counter-attacked very violently. Though these regiments took 400 prisoners and materially assisted the Cornish, Somersets, and Rifle Brigade in their reduction and retention of Langemarek, they were unable to turn the very strong position to their right, against which the Ulster and South Irish troops were dashing themselves in vain.

It will be recollected that the Ulster and South Irish Divisions had particularly distinguished themselves in the fighting at Messines, where Major Willie Redmond, M.P., lost his life. Severely as they had been tested on June 7, it was a far sterner task they were set on Thursday, August 16. They were confronted by the new German elastic system of defence in its most perfect form and the enemy opposed to them—Bavarians—had not had their nerves shaken by the explosion of mines of unprecedented magnitude. Deployed between Fortuin (south-south-east of St. Julien on the road from Ypres to the northern outskirts of Passchendaele) and the Ypres-Roulers Railway south of Frezenberg, the Irish objective was the Langemarek-Zonnebeke road which, as we have seen, was reached and crossed by the English troops on their left to the west of the Ypres-Poelcappelle road but not—nearer the Irish—between the south of Koorselaere and Winnipeg Farm. The Ulster Division was on the left, the Inniskillings, Dublin Fusiliers and Royal Irish Rifles of the South Irish Division were on the right in the order named. The Royal Irish Rifles were to work up the Ypres-Roulers railroad to the western edge of Zonnebeke.

The undulating ground in front of the Irish was sodden with rain, pitted with craters and defended by many pill-boxes. Clay and earth had been piled up round the edges of the craters, which were fitted with wooden platforms and high steps for the machine-gunners in them. Here and there barbed wire entanglements had escaped the British bombardment. The Haanebeck and Zonnebeke streams, both swollen by the rain in places, ran across the line of advance. The Zonnebeke north of Frezenberg entered our lines south-west of Fortuin and then turned northwards and at St. Julien received the Haanebeck, flowing down from the

Passchendaele Ridge; west of St. Julien the two conjoined streams were called the Steenbeek.

At 4.45 a.m. the Ulstermen set out. They speedily ejected the handful of Bavarians in the first crater line, but then their troubles began. Close to their starting point an old battery position had been converted into a nest of machine-guns, and beyond rose the solid concrete structure of Pond Farm redoubt, with its chain of deep dug-outs. With bayonet and bomb the Ulstermen gradually overpowered the tenacious foe and resumed their advance. But from Hill 35, south of the Langemarck-Zonnebeke road, torrents of bullets poured down on them; they were enfiladed from the Gallipoli redoubt and held up by a broad entanglement of barbed wire. While cutting their way through this they were mown down in heaps. They succeeded in taking a post—"The Caserne"—near Border Farm, but, fiercely counter-attacked, were obliged to relinquish it. Step by step they were forced back and at nightfall the Pond Farm was again in the hands of the Bavarians. The experiences of the South Irish Division were very similar. The Inniskillings crossed the Zonnebeke, captured two redoubts, and temporarily gained the summit of Hill 37, but, unsupported on both flanks, they too were forced to retire. The Dublin Fusiliers to the right were held up by the

machine-guns of the Bremen redoubt, while the Royal Irish Rifles, who had worked up the Ypres-Roulers railway as far as the level crossing and endeavoured with details of the Dublin Fusiliers to carry Hill 35 from the east, were in their turn flung back by masses of Germans advancing from the direction of Zonnebeke. By the end of the afternoon the attack between Fortuin and the Ypres-Roulers railway had been bloodily repulsed.

The reverse suffered by Gough's centre between Fortuin and the Ypres-Roulers railway was not counter-balanced by successes in the wooded region south of the railroad. There the weather conditions, rendering aeroplane observation very difficult, told most heavily against the British, for the woods east of Westhoek enabled Sixt von Armin to conceal preparations for counter-attacks better than in the open country from Langemarck to Zonnebeke, although parts of the wood had been reduced to tree stumps by our gun-fire. To retain the Nonne Bosen, Polygon and Glencorse Woods and Inverness Copse was rightly considered by the German commander to be a matter of vital importance. If Gough from the Westhoek ridge drove the Germans eastwards through the Nonne Bosen and Polygon Woods, he would not only menace Zonnebeke from the south but he would be on the edge of the Passchendaele Ridge. Were



[Australian official photograph.]

ZONNEBEKE.



Glencorse Wood and Inverness Copse lost by the Germans, their hold on Herenthage Château, Dumbarton Lakes and Shrewsbury Forest would become precarious, and Veldhoek, Gheluvelt and Zandvoorde might ultimately have to be abandoned. The Battle of Messines had secured the Allies from a thrust at their communications west of Ypres. The chances of a successful German drive at Ypres from the north were now small; during the day they had become smaller; consequently a counter-offensive against Ypres from the east on both sides of the Ypres-Menin road was the last move left open to Sixt von Armin, if he wished by active measures to prevent the Allies moving on Thourout and Roulers. He had, therefore, massed the bulk of his guns and reserves on the line Zonnebeke-Gheluvelt-Zandvoorde. In front of them the 34th Division in the woods north of the Ypres-Menin road was ordered at all costs to defend the pill-boxed zone.

Along the Westhoek ridge from the Ypres-Roulers railroad to the road to Menin, Gough had deployed English county and London regiments for the attack. The Londoners were in the centre and their objectives were the Glencorse, Nonne Boschen, and Polygon Woods.

Their comrades on the left in touch with the Royal Irish Rifles were to descend the ridge and gain the west bank of the Haanebeek; Inverness Copse was to be stormed by the troops on the right of the Londoners.

At 4.45 a.m., in successive waves, the English county and London battalions moved slowly forward through the woods and morasses. They had been out all night in the wet mud under heavy fire. At first it seemed that the Londoners would be successful. Disregarding machine-gun fire from Inverness Copse, they broke through Glencorse Wood. A powerful German barrage fell upon them as they struggled northwards along the west side of Nonne Boschen Wood, which, owing to the floods, was mostly under water. At the northern end of the woodland they found a redoubt tucked away among shattered trees. It was reduced by bombing, as also was another pill-box beyond it on the road from Zonnebeke to Veldhoek, which skirts the east of the wood. From the western edge of Polygon Wood many machine-guns played on the now disordered men. Yet groups of Londoners waded through the Nonne Boschen Wood, others proceeded north of it on the drier ground, while detachments managed to cross the open space, enter



[French official photograph.]

RESULTS OF ARTILLERY FIRE IN FLANDERS.



AT BAY IN A SHELL-CRATER: HOLDING UP A COUNTER ATTACK WITH LEWIS GUNS.

the belt of trees and bombing and bayoneting to arrive at the great racecourse in the centre of Polygon Wood. There they halted and waited for reinforcements to resist counter-attacks.

Unluckily the reinforcements did not arrive. They were kept off by the enemy's barrage of shells, while the failure of the troops on the left to advance and those on the right to capture Inverness Copse, left the Londoners exposed to flank attacks. The only assistance they received was from the air. One of our daring battle planes hovered over the main street of Zonnebeke and above Polygon Wood, scattering the Germans mustering for counter-attacks. Other aeroplanes with their machine-guns peppered the approaches to the wood, dropped bombs on the concrete redoubts defending its flanks, silenced batteries, and dispersed a column of the enemy on the Menin road.

At 2 p.m. counter-attacks commenced from all sides. The Germans poured over the ridge south of Zonnebeke, issued from Inverness Copse and Herenthage Wood, from shell holes and from Polygon Wood itself. The Londoners fought stubbornly. Their position may be gathered from the following message signalled by a Middlesex officer commanding one of the groups. "Am in shell hole, before second objective," it ran, "and two strong points held by the enemy. Have ten men with me. We are surrounded, and heavy

machine-gun fire is being turned on us. Regret no course but to surrender. Can't see any of our forces." Some of our small advanced bodies were more fortunate, and, cutting their way through the encircling foe, re-entered Nonne Boschen and Glencorse Woods and reached our lines in safety.

The second phase of the Third Battle of Ypres had resulted in another success for Anthoine and, between the Broenbeek and St. Julien, in a success for Gough. But, in the words of Sir Douglas Haig, "except for some small gains of ground on the western edge of Glencorse Wood and north of Westhoek the situation south of St. Julien remained unchanged." Against the severe losses sustained by the Ulster and South Irish Divisions and the English County and London regiments fighting on their right was to be set the fact that in the course of the day the Allies had captured over 2,100 prisoners and some 30 guns. The German official report of the fighting was characteristic. It falsely alleged that Gough's troops had entered Poelcappelle and been expelled from both that village and Langemarck; also that Plumer's Second Army had taken part in the battle. As a specimen of German mendacity, the report deserves to be reprinted:

FRONT OF THE CROWN PRINCE RUPPRECHT.—The second great fighting day of the Flanders battle has been decided in our favour, thanks to the bravery of all arms, thanks to the never-failing attacking strength of our incomparable German infantry.



On the morning of August 15, after an hour's drum-fire, the flower of the English Army, accompanied by French forces on the northern wing, burst forward, deeply echeloned, to the attack.

On a front of 30 kilometres (18½ miles), from the Yser as far as the Lys, the battle raged throughout the day. Our advanced posts on the Yser Canal near Drie Grachten were overrun. The enemy also captured the ground before the battle position of the Martje Vaart, north and east of Bixchoote, which was yielded step by step by our protecting troops.

The English penetrated our lines near Langemarek, and by means of reinforcements pushed forward as far as Poelcappelle. At this point they were met by a counter-

had brought down 15 and driven down 11 of the enemy's machines. One German observation balloon had been sent to the ground in flames; hostile aerodromes, which were now roofed with bullet-proof steel, had been cleared with machine-gun fire from a height of a few score feet, and 6½ tons of bombs had been dropped on enemy aerodromes, railway stations and billets. During the day 73 hostile batteries were silenced and subsequent observation



[Official photograph.]

#### MAKING A ROAD UNDER SHELL-FIRE.

attack on the part of our fighting reserves. In an irresistible assault the foremost enemy troops were overpowered and his rear echelons were thrown back. By the evening, after tough fighting, Langemarek and our lost position was again in our hands.

Also near St. Julien, and at numerous points farther south as far as Warneton, the enemy, whose shattered attacking troops were continually reinforced, penetrated into our new battle zone. In all other sectors of the extensive battlefield the English assault collapsed before our entanglements.

In spite of heavy sacrifices, the English have accomplished nothing! By this repulse we have gained a full victory. Unshaken, with high spirits, our front stands ready for new battles!

As we have seen, our airmen, though, owing to the weather, they had often been unable to detect preparations for counter-attacks, had rendered on August 16 good service. The German aviators had had 10 days' rest; they had been reinforced with one or more of their circuses; and a strong west wind made it difficult for damaged British and French machines to regain their lines. Nevertheless, with the loss of 11 aeroplanes, the British

showed that 21 gun-pits had been entirely destroyed and 35 others badly damaged. Further, 18 ammunition dumps were exploded and 15 considerable fires caused. Our men had flown a total of 1,784 hours in the 24 hours ending at 6 p.m. on the 16th. In addition to the aerial incidents already related, some others which occurred on the 16th are well worth recording. One aeroplane, going through our barrage several times, attacked the "Au Bon Gîte" redoubt, others fired on German troops entering or leaving Langemarek. A British airman flew off at 4.45 a.m., attacked an aerodrome with his machine-guns, fired 500 rounds at three Albatros machines on the ground and into the billets of their crews. Proceeding above a main road, he shot the horses of a transport wagon, at a railway crossing killed or wounded a German sentry, and a little farther on stampeded a horse transport. All this was accomplished in an



[French official photograph.]

**NIGHT SCENE AT AN AVIATION STATION: A MACHINE ABOUT TO START.**

hour at a height of less than 100 feet. Another of these brave men bombed seven machines at a German aerodrome, crossed a railway line, saw a train on a siding and fired at it. Visiting another aerodrome he set a hangar on fire. Afterwards he engaged a railway engine. Still one more airman flew in the darkness over a German aerodrome, bombed the hangars and a railway siding, which was crammed with troop trains, attacked and destroyed two Albatross machines, silenced a machine-gun and wounded or killed many of the enemy.

Two more examples of the daring displayed by our airmen may be given. One of our men in his aerial journey found a machine just about to rise from the ground, so he dived and fired into and wrecked it, then circled round

and continued to shatter the wreckage. He made a tour of the aerodrome, firing into the sheds from below the level of the roof, but as no one appeared, he went away and found a German battery in action. He stooped at it, fired along the line of guns, and silenced them. Then he flew over the battery for five minutes lest it should recommence firing, but as it did not he returned home and used the remainder of his ammunition on enemy trenches in passing. The second incident, also, shows the efficacy of aircraft under varying aspects. Here the aviator attacked an aerodrome, circling round at a height of 20 feet, firing into every shed and setting one on fire. A two-seater machine was being got out when he arrived, so he wrecked that and used all the



[Official photograph.]

**ON THE FLANDERS FRONT: A SCENE IN ONE OF THE CAPTURED VILLAGES**

A shell-crater in the road has been filled with sand-bags.





[Official photograph.]

#### PACK MULES GOING TO THE FRONT WITH SHELLS.

rest of the ammunition he could spare flying up and down a railway train full of troops in a siding, firing into it through the roofs and the windows.

Remembering that the above feats had to be performed in the face of the fire of machine-guns and anti-aircraft guns of the latest and most powerful design, and that at any moment our men might be pounced upon by enemy aviators from the sky above them, the courage and ability displayed were marvellous. Before the war flying had been regarded as a most hazardous occupation. Few would have then imagined that by 1917 thousands of men would be unconcernedly risking their lives in the air under circumstances so infinitely more nerve-racking. Nor was the Royal Naval Air Service inactive on the 16th. It bombed Ostend and Thourout railway stations and sidings, and Ghistelles aerodrome. Aerodromes and road transport at Uytkerke, a mile inland from Blankenberghe, and at Engel, half-way between Ghistelles and Thourout, were attacked by naval aeroplanes, but harmlessly.

The formidable character of the German fortified zone between the Ypres-Comines canal and the Ypres-Roulers railroad and the

methods of Sixt von Armin's system of elastic defence were now fully evident to Sir Douglas Haig, Sir Hubert Gough, and Sir Herbert Plumer. To penetrate that zone an attack on a wider front would be required. In view of the counter-attacks which had been directed against the flank of the Londoners and English county battalions from the woods south of the road to Menin, the region thence to the Ypres-Roulers railway could not safely be treated as an independent sector. The next great blow would have to be struck on both sides of the road. A question arose whether or not it should be struck by Gough with his right wing. If it were to be, that wing would have to be prolonged southward to the Ypres-Comines canal. The 5th Army, however, had borne the brunt of the fighting since July 31 and its losses had been considerable. The numbers at Sir Douglas Haig's disposal in France did not justify him in weakening Horne's, Byng's, and Rawlinson's Armies to reinforce Gough's four corps. The campaigns in Palestine and Mesopotamia competed with that in France for such forces as were being newly raised. Every day the situation in Russia was becoming worse, and the possibility or probability that Ludendorff might, in

his turn, take the offensive on the Western Front had to be reckoned with. Against that eventuality it was necessary to keep a mass for manœuvre in reserve; for the district in which Ludendorff might attack was uncertain. Sir Douglas had, therefore, no option but to continue the operations in the Ypres salient with the 5th and 2nd Armies, and as Plumer's troops, backed by the Wytschaete-Messines ridge, were in a stronger position than Gough's, and had had since the Battle of Messines the easier work to perform, it was clearly more advisable to extend Plumer's left than Gough's right. Accordingly, the attack upon the whole of the high wooded ground crossed by the Ypres-Menin road was entrusted to Sir Herbert Plumer. That able soldier had shown at Messines that he was peculiarly fitted to carry out an operation of the kind contemplated.

At the same time a modification of our artillery tactics to meet the situation created by the change in the enemy's methods of defence was made. Sixt von Armin's front being only lightly held, our gunners would henceforth have to bestow more attention on the background of the battle. This involved the guns

being brought nearer to our first lines, which meant, to quote Sir Douglas Haig, that "the long preparatory bombardment had to be conducted from a narrow and confined space, for the most part destitute alike of cover and protection and directly overlooked by the enemy. As our infantry advanced," continued Sir Douglas, "our guns had to follow, at the cost of almost incredible exertion, over ground torn by shell fire and sodden with rain. When at length the new positions had been reached, our batteries had to remain in action, practically without protection of any kind, day after day, week after week, and even month after month, under a continuous bombardment of gas and high explosive shells."

In connexion with the above quotation it will be noted that the German Higher Command by its Order of June 30 had immensely increased the difficulties of our artillerymen and also of our aeroplane observers. (See last chapter, p. 328).

The extension of Plumer's left wing and the steps in connexion with the modification of our artillery tactics delayed the renewal of the offensive on a large scale. The weather, too, again became wet and did not improve until the beginning of September. During the



[Official photograph.]

BRIDGING A STREAM.



remainder of August, with the exception of the Fourth Battle of Verdun, which was begun on August 20, only minor actions were fought on the Western Front.

The day after the Battle of Langemarck, as the second phase of the Third Battle of Ypres was currently called, the aviators of Anthoine's army were active. During the night of the 17th-18th they bombarded the railway stations of Ostend, Cortemarck, Lichtervelde, Thourout and Cambrai and hutments in the Forest of Houthulst. The railway station at Thourout had been visited the night before (August 16-17) at midnight by our

north of St. Julien. The enemy thought our infantry was about to attack. Up went rockets bursting into white and coloured stars and the tired garrisons of redoubts and craters rose wearily to repel the attack. A succession of German barrages was flung between Koorse-laere and St. Julien. The minutes passed and no movement could be detected in the British lines. German observers strained their eyes through the mist. The German guns were notified that a false alarm had been given. Suddenly at dawn some 12 tanks were perceived crawling up towards the Triangle Farm, Mt. du Hibou and Cockerott redoubts which barred



*Official photograph.*

#### LONDON MOTOR OMNIBUSES ON THE ROADSIDE.

Royal Naval Air Service, when fires had been caused, an ammunition dump hit and the railway damaged. On Friday, August 17, strong westerly winds again prevailed in Flanders, but our airmen succeeded in bringing down 12 enemy machines, in driving down 18 others out of control, in obtaining an unusually large number of photographs, and in bombing and harassing with machine-gun fire the German positions and infantry. But 12 of our machines were missing, two of which collided during a fight and fell within the enemy's lines. The next day, Saturday, August 18, we, however, lost eight, and brought down only three, while four German machines were driven down out of control.

Sunday, August 19, was also the date of the first of the minor operations in the Ypres salient above referred to. Soon after midnight our guns violently shelled the German positions

the road from St. Julien to Poelcappelle and had resisted all our efforts on the 16th. Rockets again shot up and the German guns flung gusts of shells at the iron monsters. It was too late; they were already encircling the redoubts. Bullets pattered against the sides of the tanks; grenades exploded above and below them. The crews with their guns blew holes in the steel doors or fired their machine-guns through the slits. The garrisons of the redoubts surrendered or fled and our infantry came up and established themselves in the captured strong points. One tank had its machinery put out of order. The crew destroyed its vitals, slipped out and with Lewis guns helped the infantry. Our casualties were 30 and we had advanced our line 500 yards on a front of about a mile. There was no more fighting during the day, but in the air hostile aeroplanes working in large formations struggled to prevent our airmen



[Australian official photograph.]

## SCENE NEAR THE MENIN ROAD.

bombing, photographing, and observing. Two German machines were brought down, four others driven down out of control, and one shot down by anti-aircraft guns. An enemy train was wrecked, and damage done to aerodromes, dumps and stations. About midnight (August 19-20) the Royal Naval Air Service dropped tons of bombs on Middelkerke dump, near Ostend, and on the Brugeoise works. On the 20th, French aircraft bombarded the railway stations of Thourout, Staden, Roulers and Gits—a station north of Roulers—and our airmen, losing four, brought down nine and drovo down out of control seven German machines. The next day (August 21) we were not so relatively successful. Twelve of our aeroplanes were missing—two had collided during a bombing raid—as against as many brought down and five others driven down out of control.

On Wednesday, August 22, a vigorous action was fought east and north-east of Ypres. In the forenoon of that day the Kaiser addressed in Flanders deputations from Sixt von Armin's troops. He thanked them for their gallantry and contrasted the German with the Anglo-French view of the world! The grandson of Queen Victoria then proceeded to pour out his spleen on the British troops:

It is in God's hands when He will give us victory. He has taught our Army a hard lesson, and now we are going to pass the examination. With the old German confidence in God we will show what we can do. The greater and mightier the problem the more gladly will we grapple with it and solve it. We will fight and conquer until the enemy has had enough.

In these struggles all the Germans have realized who is the instigator of this war and who the chief enemy—England.

Everybody knows that England is our most spiteful adversary. She spreads her hatred of Germany over the whole world, steadily filling her Allies with hatred and eagerness to fight. Thus everybody at home knows what you know still better, that England is particularly the enemy to be struck down however difficult it may be. Your relatives at home, who have



[Australian official photograph.]

## WATER-CARRIERS FOLLOWING THE TAPE TO THE FRONT LINE.

made great sacrifices too, thank you through me. A difficult struggle is in front of us. When England, proud of her stubborn resistance, believes in her invincibility, you will show that you can do better, for the price of the war is the German people's freedom to live, freedom at sea and freedom at home. With God's help we will see the struggle through and be victorious.

It was no doubt a consolation to the British to see that even the Kaiser thought the





[Official photograph.]

#### A WORKING PARTY GOING FORWARD NEAR YPRES.

decision of the contest between night and right lay in God's hands. They could well afford to leave it there.

Two attacks were launched by the British Army, one north and east of St. Julien, the other astride the Ypres-Menin road. Both were preceded by a long and searching intensive bombardment. The first of these attacks was the consequence of the success gained by the tanks on the morning of the 19th. The capture of the Triangle Farm, Mt. du Hibou and Cockcroft redoubts on or along the road from St. Julien to Poelcappelle had enabled us to turn from the north-west the very strong position which on the 16th had defied all the efforts of the Ulster and South Irish Divisions. The Ulstermen had been replaced by Midland, the South Irish by Scottish troops, opposed to whom were Bavarians. Pivoting on the three captured redoubts, the aim of the British was to swing their line towards or to the Langemarek-Zonnebeke road. They were already across this road from near the Mt. du Hibou redoubt to Langemarek. Their advance south-eastwards down it was blocked by two strong points, the Winnipeg and Schuler Farm redoubts and the various strongholds on and about Hills 37 and 35 which had baffled the Ulstermen and South Irish. Tanks assisted in the advance, which ended in our pushing our line forward

on a front of two and a half miles to a depth, in one place, of over half a mile.

On the 22nd fighting of considerable importance occurred near Inverness Copse, Glencorse Copse and Herenthage Château. The two adversaries here occupied a front line of shell craters (most of them half full of water) and the hostile positions were separated by a quagmire, the result of the swaying movements of the combatants combined with the continual shell-fire.

Along both sides of the Ypres-Menin road the struggle was very bitter. Our line ran from opposite Glencorse Wood on the left past Stirling Castle, which was in our possession, then crossing the Ypres-Menin road. It was the comparatively high ground which our men occupied that formed the German objective, while the intention of the British Commander was to push the Germans still farther back and occupy the whole of the line which ran along past Polygon Wood, thrusting the enemy down the reverse slope of the hill.

In front of the British troops was Inverness Copse, a thousand yards in length and about five hundred in depth, strengthened with many concrete blockhouses and other defences and difficult to penetrate owing to the fallen trees which, half blown away and tangled up with tree stumps, formed an exceedingly difficult obstacle to our troops.

South of the Ypres-Menin road were the ruins of Herenthage Château, an old château which had been transformed into a formidable work by the usual concrete constructions. North of Inverness Copse the Germans had three lines of trenches which still afforded them some shelter though they had been severely handled by our guns. There were also three blockhouses which were intact and strongly garrisoned.

At 7 a.m. the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry on the left and the Somerset Light Infantry on their right started to take the German line, preceded by an artillery barrage and supported by other infantry units and by some tanks. The Cornishmen when they went forward were at once met by blasts of machine-gun fire from the pill-boxes; but, in spite of these, they pressed forward and forced an entry into Inverness Copse and began to attack these concrete blockhouses. Round one of these our men swarmed, but although they managed to keep down its fire by discharging their rifles through the loopholes, they could not beat in the entrance door. The word was passed back for the sappers to come up with gun cotton. They did so and the steel door

was immediately blown in and the few of the garrison who remained were killed fighting. On the left of this regiment's attack the men were held up by machine-gun fire from Glencorse Copse and by a pill-box north of Inverness Copse. But a gallant and determined charge of the Cornishmen conquered both those obstacles and the blockhouse itself was entered and the garrison killed. Meanwhile the Somerset Light Infantry, moving on the right of the Duke of Cornwall's, had stormed Herenthage Château. The combat was a severe and bloody one, but the Germans were outfought and their post captured, only one of the garrison surviving. Our troops then proceeded to establish themselves in front of the Château and on the enemy's edge of Inverness Copse.

Unfortunately the left of the attack by these two regiments had not been so successful. Here the enemy held ground to the east of Clapham Junction, where there was a strongly fortified farm with six machine guns. Progress was impossible, and men were dropping fast when fortunately a tank came up and took up a position close to the German work. The fire from its guns and machine-guns was so vigorous



[Australian official photograph.]

MATERIAL FOR ENTANGLEMENTS BROUGHT UP DURING THE BATTLE OF MENIN HEIGHTS.





A GERMAN ATTACK WITH FLAME-THROWERS.

that the fire of the garrison slackened. The Cornishmen then went on again, burst through the defences and disposed of the whole of the garrison with their bayonets. It was now 10 o'clock and the contest had lasted three hours. The Somerset and the Cornwall Light Infantry and the other troops acting with them had suffered heavy losses and were hanging on to the positions they had so hardly won with numbers which were scarcely equal to the situation. It was at this juncture that the Germans counter-attacked. A hurricane of shells swept through the captured position of Inverness Copse, and behind this barrage, which was flung on the line from every gun the Germans could bring to bear, there came from the east of Inverness Copse and from the south of it masses of storm-troops bent on re-establishing the German line on the ground held before the recent fighting.

A first attack we drove back and then a second, but a third came on in even greater strength. The Somersets, depleted as they were, sent back to say they were being turned on either flank and could not hold on, and proposed, therefore, to retire half-way back through Inverness Copse. A few supports from the Light Infantry Division reached them, but only sufficient to enable the retiring line to fall back more slowly. The Cornish Light Infantry formed a defensive flank to cover the left of the rearward movement, and these new dispositions sufficed to beat back once more the German attack. Another assault was delivered by the enemy at noon and was stopped by our infantry and machine-gun fire. Two hours later a fifth attempt was made, this time to turn our left flank, but the massing of the assailant's troops had been observed and reported to our artillery in rear and the fire of our guns was so destructive that the assault was blown away before it had really come forward.

There was now a pause in fighting probably due on both sides to exhaustion, and in the evening the position we held was roughly what it had been in the afternoon. Our men held ground to the east of Stirling Castle and part of Inverness Copse, and there they passed the night in great discomfort but with courage undiminished. Artillery fire was kept up on them from one in the morning with great vigour and about half-past three became very intense. It was the prelude to another attack, this time the lead being given to the enemy's flame-throwers. For a short space the Duke of

Cornwall's men fell back before the flames, but it was only a step to the rear before two steps forward. Then they turned on their foes, and rifle bullets and flashing bayonets proved better than burning flames. As our men went forward they saw several of the flame-throwers fall down before their fire, and in doing so let their flames in several instances fall on their own men who were seen to burn briskly, doubtless fed by the escaping liquid they carried from the cases penetrated by British bullets. It was a terrible sight to see these human torches writhing in the agony they had hoped to inflict on the British. Once more the baffled Germans fell back before the calm courage of our infantry and abandoned further attempts for the night. Our men still held their line.

The German version of the fighting was as usual a travesty of fact. The Crown Prince of Bavaria reported that his troops had wrested from us the gains made in the recent fighting south of the Ypres-Menin road and that the lost trenches had been recaptured and held. He also reported that on the 22nd the English lost 21 tanks which lay destroyed before the German front. Some of the occupants who had not been killed were made prisoners. We know the truth about the trenches; some tanks were disabled, but not even the German Commander-in-Chief had the face to claim the capture of any one of them. Sir Douglas Haig's statement that we had carried the British line on the Ypres-Menin road some 500 yards farther forward on a front of a mile, thus gaining an important position for observation over the ground to the east (which accounts for the desperate counter-attacks of the Germans) and had established a position in the western part of Inverness Copse, gives the true position.

One solid fact can be claimed by the Allies, viz., that up to August 22, since the beginning of April 1917, when the year's campaign opened with the Battle of Arras, they had, on the Western Front, captured 90,000 German prisoners besides a huge mass of machine-guns and many pieces of artillery in addition to considerable gains in reconquered territory.

On the 23rd a strong attack made on our position east of Langemark was stopped by machine-gun fire. On the 24th the enemy attacked again with great strength in the neighbourhood of the Ypres-Menin road and forced back our troops from some of the ad-



vanced posts we had won on the 22nd. The struggle was one of great intensity, and the combat swayed backwards and forwards, but the net result was that along this road we had to give up some of the ground won on the 22nd. At the same time our troops were heavily engaged in the Inverness Copse and Glencorse Wood and continued fighting late into the night. Our artillery played an important part in this



[Canadian War Records.]

#### AN OLD GERMAN TRENCH NEAR THE MENIN ROAD.

struggle, and several times its fire alone dispersed troops assembled for assault.

The 25th saw but little done on this sector, but on the 26th the Germans again made another desperate bid to regain the ground they had lost, with the aid of a severe artillery fire and an infantry attack preceded by flame-throwers. They succeeded in reoccupying the north-west corner of Inverness Copse, but were at once counter-attacked and driven out and our troops occupied the line they had held in the morning. On this day, too, after some smart fighting, our line was advanced a little north of St. Julien.

In the week ending August 21 our airmen had

destroyed 128 gunpits and caused 321 explosions behind the enemy lines. They had dropped nearly 36 tons of bombs, including about 100 of between 200 lb. and 300 lb. in weight, and had fired over 30,000 rounds of ammunition at troops on the ground from low altitudes. Sixty-eight German aeroplanes had been destroyed and 90 others driven down out of control. The weather had been stormy, with a good deal of rain falling for the last few days, and was of the same character on the 27th. There was, therefore, not so much aerial activity as usual, yet during the week from the 22nd a good deal of work was done. On the 23rd we destroyed 12 and forced down out of control six others, while we only lost two. On the 25th the weather was bad, and consequently there was little activity in the air; but in the evening, when it improved, in addition to useful work for the artillery, three German aeroplanes were disposed of and four others forced down. We lost two. On the 26th, in spite of the weather, some fighting took place in the air. Seven German aeroplanes were destroyed or driven down, while we lost two. On the 27th rain fell nearly all the day, but in the fine intervals our airmen fought with great activity and, with a loss of only two machines missing, destroyed four of the Germans besides forcing down three more out of control.

August 27 saw another determined effort of the enemy to recover the positions he had lost about Inverness Copse and along the Ypres-Menin road, but without success. Two separate attacks were delivered, commencing at 8 p.m., against the British positions in Inverness Copse and on the Ypres-Menin road. In both cases his efforts failed completely. The ground was made very difficult by the rain and mud, the attacks were detected in their initial stage and heavy artillery fire brought to bear on them, while the machine-gun and rifle fire completed what the artillery had begun. But we made important progress astride the St. Julien-Poeleappelle road, east and north of Langemark, the centre of the advance being about Koorselaere. Our troops advanced our line after heavy fighting for about 2,000 yards, penetrating in places a further portion of the German third line. Some fortified farms and redoubts were taken, with 40 prisoners and several machine-guns. Our attack began at 2 p.m. with a heavy barrage. The ground over which the troops had to advance was in a ter-



[Official photograph.]

## PART OF THE CAPTURED GROUND ON THE MENIN ROAD.

rible condition with the constant rain which had fallen lately and which continued nearly all the day, while the wind blew a severe gale. Every shell-hole was full of water, so that the heavily laden infantry stuck at every step. The enemy concrete redoubts were mostly placed along the line of the Zonnebeke-Poelcappelle road, and not a few of them were stood in the middle of water. The German machine-gun fire from the uninjured redoubts was heavy, and there was severe fighting round many of them, especially round a considerable work built on some ruined houses known as Vieilles Maisons, near Koorselaere, but still our men pushed on and drove the enemy back. It was, considering the conditions, a notable success.

Notwithstanding the heavy rain and high wind our aviators maintained contact with our infantry throughout the advance, and not only did good service by engaging the enemy's infantry with machine-gun fire from a low elevation, but created a considerable amount of havoc among his transport by the same means.

It has more than once been pointed out that an essential feature of Sir Douglas Haig's plans during the Battle of Flanders was to maintain a menacing attitude towards the enemy between the Lys and the Upper Somme. "In order to meet the urgent demands of battle," he remarks in his dispatch of December 25, 1917,

"the number of Divisions in line on other fronts has been necessarily reduced to the minimum consistent with safety." To conceal, as it were, this unpleasant fact from Ludendorff's observation, the soundest course was not to confine the troops of Horne, Byng and Rawlinson to a passive defensive. Whether or not the British feint at Lens and the raids in the second half of August prevented Prince Rupprecht from reinforcing Sixt von Armin may be a moot point. But events certainly seem to prove that the Lens feint and those raids induced the Bavarian Crown Prince and his advisers to believe that the British lines were much more strongly held than was the case. At all events, it was not till the Second Battle of Cambrai (December 2) that the Germans made any serious effort to break through the British front.

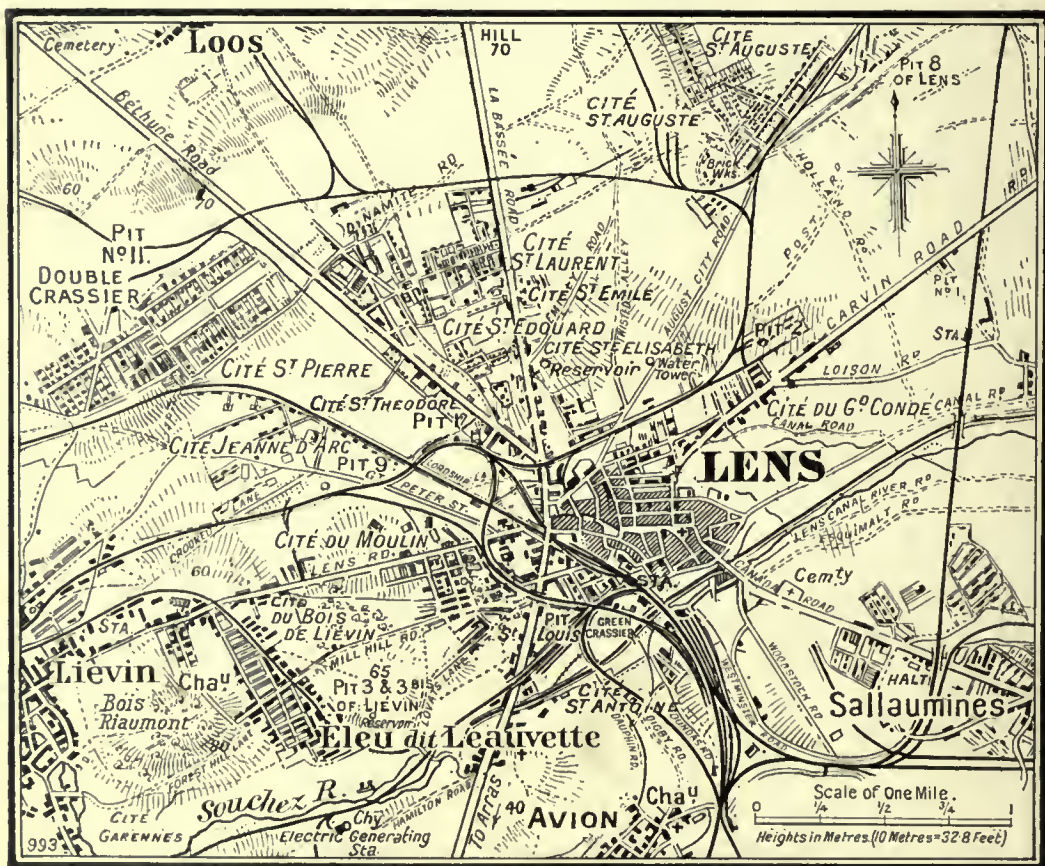
In the previous chapter the fighting at Lens down to the evening of Saturday, August 18, was described. The violent counter-attacks of the enemy had been in vain, and Currie's Canadians remained masters of Hill 70 and their other gains. On Sunday, August 19, the fighting died down to an artillery duel and on the 20th there were only patrol encounters. This minor action, which might almost be dignified with the name of a battle and would have been described in the nineteenth century as a very great battle, recommenced on Tuesday,



August 21, when General Currie assaulted the outskirts of Lens from the direction of Cité St. Emile and Cité St. Elizabeth on the north and Cité du Moulin on the west, capturing 200 prisoners. Both artilleries had been hard at work during the preceding night.

An autumn mist clung to the earth and blurred the twilight when at dawn the Canadians charged. Their main objective on the north was the spot where the road from La

of bursting shells, the noise from the explosions drowning the cheers and cries of the antagonists. The relative value of two opposite systems of tactics was again being tested just as it had been in the second century B.C. at Cynosephalæ and Pydna, in the fourteenth century A.D. at Creey and Poitiers, and a hundred years ago at Waterloo. Would this time the open order or the mass attack triumph? If bayonets had been the only



MAP OF THE COUNTRY AROUND LENS.

Bassée joins the road from Béthune. Thence a network of streets led to the Cathedral Square and the heart of Lens. The Canadians, following on the trail of their barrage, suddenly perceived that it was greatly enlarged. The Germans were apparently shelling the same points. Our barrage went forward and the waves of Canadians passing through the German barrage, which was moving northward, now noticed in the mist masses of Germans advancing towards them. It had so happened that by a coincidence the enemy's commander was also launching an offensive. In a few seconds Germans and Canadians were grappling with one another between two walls

weapons employed there would have been little doubt of the result. But many of the enemy were provided with grenades, all with automatic pistols, and they were in numbers greatly superior.

At first it seemed that weight must tell. The first thin, dotted waves of Canadians, made up of little parties of men, straggling out singly or in twos and threes, had to hold up the almost solid line of the attacking Germans. However, they held them. Bitter hand-to-hand fighting went on, every Canadian having several Germans against him. But the enemy front had been penetrated and the impetus of the German charge lost. As they fought, other thin waves

of Canadians came up, and yet others. The Germans offered a plucky resistance, and their officers, who did not spare themselves, tried to make them stand. It was in vain. The battle, which had raged in the middle of No Man's Land, gradually receded towards the enemy lines. He was pressed back towards the trenches he had left, where his reserves were waiting to follow up the first attack. New ranks of Germans came out, only to be hurled back, till the first line of the German trenches was reached. Here the enemy was in great strength, the trenches being full of other masses of reserve troops ready to go forward. The Canadians, driving the defeated Germans in front of them, charged the trenches, flinging themselves upon them with the utmost fury. It was a formidably fortified line, protected with two belts of wire, and the Canadians had already advanced some hundreds of yards, while the defenders of the trench were fresh. For a period the combat raged up and down the whole length of trenches. It was savage hand-to-hand fighting, without interference by the artillery, for the guns of neither side dared to fire on the spot where the combatants were locked. But

our men in the end scrambled up the parapet and flung bombs into the crowded ways beneath. Parties of Germans sought to retreat down the communication trenches, which also were full of troops. When the tumult died away the Canadians were in possession of the whole line of trench, which was literally heaped with German dead.

While the Canadians on the left of this attack were fighting with rifles and bombs until their ammunition was exhausted and they had no weapons left but the bayonet and butt-end, those on the right were engaged in the houses of the northern outskirts of Lens. Some rushed up so close to the walls that the machine-guns were firing over their heads. The enemy dropped bombs upon them through the loopholes and sandbagged windows and fired rifle-grenades at them. Into one house our men burst their way. It was crammed with bombs. At the same time the Canadians attacking from the Cité du Moulin on the west of Lens were engaged in furious fighting along the railway embankment, which had been converted into a long machine-gun emplacement, and among the colliery sidings between



GERMAN OFFICERS CAPTURED BY THE CANADIANS ON HILL 70. [Canadian War Reco



the ruined houses and shops. On the farther side of the Cité du Moulin, the Germans, on the south side of the railway line, had a very formidable line of trenches and defensive works, running by Fosse St. Louis and Cité St. Antoine, and the last formal barrier before the inner city. That line was the scene of fierce fighting, during which we penetrated into part of the city itself. Here, as elsewhere, the Germans contested every yard of progress with every conceivable advantage of defence among the battered streets and blocks of workmen's dwellings.

Undeterred by his heavy losses, the German Commander refused to admit his defeat. Some six enemy divisions, it is believed, had been already hurled at Currie's Corps. The Prussian 4th Guard Reserve Division was now sent in, and during the remainder of the day counter-attack succeeded counter-attack. The troops mustering for these desperate ventures were frequently dispersed by the British artillery. For example, our aeroplanes on one occasion reported that a mass of Germans was forming up in one of the Lens squares. Instantly field guns, heavy guns and howitzers

dehugged them with shells. The enemy infantry scurried off to cellars and tunnels, but hundreds were blown to pieces or wounded. In all there were eight counter-attacks, the chief of which was made after mid-day, in the northern suburbs of Lens, by the 5th Guards Grenadier Regiment. Each counter-attack was preceded by a violent bombardment with high explosive, shrapnel and poison-gas shells.

The Grenadiers in swarms issued from the cellars and tunnels of the city. Some of them carried nothing but stick-bombs, which they had slung round their bodies. They rushed up the communication trenches and flung their grenades. After repeated efforts they drove back the left wing of the Canadians. Our men on the right, who for the time being had beaten off the enemy, sent support to their comrades. The charge of the Prussian Grenadier Guards was temporarily stopped, but ammunition was fast running low. Owing to the German barrage it had been with the utmost difficulty that any cartridges and bombs had been passed through to the Canadians on the left. At last the order was given



GERMAN STRONGHOLD IN A BREWERY CAPTURED BY CANADIANS.

[Canadian War Records.]



### A LENS SUBURB:

The scene of heavy fighting.

to the Canadians to retire to a trench farther back. Heaping earth, rubble and concrete in the communication trenches to delay the pursuit of the Prussians, the Canadians slowly fell back. The "Heines," as the Canadians somewhat inappropriately called their opponents—for Heine was a Gallicized German Jew—had paid dearly for the recovery of the ground, and that success was incomplete. Currie's troops had, north of Lens, indeed failed to advance materially their line, but Hill 70 was still theirs, while west of Lens the enemy's counter-attacks had been swept away by machine-gun fire.

Two incidents of this struggle so glorious in Canadian history may be given on the authority of a *Times* Correspondent who observed the action and questioned survivors:

Certain men of a British Columbia Battalion did some heroic fighting. There were 40 of them in an advanced position, among a litter of shell-holes, ruined walls, and ploughed-up railway embankment. Through the *débris* the Germans kept flinging attack after attack, and several times they surged up to this advanced post, so that there was hand-to-hand fighting, the Western men meeting the enemy body to body, using their bayonets and rifle butts or grappling the Germans by their throats and hurling them back. When supports came up and took over the post over 120 dead Germans lay before it.

The Canadians also tell of an exploit of one of their number, who is a Russian by birth. He crept out and installed himself in a position among ruins where he commanded a section of enemy trench, taking with him a number of hand-bombs. Whenever two or three of the enemy gathered together in the trench he flung a bomb, and the Germans seem never to have discovered where the bombs came from. Afterwards in the loop of trench which he commanded there were found 28 dead. These things are horrible, if heroic, and it is significant of the qualities which this war calls out in men that it is said that this Russian was normally one of the gentlest of creatures who would hurt nobody.

Wednesday, August 22, was, comparatively speaking, a day of rest. The enemy heavily



[French official photographs.]

### PIT SLAG-HEAPS,

Which abound in the neighbourhood of Lens, and formed points of vantage to the troops occupying them.

shelled Liévin, Angres and Avion, and there were occasional affairs of outposts. Night closed on the battlefield, and aeroplanes ascended. They flew over the villages behind the lines, and flashes and roars told where bombs had fallen. Searchlights groped in the sky for the raiders, and the heavens were criss-crossed by their lines of light, while shells from anti-aircraft guns were exploding round the machines. From the perimeter of Lens rockets rose in clusters, and for a second or two No Man's Land was vividly visible. A dump suddenly went up, and the clouds above it became scarlet. All the while the British and German guns, singly or in groups, continued the thunder, while the rat-tat-tat of machine-guns showed to the listening onlooker where fighting was still in progress. Just before 3 a.m. on Thursday, August 23, the bombardments south of Lens awoke to extreme violence, and the ceaseless rattle of the machine-guns indicated that a serious struggle had commenced again there.

The Germans through the previous fighting had been wedged into an area of ruined build-



ings, measuring roughly 1,100 yards from west to east, and 900 yards from north to south. But these ruins were, in effect, one vast fort: every street was barricaded, every cellar had been enlarged and concreted. Tunnels connected the cellars, and the muzzles of machine-guns protruded from the thousands of loopholes in the exterior line of defence. Currie was thrusting at the southern edge of this fortress. At 3 a.m., before dawn, the Canadians attacked a group of slag heaps and colliery ruins beside the Souchez river, which had been dammed up by the Germans and had overflowed its broken banks. In front of the floods was a heap of mine refuse, the Green Crassier, overlooking the central railway station of Lens, only 300 yards to the north of it. The shapeless mound of rubbish had taken years to accumulate. It lay between three goods yards of the railway. The Germans could move to the Green Crassier from the cellars of Lens by dry subterranean passages, whereas the Canadians would have to wade through filthy mud and water to reach it. Adjoining the Green Crassier on the west was the St. Louis colliery with a strip of railway embankment at its side. The ground there was covered with the remains of workmen's cot-

tages; it was full of broken cellars and pits, some of them of great depth.

Pivoting on their lines before the St. Louis colliery, the Canadians, under cover of the darkness, crossed the Souchez, deployed and waded forward on a front of about 700 yards. From the east of the colliery they were enfiladed by powerful machine-gun fire. Many dropped dead or wounded, but their comrades pressed on. The Green Crassier was ascended, and the work of bombing and bayoneting the garrisons of the dug-outs in its sides began. Prussians of the 99th and 190th Regiments resolutely disputed the possession of this bastion on the south of Lens. At daybreak enemy aeroplanes came up to assist the Prussians. They swooped down and fired at our men. One machine hit by a shell descended in flames; another came crashing to the ground. Right through the day and into August 24 the conflict raged. It was particularly bitter at the mouth of a tunnel whence four machine-guns swept the Canadians with lead. After several attempts a group of the latter managed to put the machine-guns out of action and to capture the survivors of their crews. The result of the fighting was that we got a footing on the Green Crassier and secured trenches to the north-west of it.



TRANSPORTING WOUNDED CANADIANS TO THE BASE.

[Canadian War Records.]

In a message to General Currie, Sir Douglas Haig summarized the results of the struggle round the northern, western, and southern outskirts of Lens :

I desire (said Sir Douglas) to congratulate you personally on the complete and important success with which your command of the Canadian Corps has been inaugurated. The divisions you employed on August 15 totally defeated four German divisions, whose losses are reliably estimated at more than double those suffered by the Canadian troops. The skill, bravery and determination shown in the attack and in maintaining the

of Hulluch. The German support line was reached and many casualties inflicted on the garrison. This stroke was designed to deceive Prince Rupprecht into believing that the Canadian capture of Hill 70 portended a second Battle of Loos. Further to mystify the Crown Prince of Bavaria, on the night of the 18th-19th our men entered the German positions between Havrincourt and Epéhy, west of the canal joining the Scheldt and Somme. They inflicted



[Canadian War Records.

**A GERMAN CONCRETE GUN-PIT USED AS Y.M.C.A. HUT.**

positions won against repeated heavy counter-attacks were in all respects admirable.

Sir Douglas Haig's praise of the Canadians was well deserved. Every hundred yards gained had been won by desperate fighting and held against repeated counter-attacks of picked troops, supported by gigantic bombardments. Only in one sector, the northern, had the enemy been able to win back lost ground, and that lost ground did not include Hill 70.

The lunge at Lens was the greatest but not the only feat of Sir Douglas Haig in the second half of August 1917. The day after the second phase of the Third Battle of Ypres, on August 17, the British raided the enemy's trenches west

heavy casualties. The next morning, after a bombardment, they captured enemy trenches in the neighbourhood of Gillemont Farm, south-east of Epéhy. A German attempt to regain the lost trenches was repulsed on the night of the 19th-20th after sharp fighting. The attempt was renewed in the course of the morning of the 20th, but the enemy, caught by our guns, were dispersed; about the same time a German raid east of Armentières was beaten off. As a reward for his pains, the enemy secured two British soldiers. On Tuesday, August 21, a third attempt by the Germans to regain the trenches near Gillemont Farm was made. It was completely repulsed and simultaneously the British east of Epéhy raided the German lines.



on a wide front in the direction of the Scheldt-Somme Canal. They returned with several prisoners. The reader will not forget that the same day General Currie once more struck at Lens. In the night of the 23rd-24th the Portuguese baffled two raids north-west of La Bassée. Our next raid was on the coast east of Nieuport. During the night of the 24th-25th we gained a post with a few prisoners and a machine-gun west of the Geleide creek and south-west of Lombartzyde. Early in the morning of the 25th the Germans heavily bombarded our positions south-east of Epéhy and attempted to recover Gillemont Farm. It was attacked on two

neighbourhood of the Peronne-Cambrai chaussée. During the night of the 30th-31st the enemy systematically shelled our forward positions north of Arleux-en-Gohelle, five miles south-south-east of Lens, and ineffectually raided them in the early hours of Friday, August 31. Simultaneously he attacked east of Gouzeaucourt, Hargicourt, and Epéhy. His sole success was the capture of an isolated knoll north of Gillemont Farm, which we were forced to evacuate.

The engagements along the French front between the openings of the Third Battle of



[Canadian official photograph.]

#### A CANADIAN PIPE BAND PRACTISING BEHIND THE LINES.

sides, but its garrison held the enemy at bay, although a small portion of the trenches to its north-east was lost by us. Later in the day this was regained by the British, and during the night of the 25th-26th a German counter-attack was repulsed, as was an enemy raiding party by the Portuguese south-east of Laventie. Towards dawn of Sunday, August 26, we attacked on a front of over a mile the enemy's positions east of Hargicourt (north-west of St. Quentin) and west of the Scheldt-Somme Canal. Our troops stormed the strong points of Cologne and Malakoff Farms and penetrated to a depth of half a mile. Over 130 prisoners were captured. A few hours earlier the post west of the Geleide Creek had been retaken by the enemy. On the night of the 28th-29th the British again raided the German trenches in the Hulluch region and also those north-east of Gouzeaucourt, in the

Ypres and the Fourth Battle of Verdun, which began on August 20, will now be narrated. The offensive in Flanders had had the same effect on the German strategy as the Battle of the Somme had had the year before. Just as the Battle of the Somme caused the enemy to relax his efforts at Verdun, so the Third Battle of Ypres caused him to relax them, in August 1917, on the French front.

Our Allies, it will be recollected, had extended their line to the north of St. Quentin when Gough's 5th Army had been transferred to Flanders. On August 10 the French were attacked north of St. Quentin in the region of Fayot. This attack on a front of 1,000 yards succeeded in the centre and failed on the wings. At 3 p.m. the enemy attempted to storm the Mennechet Mill and Cépny Farm, but were repulsed. The French on the 11th and



[Belgian official photograph.]

## SHELL EXPLODING NEAR NIEUPOORT.

12th recovered all the ground lost by them in the Fayet region. On the 16th the Germans deliberately set fire to the Cathedral of St. Quentin and very characteristically debited this new outrage to the French artillery. Apart from the above engagements, there was rest along the hostile fronts—if the word rest may be used when every day men were killed or wounded by shells or shot—between the north of St. Quentin and the banks of the Ailette.

There was greater but very diminished activity on the old battlefield of Craonne-Reims. During the night of the day before the Third Battle of Ypres the French at 8.15 p.m. (July 30), attacked von Böhm's troops on the Chemin-des-Dames hog's back south of La Royère, and west of the Chevreigny ridge. They gained all their objectives, and captured over 210 prisoners. The advanced trenches of the enemy were full of German corpses. At

11 a.m. the next morning (July 31) the enemy counter-attacked ineffectually. The same day, after an intense bombardment, with three regiments he assaulted the French positions east of Cerny on a front of about 1,600 yards. The French counter-attacks drove him back. Von Böhm next tested the strength of the French lines west of Cerny. On August 1 he attacked more than once but was beaten off. The next day (August 2) two German attacks east of Cerny were also repulsed. During the preceding night our Allies in the region of Allemant, south-east of Vauxaillon, had captured 34 prisoners and a machine-gun, and east and south-east of Reims had repulsed two raids. Von Böhm persisted in his efforts round Cerny. East and south of that village and during the night of August 2-3 his guns opened a hurricane bombardment and his infantry attacked several times on a front of 1,600 yards. The Germans



[Canadian War Records.]

## CANADIAN TROOPS PUTTING OUT A FIRE CAUSED BY GERMAN SHELLS.



were beaten back and the ground was strewn with heaps of their dead and wounded. On August 3 a surprise attack was tried by the enemy east of Cerny. It, too, was repulsed. On the afternoon of the 4th, about 2 p.m., the attempt was twice repeated. Both attacks were broken by the French fire. During the next night (August 4-5) small German forces trying to dislodge the French from their exterior line on the Casemates Plateau met with the same fate. At 12.30 a.m. on August 5 von Böhm made (between Craonne and the Aisne)

the Germans in vain twice tried to recapture it. On the 13th they again on several occasions returned to the charge only to be beaten off with heavy losses. They also attempted without success to raid the Vaclere Plateau on August 15. A few hours later (August 16) our Allies took the offensive south of Ailles and in the region of the Hurtebise Monument. In the former locality they secured a thousand yards of trench system and repulsed four counter-attacks, taking 120 prisoners. At nightfall the Germans, after a preparatory



[French official photograph.]

#### RUINS OF ALLEMANT.

a violent assault on the French trenches to the south of Juvincourt. Lower Silesian and Posen regiments carried a trench but were promptly expelled.

From August 5 to 10 the fighting on the Chemin-des-Dames ridge was almost entirely confined to artillery duels, but at 4 a.m. on the 10th the Germans violently attacked from the Panthéon Farm to the Chevregny Spur. Three battalions, assisted by nine companies of storming troops and two parties with flame throwers were employed. The operation at first met with some measure of success. After a fierce hand-to-hand combat, however, the French flung back the enemy, who lost heavily in this engagement. Over 100 prisoners were captured by our Allies, who on the 11th seized a German trench south of Ailles. The next day

bombardment, attacked from the Vaclero Mill to the eastern end of the California Plateau. They were mown down by the French artillery and never reached the French trenches. The same day a surprise attack west of Bray-en-Laonnois was easily frustrated. During August 18 various German raids north of the Aisne were repulsed, as were those on the 19th north of Bray-en-Laonnois and in the regions of Bermericourt, north-west of Reims, and of La Pompelle, south-east of that city.

Between the battlefield of Moronvilliers and the Argonne on August 10 the Germans, after artillery preparation, assaulted the French trenches to the east of Maisons de Champagne. On both wings they were repulsed, but in the centre they gained a temporary footing. A counter-attack, however, drove them out. The

fighting had been of the fiercest description. The next day (August 11) after sunset the enemy several times assaulted the French positions on the Moronvilliers heights at Mt. Cornillet, Mt. Blond and Mt. Haut. He was at all points completely defeated.

Nothing particularly noticeable happened in the Argonne or between the south of Verdun and Belfort during the three weeks under review, but in the region of Verdun every sign betokened that another great battle was about to be fought on the banks of the Middle Meuse.

Before the Battle of Flanders opened it had been arranged between the British and French Commanders-in-Chief that the French were during the battle to assist Sir Douglas Haig by carrying out such offensives on their own front as they might be able to undertake. After the inconclusive result of the British fighting in the Ypres salient on August 16, the desirability of preventing guns and men being shifted from the German Crown Prince's Army to Flanders had become more than ever apparent. General Guillaumat had by then already made his preparations for fighting a fourth Battle of Verdun, a battle needed not only to keep the Crown Prince's reserves away from Flanders but also to render the Verdun salient more secure against another German inroad.

Despite General Guillaumat's brilliant recovery of the Col de Pommérieux in July (see Chapter CCXXVII, p. 188), the situation in the Verdun region was still unsatisfactory. With the Bois de Cheppy, the Bois de Malancourt, nearly the whole of the Bois d'Avocourt, the summits of Hill 304 and the Mort Homme, Cumières and the wood named after that village in the hands of the enemy, the communications of Verdun west of the Meuse with the Argonne were in jeopardy. Up the valley of that river the Germans were entrenched round the loop which the Meuse makes between Regneville and Vacherauville, their outposts here being only some five miles from Verdun itself.

On the east bank of the Meuse the enemy retained all the ground in the above-mentioned loop and the Talon Hill at its base; and his front ran over the Meuse heights to the northern outskirts of Bézonvaux. South of the line Vacherauville-Bézonvaux he had, it is true, been expelled—generally speaking—from those heights, but he was still at their foot and in a few places between Verdun and St. Mihiel held them.

As the hilly and wooded region between the Meuse and the plain of the Woëvre is but six or seven miles in width, the danger of a thrust at Verdun from the West was for the moment small. The weak points of the French line were north of the city. That the Germans had not abandoned their intention of moving on Verdun from this direction had been evidenced by their abortive effort to seize the Col de Pommérieux.

During the first fortnight of August General von Gallwitz again struck at the French lines north of Verdun between Avocourt and Bézonvaux. On August 1 in the morning he attacked between the Avocourt Wood and Hill 304, seeking to recover the Col de Pommérieux. His troops—Baden battalions—secured some advanced posts and vainly endeavoured to press forward during the night of the 2nd-3rd. The next night the attempts were renewed, and efforts were made then and on the 6th to eject the French from their hold on the south-eastern



FRENCH GRENADE-THROWERS  
ADVANCING TO ATTACK.



end of the Avocourt Wood. Two days later other Baden troops on the east bank of the Meuse raided the Bois des Caurières, in the Bézonvaux region, and on August 10 Baden storm-troops penetrated the French lines north of Vacherauville. Two surprise attacks on the Caurières Wood and at Bézonvaux were repulsed by the French on the 12th, as was another one west of Avocourt delivered about the same time. With the exception of a successful raid on August 9 north of Vaux-les-Palanoix, in the region of Les Eparges, the French had remained on the defensive.

On Sunday, August 12, however, the German *communiqué* reported that "on both banks of the Meuse the artilleries were fighting each other with more intensity than had been usual lately." From that date to the morning of Monday, August 20, the French artillery pounded the region about to be attacked. The German guns replied, and on the evening of the 16th von Gallwitz, with Baden troops, violently attacked the French east of the Meuse between the northern part of Caurières Wood and Bézonvaux. The Badeners entered the French lines at several points, but were promptly ejected from nearly all of them. Two days later (August 18) a brilliant counter-

attack by our Allies gave them back the remainder of the lost ground.

Meantime the French aircraft exhibited great activity west and east of the Meuse. For example, during the day of August 17 and the night of August 17-18 the French bombarding aeroplanes carried out many flights over the enemy's lines. One hundred and eleven machines took part in various flights, in the course of which 28,600 lbs. of projectiles were dropped on the enemy's establishments. The aviation grounds of Colmar, Frascati and Habsheim, just east of Mulhouse, and the aviation camp in the region of Chambley, 14 miles south-west of Metz, the railway stations of Freiburg-im-Breisgau, Longuyon, Montmédy, Pierrepont, seven miles south of Longwy, of St. Juvin, Grand Pré, Challerange—the last three south-west of Dun-sur-Meuse—and of Dun-sur-Meuse, were also bombed, while the bivouacs of the Spincourt Forest, about 17 miles north-east of Verdun, were copiously showered with projectiles. Many explosions on the objectives were observed and several fires broke out. Only two French machines were lost in these extensive raids.

These operations marked the preliminaries to the Fourth Battle of Verdun.



## CHAPTER CCXXXIII.

# THE ITALIAN OFFENSIVE OF JULY—SEPTEMBER, 1917.

FIGHTING IN THE SETTE COMUNI AND ADAMELLO SECTORS—POLITICAL EVENTS—ITALIAN PROTECTORATE OF ALBANIA—"PACIFIST" PROPAGANDA—MILITARY EFFECTS OF RUSSIAN COLLAPSE—PARIS CONFERENCE OF JULY 25, 1917—THE POPE'S NOTE—EFFECT ON THE ARMY—ITALIAN OFFENSIVE OPENS—THE ISONZO CROSSED—ADVANCE ON THE BAINSIZZA PLATEAU—MONTE SANTO CARRIED—END OF THE FIRST PHASE—FIERCE FIGHTING FOR SAN GABRIELE—THE AUSTRIAN DEFENCE—CARSO BATTLES—ITALIAN GUN SHORTAGE—EVE OF THE AUSTRIAN COUNTER-STROKE.

THE four weeks' struggle on the Middle Isonzo and the Carso, described in Chapter CCXXI., was quickly followed, in other sectors, by two minor Italian offensives, of which only a brief account need be given.

Of these the first and most important was an attempt to improve the line north of Asiago, in the uplands of the Sette Comuni. The Austrian offensive of May and June, 1916, had left the invaders in possession of very strong positions. When they were pushed back by General Cadorna's counter-attack and lost the main part of their gains, they had held on to a mountain system which appeared absolutely impregnable to frontal attacks. The northern part of the Seven Communes may be described as a sector of a huge amphitheatre—the outer wall dropping abruptly to the valley of the Brenta. Within this wall lies a wild and barren tableland that slopes southwards towards Asiago, and in its lower stretches is cut into mountain ridges by valleys that run almost due north and south. The mass of the outer wall is more than 5,000 feet above the Brenta, and it is battlemented with peaks that rise another 1,000 or 1,500 feet. Asiago itself, the centre of the amphitheatre, lies 3,280 feet above the sea.

West of the Passo dell' Agnella, 10 miles due north of Asiago, the Austrians held the outer wall. And they held the ridge that runs down southward of the pass—from Monte Ortigara by Monte Forno to Monte Zebio, which divides the Val de Nos from the Val Gabnarera. In this mountain system the enemy occupied a great wedge thrust forward between the Val Brenta and the Val d' Assa, which not only opposed a formidable obstacle against any Italian advance, but made the way easier for a possible renewal of an offensive on their own part. It gave them a downhill road to Asiago from the north as well as from the west. The Italian effort was directed to reducing this wedge.

On June 10, after an accurate bombardment, the Italians launched three separate attacks. The main effort was against the outer wall, where columns of Alpini occupied the Passo dell' Agnella and stormed one of the Ortigara summits, the peak known as Hill 2101. The task was difficult enough under any conditions, for the terrain is altogether favourable to the defence. It is a waste of stony steeps. "With the exception of the Carso it is the most bleak, desolate, and rocky of the Italian battlefields. It is like another Carso stretched nearer to the sky, but not nearer to the sun. Rains and





*Italian official photograph.*

A BRIDGING SECTION OF ITALIAN ENGINEERS ON THE ISONZO.

mist shroud it most of the year, and wind-storms are numerous and perilous. Tufts of rank grass in the interstices of the rock, and, at rare intervals, some scrubby pine which by its loneliness adds to the sense of desolation, are the only vegetation."\* The Alpini had to climb up bare slopes of rock and shale, and their difficulties were increased by the appalling weather. There was a very high wind, and the rain swept down in solid sheets of water. Farther to the south the attacks were not pushed home, but useful progress

nor did a further attempt, in the early morning of June 15, have any effect against the determined resistance of the Alpini. After some 10 hours' fighting the enemy columns withdrew in disorder, leaving behind them a number of prisoners.

During this week the Alpini were put to a very hard test. The storm which had burst just before their advance beat upon them for three days with unceasing violence. They had no shelter from the cruel weather or from the crueler storm of shells that was rained on



AN ENCAMPMENT ON MONTE ZEBIO.

was made on the slopes of Monte Forno, and just under the crest of Monte Zebio, where the enemy lost several important trench systems. The weather interfered greatly with the work of the artillery, and the action had to be limited to a diversion which should keep the enemy anxious regarding the Forno-Zebio line.

The Austrians hurried up reserves to all the threatened sectors, and on the night of June 12-13 they attempted a surprise attack upon the Italian positions on the Ortigara. The surprise failed, but the attack was renewed with greater forces. It met with no success,

them by the enemy. It was difficult to keep them supplied with the necessary minimum of ammunition, food, and water, for to reach them the supply trains had to pass directly under the enemy's lines, in full view of numerous machine-guns. As soon as the weather cleared the enemy counter-attacks came, and they were very determined. But the Alpini held firm, and gave time for trench mortars to be brought up and placed in readiness for a fresh attack.

This came on June 19. The Italian guns and trench mortars had prepared the way by a tremendous pounding, which drove the enemy into his caverns, and the attack went forward so quickly that many of the Kaiser-

\* *The Times* Special Correspondent, June 30.



jäger and other mountain troops who held the line were caught before they could begin to fight. By seven o'clock in the morning the attacking troops—Alpini, Bersaglieri, and detachments of the Piedmont Brigade of infantry—had captured the highest point of Monte Ortigara (Hill 2105) and the system of trenches which linked it up with the next ridge to the south. Nearly a thousand prisoners were taken, belonging to a number of picked mountain units, and the proportion of officers was very large—no fewer than 74 being captured, mostly in the caverns. A feature of the action was the work of the Italian aeroplanes. Altogether 145 planes went out over

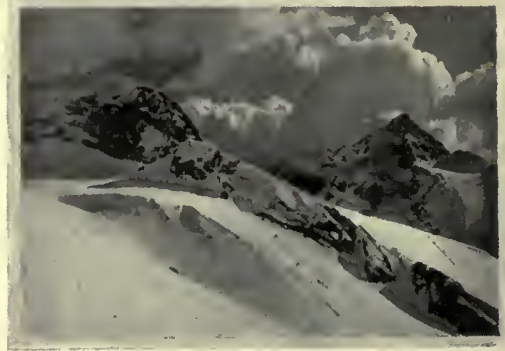


CIMA DODICI.

the enemy lines, and 400 large bombs, weighing altogether five and a half tons, were dropped on the enemy artillery, on the roads leading to the scene of battle, and on various "points of concentration."

The action was a brilliant local success, but the enemy still held all the advantage of position. Monte Ortigara was completely dominated from the west, from the still higher rock wall that runs up to Cima Undici and Cima Dodici, and the Austrians were massing reserves, both of guns and men. To construct trenches on these rocky heights requires weeks of work with drills. The enemy had no intention of allowing the necessary time.

The counter-attack came on the morning of June 25, and after two days' fighting it succeeded. A great weight of artillery fire was concentrated on the bare slopes where the new Italian line was precariously stretched. Very heavy loss was caused before the enemy infantry came into action, and furious assaults were



SUMMIT OF ADAMELLO.

then launched against the Passo dell' Agnella and the ridges of the Ortigara. The enemy attacked with masses of picked mountain troops, backed by numerous infantry reserves which had arrived shortly before from Galicia. After a desperate struggle, both sides of the Passo dell' Agnella were held, but the Italians were swept off the summits of the Ortigara, though they succeeded in maintaining their hold on part of the mountain. The proportion of casualties among the defending troops was very high indeed, the fire of the enemy guns causing terrible havoc. It was only after their battalions were broken in pieces that the Alpini gave ground. A considerable number of men were cut off by the enemy infantry attack, and finally surrendered.

In spite of the brilliant initial successes it seems clear that the Ortigara action ought not to have been attempted. This at least was a common opinion in the Italian Army. The officers in command of the Alpini, veteran mountain fighters, were opposed to the attempt. The general who planned and directed the attack did not understand the mountains as they did, and over-rode their counsel. A study of the positions would seem to indicate that the taking of the Ortigara could lead to nothing, and must leave its captors practically at the mercy of the enemy. This was the objection urged before the action, and events showed that the fear was well-founded. The Alpini put up a magnificent resistance, but they were literally hammered to pieces. Both

officers and men felt sore about the action. The Alpini had shown many times that they were quite ready to attempt the impossible, if there were a reason for the attempt. In this case they could not see the reason. They felt that they had been mishandled, and that their losses were not only needless but useless.

Meanwhile another "Group" of Alpini had been renewing its astonishing exploits on the Adamello glacier. In Chapter CXXXIX, a description was given of the attack which led to the capture of almost the whole glacier system that lies east of the main Adamello peak. Subsequent to this attack the Austrian main line of defence ran in the form of an arc from Menicigolo by Monte Coel to Care Alto, but from the southern end of this line there projected northward into the glaciers a rock ridge that was still in Austrian hands—the southern part of the ridge that divides the Larès and the Fumo glaciers. The Italians had occupied the greater part of this ridge, from the Crozzon di Fargorida to the Passo di Cavento, in the attacks of April and May, 1916, and they had also seized the Crozzon del Diavolo (Devil's Crust), that bounds the Larès glacier on the north, but Corno di Cavento (The Horn of the House of the Wind) and Monte Folletto were still Austrian. From Corno di Cavento a line of redoubts cut in the ice and joined by galleries, also cut in the ice, ran eastward to Monte Coel across the Larès glacier, to face the Italians on the Devil's Crust.

Early in the morning of June 15 the Italians attacked the Corno di Cavento. Little columns of white-clad Alpini on skis came down from the Devil's Crust and swept through the line of redoubts, while two other columns attacked from the western side of the Cavento ridge. One climbed up between the Corno and Monte Folletto, while another came along the jagged crest from the Passo di Cavento. The enemy held till these columns were close upon them, and kept up a brisk fire, but by this time Alpini of the ski column were threatening them from behind. The Austrians fled eastward across the glacier, leaving many dead. A dozen machine-gunners resisted to the last and then surrendered. Two field guns, a trench mortar, four machine-guns, and a great store of supplies fell into the hands of the Italians. And they found there great preparations for action on a larger scale. The House of the Wind was tunnelled and galleried for guns that had not yet arrived.

This was only a little fight, but it deserves special mention, for, in the words of *The Times* Special Correspondent, who witnessed the attack, the sector where it took place "is certainly unique in the story of battles. Since the world began men never made war under such conditions. The mere getting to the scene of the battle of Corno di Cavento presents such a series of difficulties to overcome as to leave the beholder mute with amazement." After describing the journey in "a newly constructed mountain automobile, short and squat," up winding precipitous roads to "the first *teleferica*," the Correspondent goes on:

Ascending by several *teleferiche* in an iron basket across ugly chasms, suspended on a frail wire, always climbing up from one precipice to another, at two hours



ALPINI ON SKIS.

after midnight, under the clear stars of a perfect night we found dogs and sledges, which carried us across a sea of ice rimmed round with ghostly peaks . . . Across this glacier, whose crevasse have been sounded for 2,000 feet without touching soil, we pushed on to a mountain formed entirely of boulders thrown together, one would say, by Titans. Up this we painfully crawled for an hour and a half, until we saw spread before us the field of battle. The dazzling glittering wastes were only broken by jagged and fantastic rock elevations rising here and there to great heights, measuring their awful impassibility against the yielding and uncertain snow.

The month of June saw much fighting on the Italian front, and it saw also a recurrence of political difficulties at home. The origin



of the difficulties lay a long way back—in the composition of the "National Government" which came into being on the fall of the Salandra Government. Baron Sonnino, Signor Orlando, and Signor Bissolati, Signor Boselli's three chief lieutenants, represented tendencies of thought and habits of action so widely divergent that the compromises necessary to the smooth working of the Cabinet were very difficult

Those who disagreed with his methods and feared their consequences, but trusted his ability and character, combined to avoid a crisis.

Everyone felt that a crisis had only been deferred, but when it came its manner was unexpected. The Interventionists of the Left had become increasingly anxious about Signor Orlando's home policy—slight disturbances



*Italian official photograph.*

#### UNLOADING MUNITIONS AT 2,800 METRES.

of attainment. For a long time it had been felt by the "Interventionists of the Left," and not by them alone, that the methods adopted by the Ministry of the Interior to deal with the subterranean anti-war influences, which were at work in Italy as in every Allied country, showed a lack of firmness and severity. Signor Orlando had come in for much criticism.

The harmony of the Cabinet was further disturbed by the fact that Baron Sonnino had entirely disappointed the hopes of those who had expected that he might break with the habit of years and talk more freely—at least to his colleagues. His parliamentary position at the end of the spring session had been very uncertain. There was talk among his closest supporters of a "conspiracy" against him. It would be truer to say that there was a conspiracy to prevent his fall.

in Milan in May had added to their misgivings—and they were prepared to raise the question on the opening of Parliament, when Baron Sonnino took everyone back by a proclamation guaranteeing the unity and independence of Albania under the protection of Italy. The proclamation which was issued at Argyrocastro on June 3 by General Ferrero, commanding the Italian Army in Albania, ran as follows:

#### TO ALL THE PEOPLE OF ALBANIA.

To-day, June 3, 1917, the happy anniversary of the establishment of Italian constitutional liberties, we, Lieut.-General Giacinto Ferrero, commanding the Italian corps of occupation in Albania, by order of the Government of King Victor Emmanuel III., solemnly proclaim the unity and independence of Albania under the aegis and protection of the Kingdom of Italy.

By this act, Albanians, you will have free institutions, troops, Law Courts, and schools directed by Albanian citizens; you will be able to manage your properties and the product of your labour to your own advan-

tage and for the over-increasing well-being of your country.

Albanians, wherever you may be, whether already free in your country or fugitives through the world or still subjected to foreign domination, generous in promises, but in reality practising violence and pillage; you who belong to an ancient and noble race, who are bound by century-old memories and traditions to the civilization of Rome and Venice, you who are aware of the community of interests of Italians and Albanians on the seas which separate and at the same time unite; you who are men of good will and have faith in the destinies of your beloved country, stand beneath the shadow of the flags of Italy and Albania and swear



#### ARGYROCASTRO,

Where the proclamation of Albanian independence was published.

eternal fealty to that which has been proclaimed to-day in the name of the Italian Government for an independent Albania, enjoying the friendship and protection of Italy.

The contents of the proclamation could hardly have been displeasing to Italian opinion or to those of Italy's allies whose chief aim was the welfare of the Albanians. The partition of Albania could not well find a place in a programme based upon the principles frequently expressed by Allied statesmen. Yet Albania could hardly stand alone without becoming once more a fruitful field for international jealousies and intrigues, and for the dangers that arise from these. And of all the great allied nations Italy seemed indicated as the necessary protecting power. She was nearest, geographically, and her special interests in the country had already been acknowledged.

Yet the announcement given above, which was signed by General Ferrero, but came from Baron Sonnino, was not pleasing to Italy's allies, and raised a sharp storm in Italy. It was the manner of the announcement that gave grounds for criticism, for Baron Sonnino acted alone. He had reasons for his sudden and surprising decision, but these reasons cannot well be discussed here. His action gave rise to a strong protest on the part of his critics in Italy, who revived the old charge that the Foreign Minister was claiming the right to

act as a dictator in foreign affairs. The *Secolo* in particular, speaking on behalf of the Interventionists of the Left, was very severe, and reinforced its contention that Baron Sonnino's methods constituted a slight to his colleagues by the argument that they endangered the cordiality of Italy's relations with her allies.

For some days it seemed as though the Government might break up, but a full and frank discussion between the various Ministers relieved the tension, as far as foreign policy was concerned. Signor Bissolati and his friends, however, took advantage of the general unloosening of tongues within the Cabinet to raise the question of home policy.

In Chapter CCXXI. mention was made of a letter sent by General Cadorna to the Govern-



#### BARON SONNINO,

Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs.

ment on June 2, pointing out the danger to the Army that was caused by a failure to check anti-war propaganda. This letter was followed by two others, and an answer eventually came. But neither the written word, nor the action which followed, was really adequate to the situation. When Parliament met on June 20, the date having been delayed for six days owing to the crisis within the Cabinet, the main question at issue was no longer Baron Sonnino's method of conducting foreign policy, but Signor Orlando's régime at the Ministry



of the Interior. If there was any lingering doubt as to the strength of Baron Sonnino's position it was dispelled by the reception given to his speech at the opening sitting of the Chamber. The Foreign Minister scored a



**SIGNOR ORLANDO,**  
Italian Minister of the Interior.

notable success, and his treatment of the thorny question of Albania was generally accepted as a complete and satisfactory explanation.

On June 21 the Chamber went into secret session, and the attacks on the Ministry of the Interior developed at once. Signor Orlando defended himself with great skill, but he did not satisfy his critics, who insisted that he had shown undue hesitation in dealing with difficulties that could have been readily disposed of by a stronger hand. Further discussion led to a movement against the Premier, Signor Boselli, who, it was said, was no longer equal to the task of leading the Government, or the Chamber. He had now entered his eightieth year, and the great physical strain of the previous twelve months had told upon him. In the end the Government received the usual war majority.

The support given to the Cabinet was not inspired by any enthusiasm. Two phrases occurred regularly in spoken and written comment—"a fear of something worse," and "a leap in the dark." The only Minister who strengthened his position during the debates

was Baron Sonnino. His statements of policy, both in public and private sittings, won general approval, and his refusal to be a party to the reconstruction of the Cabinet desired by the Interventionists saved the Government. But the favourable vote did not mean a real solution of the Ministerial crisis. It was in effect a suspension of judgment, an expression of hope that things would go better in future, and an admission that circumstances made it difficult to better the existing Government. The following estimate of the situation was published in *The Times* of July 3, and the course of time proved it to be accurate :

The real solution will depend on the willingness or ability of the Cabinet to tighten up various loose screws and generally to show greater capacity for dealing with war problems. Above all, the future of the Government and, incidentally, of the country depends upon the policy pursued by the Ministry of the Interior. It is understood that Signor Orlando sees the necessity of tightening his hand, but the change will not be an easy one to make. The present system is not fair



**SIGNOR BISSOLATI,**  
Socialist Leader and Minister without Portfolio.

to the Italian people, which is almost at the mercy of those who preach pacifism, pro-Germanism, and all the other "isms" that are the fruit of the unhallowed union between these two.

It is impossible to speak too highly of the patriotism and good sense of the Italian people, which has resisted the suggestions and insinuations of propagandists to an extent that no one has any right to expect. But it is felt now by all who are not opposed to the war that a further check must be put on the kind of *sabotage* that has hitherto been winked at. There is a limit to the resistance that even good sense and patriotism can oppose to false insinuation, especially when there

is little counter-propaganda and the conditions of living grow more pinched.

As June drew to an end, there was cause for disappointment in the military situation. The greatly increased artillery strength of the enemy, and the extent to which he was able to draw upon the Eastern front for infantry reserves, had altered the general position to Italy's grave disadvantage. There was less illusion in Italy than in England regarding prospects in Russia. All information went to show that the Russian front would soon become a vast rest camp. Austrian prisoners boasted openly that the Italian successes would be only temporary—that the entire effective strength of Austria-Hungary would shortly be concentrated against Italy. News had come that General Brusiloff would make a move at the beginning of July, but the Italian command were not confident of the success of such a move, and their forebodings were amply justified by the event. The tragic flash-in-the-pan which came in July, so far from checking the balance that was swinging against Italy, had the reverse effect. The defection of General Brusiloff's troops, after their brilliant initial successes, stripped off the last veil of uncertainty that had shrouded the situation on the Eastern front. Russia was already out of the game, as far as the rôle assigned to her by the Allied plans for 1917 were concerned. It was obvious that even if she could continue to make a show of military activity the best elements of the German and Austro-Hungarian Armies would be able to come westwards.

The military situation was upset by Russia's "disorganization"—at the moment there was still a hesitation in using a stronger word. But the action of those who betrayed Russia by manœuvres cloaked with the name of pacifism had more than this direct result upon the military position. Their success encouraged those who in fact formed part of the same machine—the Pacifist Socialist element which dreamed of and schemed for "the International," and by some twist of intellect or other crookedness contended that its realization would be ensured if the enemies of Germany and Austria ceased to fight.

There was cause for anxiety in the military situation as it appeared towards the end of June; there was reason also for congratulation and hope. The Army had done magnificently, and had won through a harder trial than had



ITALIAN TROOPS HAULING A GUN UP A MOUNTAIN.

been anticipated to results that exceeded expectation. The one "regrettable incident" in the fighting could be matched in any of the Armies, Allied or enemy, the only disturbing factor being that the defection could be traced to a cause which might extend its operations. The enemy had been outgeneralled and outfought, and the course of the struggle had shown that a little more weight and staying power in the artillery would have turned the Austrian defeat into disaster, and brought Italy close upon the gates of Trieste. Her gallant infantry had gone very near to breaking through the enemy line. They had shown that there was a chance to break through. One chance had been lost for reasons with which no one could justly find fault. The conditions in Russia seemed to impose a review of the Allied plans. Would a review lead to prevision? Would France and England reconsider the question of a joint offensive on the Italian front? Would they at least send the guns which might of themselves suffice to give Italy the fruits of her victories?

Though the Allied conference which met in





[Italian official photograph.]

#### A FATIGUE PARTY ON THE HIGH MOUNTAINS.

Paris on July 25 was mainly concerned with the situation in the Balkans, and particularly with the position of Greece, it was announced at the close of the sittings, which lasted for two days, that the representatives of the Allied Armies had held several meetings and "examined all the questions relative to the general conduct of operations."

By this time the conditions in Russia had become plain for all to see. They thrust themselves at last upon the most unwilling intelligences. But the immediate plans of the Allies for the French front could hardly be revised at this late hour. It was now the very eve of the great Flanders offensive which was to be so gravely handicapped by the atrocious weather. The moment for revision had been the end of June, but at that date, no doubt, the factors which had governed the earlier decisions were still thought to hold good.

The discussions which had begun in Paris were continued in London, and the question of a joint offensive on the Italian front was once more raised. The idea brought forward by General Albricci on behalf of General Cadorna, who had returned to Italy from Paris, was to delay the Italian offensive which was already planned until Allied troops and guns could be spared to give added weight to the blows against the Austrian line. The idea

was not at once rejected. It was proposed that Allied reinforcements should be sent to Italy in October, when it was hoped that the objectives of the Flanders offensive would have been attained. But this meant losing the most favourable season for a "big push." The experience of the previous year had shown that the work of the artillery would probably be seriously interfered with by the mist and rain which are apt to prevail on the Carso and the Middle Isonzo as soon as the summer breaks. General Albricci feared that October was too late for an offensive on the grand scale. The weather might be favourable, but the risk seemed too great. It was decided to proceed with the plans already made. The Italian artillery was still superior to that of the enemy, and another half-dozen batteries of six-inch howitzers had been added to the British artillery contingent on the Carso.

It had been hoped to renew the Italian offensive towards the end of July, but action was delayed until the close of the discussions which have been briefly indicated. When the decisions were finally taken, the main preparations had already been made, and it only remained to put the finishing touches.

The Italian Army and the whole of Italy were strung to the keenest tension, when Pope Benedict XV. launched his "cry for peace." This is not the place to analyse

fully the terms of the Papal Note or the attitude of the Vatican to the war in general.\* It is enough to recall that the Pope's impartiality placed the opposing belligerents on exactly the same level, to the extent of balancing the evacuation of Belgium and the occupied territory in France with the restitution of the German colonies; that he held out hopes of territorial arrangements which would satisfy the aspirations of the contending parties:

\* The text of the Pope's Note will be found at the end of Chapter CCXXX.

and that he stigmatized the struggle between the two groups of peoples as a "useless slaughter."

The Note gave rise to a furious polemic in the Italian Press. Only the official Socialists and the Giolittian *Stampa* ranged themselves with the Clerical newspapers in defence of the Note. The *Avanti* claimed that the Pope spoke "the language of Zimmerwald," and that "two great armies—the Catholic and the Socialist—are working together to end the horrible conflict." The *Stampa* preached a



AN ITALIAN PATROL IN THE MOUNTAINS.



doleful sermon on the text "useless slaughter," and it was this phrase that excited the strongest comment of those who felt that the Note showed a strange misapprehension of the issues at stake. "If the word 'useless' is written over the tombs of those who gave themselves for a more just, a more civilized, a more human to-morrow for their country and for all free countries, the dead will shudder in their graves. Nothing in all the world was ever more sacredly useful." \*

This was the truth, but the unhappy phrase went out with all the authority of the Head of the Catholic Church, and the rest of the Note may be said to have led up to that phrase. If the assumptions made by the Pope were true, if the belligerents were equally respon-



**BARON SONNINO (on the right)**  
Leaving the Paris Conference, July 1917.

sible for the war and equally guilty in regard to its excesses, then the sufferings and losses were indeed useless. They were equally "useless" in the eyes of many people if, as the Note hinted, there was "reason to hope" that the enemies of the Entente were prepared to consider certain territorial questions "in a con-

cessatory spirit," taking account of "the aspirations of the peoples." The Note was vague enough in its reference to these questions,



**POPE BENEDICT XV.**

but the Clerical papers filled in the gaps, and the impression conveyed was that the Papal Note held out the promise of Trent and Trieste for Italy.

It is idle to say that Trent and Trieste were not mentioned by name, or that the Pope promised nothing at all, but only made an appeal for peace. The Note hinted, if it did not promise, and those whose business it was to support it took pains to suggest that its terms would probably be accepted as a common basis of discussion.

To the Entente as a whole the proposals could offer no basis for discussion. The demand for "entire and reciprocal condonation" seemed a mockery in view of the German crime against Belgium; the first and greatest of many crimes against laws human and divine that had no counterpart on the other side. Serbia was not even mentioned by name, but was included in the general reference to "territorial and political questions." Small wonder that a first reading of the Note led to indignant comment by almost every Allied newspaper that was not identified with the Roman Church or with an anti-war party. The defenders of the Note were subsequently at

\* *Corriere della Sera*, August 17.

pains to demonstrate that its wording did not necessarily imply the interpretations that were at first attached to it, but the salient phrases could not be explained away or "interpreted." And their effect upon those who had no political knowledge and with whom the Pope's word carried weight may readily be imagined.

The Note was published on the eve of an immense effort, a greater effort than Italy had ever made, and for a moment parts of the Army were shaken. The Socialists had

expect a better reward for his avowed subordination of moral questions to his longing for an end to wholesale death and suffering. The intentions of Benedict XV. were praiseworthy, but it is not likely that his famous Note will be best remembered for its intentions.

Parts of the Italian Army were shaken for a moment, but it was only for a moment. When the day of battle came, the troops showed all their old qualities—bravery, patience, endu-



A HEADQUARTERS DUG-OUT ON THE ITALIAN FRONT.

preached that the Germans were ready to make peace; the Pope seemed to repeat the suggestion, and his commentators insisted that he would not have taken the step unless he had good reason to believe it would be successful. It is known now that his eager hope of peace made him a prey to false assurances which Germany gave for her own ends. He became, in fact, the unwitting instrument of German manœuvres. It would be unfair to suggest that the Papal Note was inspired by anything but the Pope's own passionate desire for an end to the horror of the war and for the establishment of a lasting peace. The German reply, when it came, was a complete disillusion to the Pope, who perhaps had the right to

prance—under the severest trials. This fact was often quoted by Clericals as a proof that the Papal Note had no ill-effect, but the argument is false. There was a moment of anxiety and uncertainty, and if that moment passed, thanks to the essential soundness of the Army as a whole, the fact remains.\* The actual dates pertinent to the argument are as follows. A forecast of the Papal Note was published on August 14. The next day, the festival of *Ferragosto*, no newspapers appeared. At midday on August 16 the text was published in a special

\* The writer has a very vivid recollection of the language used in regard to the Papal Note by an Italian Army Corps commander, who knew how his men had been temporarily affected.





MAP ILLUSTRATING THE ITALIAN OFFENSIVE ON THE ISONZO.



edition of the *Osservatore Romano*. At dawn on August 18 the Italian artillery opened fire along the whole line from Monte Nero to the sea.

The battle that was now to be joined surpassed in extent any that had hitherto taken place on the Julian front. In 1916 General Cadorna had dealt one short sharp stroke after another, each time upon a comparatively limited front. The actions in May, 1917, described in Chapter CCXXI., were in a measure separate, though they were closely connected. Each phase of the May offensive lasted roughly three days, and in each case the type of action was simply a development on a larger scale of the previous year's hammerings on the Carso. In August the whole proportion of things was changed; the whole scheme of the fight was on a different scale.

On August 18 the entire front went on fire from above Tolmino right down to the sea, and the battle lasted for four weeks. The governing idea of the plan of action was to attack all along the line in the hope of finding a weak spot, and then to throw in reserves on whatever part of the long front promised best. That is to say, that at the outset there was no fixed objective for a main attack to which the others should be subservient. The sector for the main drive was to be decided by the results of the early fighting.

From the first the great movement went with a swing. When the main bombardment was still in progress, on the afternoon of August 18, Italian columns moved north-eastward from the Plava bridgehead, and seized the village of Britof, at the mouth of the Rohot valley, which divides Monte Kuk (611) from the main Bainsizza plateau. This movement was carried out under cover of a tremendously heavy artillery fire, which must have cut the communications of the outlying enemy trenches, for the barrage which the enemy put over in the hope of crushing the attacking forces was quite wrongly directed. The whole Isonzo valley was seething with smoke, and the enemy command clearly thought that the attack which they could hear round Britof had come from the far side of the river. The Austrian guns rained countless shells on both banks of the river below Anhovo, where they imagined that the Italians were crossing. But the Italians were already inside the barrage, and reinforcements could still come round the southern end of it.

This was only a minor movement, in the

nature of a feint. The real work began late on the night of August 18, when the formidable task of crossing the Isonzo at a number of points between Tolmino and Anhovo was undertaken. The wooded glacis that drops from the Bainsizza tableland to the Isonzo had the swift river as a protecting moat all the way from below Santa Lucia station to just above Plava. In most places the banks are precipitous, dropping some 30 to 60 feet to the water, and where it seemed as though a bridge might more easily be thrown across the enemy had established specially strong machine-gun redoubts. Most of the easy places were left alone, and in many cases the pontoons had to be let down to the river by ropes. Before dawn on the 19th 14 bridges had been thrown across the river. The task of the engineers was helped by a thick curtain of smoke that blotted out the flow of the valley and by the clever use of a great number of searchlights, the skilful manipulation of which completely blinded the enemy lights.

Many troops were across the river before dawn, and before the sun had topped the hills to the east large forces were established on the left bank. The big trench mortars had done their work well, and the enemy defences near the river were smashed to bits. In the early morning the mist lay in the valley and well up the hillsides like a level floor, that seemed scarcely disturbed by the havoc of shell-fire. Later in the day the levels broke, and the whole vaporous mass, thickened by the smoke of innumerable shell bursts, seethed and swirled like a witches' brew. Favoured by the mist and by the devices indicated above, the attacking troops got across the Isonzo with comparatively little loss, and along a great part of the river front the first rush took them through the battered remnants of the enemy trenches. The next difficulty began when they came in contact with the so-called "redoubt-line"—a line of caverns and dug-outs used as machine-gun posts some distance up the steep slopes. Across the river from Anhovo and for some little distance northward the attacking forces were held up by a murderous machine-gun fire. In front of them lay the steep ridge that dropped from Jelenik, the centre-point of the Austrian defensive system in this sector, whence a second system of trenches radiated north-east and south-east to support the front line running along the top of the glacis, and to protect the approaches to the main



plateau from an attack pushed up the Avseek or Rohot valleys. The enemy clung to the lines behind Desela with the utmost desperation, and all attempts to work up the hill failed. But as the day wore on it was seen that persistence in a frontal attack would not be necessary.

Between Canale and the mouth of the Avseek valley, by Loga and Bodrez, the scene of the feint action three months before,\* two Bersaglieri brigades, the First and the Fifth, made light of all obstacles and gained the

the Italians had enlarged the hole in the line till it extended from the Avseek valley to the point known as Kuk 711, one of the half-dozen kuks that dot the region of the Middle Isonzo. Jelenik, the hub of the defence, was threatened from the north as well as from the west

It was two days more before Jelenik fell, but in the meantime the Italians had smashed clean through on a sufficiently wide front. They were pressing eastward and rolling up the enemy line from the north.



A PONTOON BRIDGE ON THE ISONZO.

rim of the Bainsizza plateau at the heights known as Fratta and Semarek, north of the village of Vrh. They had broken up the enemy defences on this line, and were advancing southward and eastward, backed by a fresh brigade which followed them through the gap they had made. One column pushed south-eastward above the Avseek valley, another came southward along the rim of the plateau by Vrh. There was very stiff fighting, but a big gap had been made in the enemy's third line, and he could not prevent its widening. Italian reserves came across the river and up the woody slopes, and the Austrians could not stem the steady pressure. When night fell

North of the Avseek valley, opposite Doblar, the action began equally well. The river was crossed successfully, and a footing was gained on the heights to the eastward. The problem here was especially difficult. There was no possibility of extending the line of the frontal attack farther north than opposite Doblar, for the steep western slopes of the Lom and Kal plateaux end, for the most part, in a sheer rockfall into the Isonzo. The Lom heights are divided from those of Kal by the torrent of Vogereek, which drops abruptly through thick woods to the river, but the only real access to the two plateaux is from the Avseek valley, which divides the Kal plateau from the main system of the Bainsizza. A glance at the map shows the great importance of these

\* See Chapter CCXXI.

positions. The Lom plateau dominates the junction of the Baca and Idria valleys, and the southernmost curve of the Wochein railway, the sole good way of access to Tolmino from the east. It dominates, moreover, the northern part of the Chiapovano valley, which furnished the only satisfactory lateral communication for the enemy positions on the Middle Isonzo. The Lom plateau was one of the main bulwarks of the Tolmino defences, an essential part of them. The Kal plateau was in the

fighting the Italians succeeded in occupying the western part of the Kal plateau, as far as a line running north-eastwards from Levpa to near Mesnjak.

Meanwhile furious fighting was going on between Gorizia and the sea, and especially on the Carso. From the morning of the 19th the Italian pressure all along the line was very heavy, and at one point the enemy cracked badly. The Italian 23rd Corps carried the line between Korite and Selo, which had



BERSAGLIERI WITH REGIMENTAL DOGS.

nature of an outwork, interposed between the main line and the only way of approaching it.

Observation showed that the enemy front lines were well prepared, but information regarding the rearward positions was fragmentary and more of a general than a detailed kind. The country beyond the nearer ridges is broken and thickly wooded, so that observation gave poor results. Other information was practically lacking, owing to the fact that there had been practically no contact between the opposing troops in this sector. It followed that the task both for troops and leaders was exceptionally arduous, but the first steps were splendidly successful. After very hard

resisted so stoutly in May, and practically destroyed the Austrian 12th Division. More than four thousand prisoners were taken from this division alone, and its losses in killed and wounded were terrible. The 12th had won the name of the "Iron Division" for the many stubborn fights in which it had been engaged, but it had practically no chance against the furious attack of the Italians, in which the Grenadier Brigade once more distinguished itself greatly, going through the village of Selo with bomb and bayonet. In the Hermada region useful progress was made—the Italians reaching the line from which they had been driven by the Austrian counter-attack in June, and taking many



prisoners. The attack in this sector was greatly helped by the enfilading fire of the batteries on Punta Sdobba, a long spit of land thrust out into the sea south of Monfalcone. Hungarian prisoners who were brought in on the evening of August 20, dazed and worn by



MAP ILLUSTRATING THE ITALIAN ADVANCE IN THE SOUTHERN SECTOR.

the torment of three days' slaughter and thirst, could only stammer, "Sdobba, Sdobba," and wave their hands towards the guns that had pounded their flank. Very useful work was done by British monitors and Italian guns mounted on pontoons, which bombarded the Hermada, especially the reverse slopes where the enemy heavy artillery was concentrated, and the railway line that runs along the coast to Trieste. Trieste itself was also shelled.

On the northern part of the Carso little progress was made. The Austrian resistance here was perhaps more tenacious than in any other sector of the long front. The stairway of peaks that rises from west to east, and divides

the Carso plateau from the Vippaceo valley, was of enormous importance to the enemy. It was the middle, and probably the most important of the three main points of resistance between the Middle Isonzo and the sea, the northern being San Gabriele and the southern Hermada. Here the enemy put in line some of his best troops, and they fought with dogged fury. But they lost ground. In the first day's fighting the Pallanza brigade occupied an important position south-east of Fatti Hrib, and every attempt to dislodge them failed. North and south of them the fight swayed backwards and forwards as attack and counter-attack followed in quick succession, but the Pallanza held tightly to their gains.

In the Gorizia plain, and as far north as Monte Santo, the activity of the Italians was practically limited to artillery work and trench raids. Experience had shown that this sector held less promise of success in a direct attack than the Middle Isonzo and the Carso, and it may be said that here there was an exception to the governing idea of equal pressure all along the line. The artillery fire was tremendous and frequent raids were carried out, but there was no infantry attack in force. The Austrian *communiqués* spoke of "desperate fighting" in this sector, where "the Italians did not succeed in gaining a yard of territory." At this stage there was no attempt to gain territory in the centre of the line. Similar claims were made in regard to the Vodice sector. They were equally unfounded. The Italian troops in Kuk and Vodice, after a first demonstrative action, were held back until the movement farther north should be developed.

For the first day's fighting had found the weak place, and the results at the end of the second day determined the subsequent course of the battle.

The Austrians made a very gallant effort to stem the onrush of the Italians through the gap that was made in their lines on the Middle Isonzo. They fought desperately, taking every advantage of the broken, difficult ground. But resistance was useless. Nothing could stop the Borsaglieri, who pushed south-eastwards and occupied the wooded heights of Ossoinea and Oseedrih, while the supporting troops, among whom the Elba Brigade particularly distinguished itself, spread out fanwise and turned the Jelenik positions. More troops



*Italian Naval official photograph*

ITALIAN NAVAL GUNS ON A PONTOON BOMBARDING THE HERMADA.

poured through the gap and pressed across the plateau, picking up guns and prisoners, in spite of the stubborn fight put up by the enemy covering troops. By August 22 strong forces were marching hard for the eastern rim of the Bainsizza plateau. The troops which defended the wooded slopes below Jelenik and Hill 747 still resisted every attempt to dislodge them, though their line of retreat was all but cut off. Desperate fighting still went on in the woods, but these were slowly being blasted from the grim slopes. All things green were fading and dying under the blight of shell-fire. The battle had developed into a battle of movement as far as the Middle Isonzo was concerned. On the Austrian left, where the Italian attack had not yet been thrown in, the defenders were holding on anxiously, but their position was becoming very precarious. On the morning of August 23, the Florence Brigade attacked up the eastern slope of the Rohot valley, with the Udine Brigade on their right. Before long the Florence Brigade were through the enemy lines at Rutarsce and Bavterca, and pushing up towards Kobilek. They were well supported, both on left and right. The whole Second Corps, which had been held back till the movement on the north should develop, was launched against the enemy lines from below Jelenik to the saddle that runs from Vodice to Baske. The Austrians were driven back in confusion, and forced down into the Concha di Gargaro, losing very heavily, as they came under artillery fire near Slatna, on the road leading down to Gargaro.

Monte Santo was now threatened in reverse, and the same day an Italian column from the south reached the Sella di Dol—the saddle which divides Monte Santo from Monte San Gabriele. That afternoon a frantic telephone call for orders from the Austrian garrison on Monte Santo was picked up by the Italians. The commander was evidently preparing for retreat, and asked anxiously for instructions as to his movements and what he was to do with his stores and ammunition. Whatever his orders were he did not succeed in retiring all his men, or in destroying his supplies. When Monte Santo was occupied on the following day a number of prisoners were taken, and its caverns yielded a great amount of booty.

Not long before the fall of Monte Santo, the Austrians' best remaining observation post and the scene of prolonged and stubborn fighting in the previous May, would have been hailed as a great and splendid triumph. Its actual capture receded in perspective in view of the brilliant movement of which it was only a comparatively unimportant incident. It had resisted countless gallant attempts to storm its steep sides, and when the attackers had gained a footing on its summit it had poured forth men and machine-guns from its many caverns and driven the presumptuous heroes from the ruins of its convent. Yet at the last it fell, as a ripe pear falls. The chance of manœuvring given by the successes farther north did what months of hammering had failed to do. When the writer visited that sector of the front the





THE CONVENT OF MONTE SANTO  
AFTER THE BOMBARDMENT.

day following its capture, it lay like a derelict in the scorching sun. The battle had passed it by. Its battered hideousness seemed to mean nothing any more. Yet it came quickly to life again. A road crept along the crest of the ridge from Vodice, and before the road came Italian mountain-guns.

A great part of General Cadorna's Second Army was now well on the move. Divisions were marching across the Bainsizza plateau, deployed as for an old-time battle. The enemy rearguard was putting up a very fine

resistance, employing field artillery and machine-guns with good effect and making the best use of the wild and broken country. The Italians, on the other hand, were handicapped by the fact that they were now beginning to outrun their own artillery, except the mountain guns. It must always be remembered that the first part of the advance after crossing the Isonzo, was a climb of 2,000 feet, and that the upland of the Bainsizza is not flat, but traversed by ridges which rise to a considerable height above the general level. Moreover, its western sector was roadless. Where the Italians first broke through there was not a single road between the river and the enemy gun positions. Farther south there was one poor road across the saddle from Baske to Vodice, and along the eastern slope of Kuk (611) to near Paljevo. In June the Italians had built an admirable road up the western side of Kuk to the saddle between Kuk and Vodice and another between Kuk and Hill 383. Half a day's work linked up the Kuk road to the Austrian road at the hamlet of Vodice, but between the end of the Austrian road east of the ridge and the Italian road past Hill 383 there was a gap of a mile. Till that gap was filled everything had to struggle up the single mountain road that ran from Plava across



ARTILLERY TRANSPORT ON A NEWLY-MADE ROAD.

the saddle between Kuk and Vodice and thence across the Baske saddle to Ravne, on the main plateau. From the Baske saddle a road ran down to the Coneha di Gargaro. Another led from Ravne to the Coneha, and another joined Ravne to the village of Bate, which was the centre of the Austrian communications on the plateau. The position, in short, was this: that the Italians had only one road by which they could bring up guns and stores, while the Austrians had several by which they

towards the village of Ternova. Water was a very serious problem. The supply on the Bainsizza upland is at best very limited, and the enemy, naturally, had polluted the wells wherever they had time to do so. Some untouched springs were found, but the great bulk of the water for the troops had to be brought up by road, where there was a road, and elsewhere in barrels on muleback. For a week there was fierce heat, and the soldiers suffered terribly from thirst.



SERVING OUT FOOD TO ITALIAN SOLDIERS.

could retreat. The one road, moreover, was far south of the point where the gap was first made, and was not available for the Italians until the Austrian positions in front of it were actually turned by the infantry to the north. For the first part of the advance there was no road at all.

The advance across the plateau was thus very difficult, on the middle sector at least. On the southern part, where the rearward enemy positions were within range of the heavy guns and where there was at least one road for hurrying up artillery, the Austrians were driven back to the Chiapovano valley. Italian forces crossed the mouth of it, where it debouches into the Coneha di Gargaro, between the Ternova and Bainsizza plateaus, and established themselves on the rise leading up

By August 27, the limit was practically set to the Italian advance on the plateau. The farthest point reached was Volnik, a hill that rises about two miles west of the Chiapovano valley, at the broadest part of the plateau. North of Volnik a road runs down to the valley, and this road was the main avenue of retreat for the Austrian artillery. Here, in a wooded hollow, the pursuing Italian infantry came up with the enemy and all but laid hands on a great column of guns that was struggling eastwards. But the pursuers had outrun their own artillery. The wooded, broken country was admirably suited to defence by machine-guns, and in many places the woods were wired. A desperate defence was made by the enemy. His rearguard was sacrificed, but its sacrifice was not in vain, for the greater part of the threatened





ITALIAN MOTOR TRANSPORT COLUMN CARRYING TROOPS TO THE FRONT.

guns were got away in safety. If it had been in any way possible for the Italian artillery to keep pace with the advancing infantry, the bulk of the enemy artillery would have been caught north of Volnik, and an even greater success would have gone to the credit of Italian arms.

Meanwhile the fight north of Avseeck valley had not gone so well. The forward movement, which had begun admirably the first day, was checked on the second, and General Capello, who commanded the Second Army, was not satisfied that the check was necessary. The general in charge of the operations in this sector was relieved of his command, and General Badoglio was sent north in the hope that his energy and "drive" might meet with success; General Montnori taking over the Second Corps, which was still waiting till the breach made at Vrhl should be widened. This was the second time in the course of the summer that General Badoglio had been selected to take charge of operations which had already been begun.\* In May his work was rewarded by the

capture of Kuk and Vodice, but on the second occasion he was unable to make the headway that was urgently necessary. Perhaps he came on the spot too late, when the loss of the hours that mean everything to an offensive had already prejudiced the situation. This was the opinion of those who thought that more energetic action on the second day of the battle might have led to big results. It is certain that by the time he took over the command the enemy had strengthened the positions that were already strongly held. The Austrians had concentrated a large force of artillery on the Lom plateau, and ample infantry reserves were quickly on the spot. It is doubtful, however, whether the Italian attack could have had much further success even if no time had been lost. This position was all-important to the enemy. It was clear that the attainment of the Italian objectives would have placed the Austrians at Tolmino in a practically impossible situation. Their defensive measures were, therefore, very complete, and the Italian attacking strength was not sufficient. There were not enough guns to push through this operation in addition to

\* See Chapter CCXXI.

sustaining the battle along the whole wide front to the sea. Other sectors of the battle line were held to have a prior claim.

On the morning of August 30 the battle seemed still so open that cavalry patrols were sent forward in reconnaissance from Britof to the southern outlet of the Chiapovano valley, and southward towards the low ridge that joins Monte San Gabriele to the Ternova plateau. These patrols came in touch with the enemy, dismounted and kept the defenders employed till the infantry came up and took over the work. The Italians soon found themselves faced by wire, and the brief task of the cavalry was over. This was the last day of open fighting. The inevitable slowness of the advance over the difficult, roadless country had given time for enemy reserves to arrive—well served by the roads which backed the Bainsizza and led over the Ternova plateau. It was obvious that a pause was due. The ground was still very favourable to the defence. Among the woods and rocks of the Bainsizza, wire and machine-guns could hold up any advance that was not backed by a heavy weight of artillery fire. The steep eastern rim of the plateau rises well above the approaches to it, and it was strongly held. Four divisions were in line here, *plus* the shattered remnants of two others

which had left most of their effectives on the ground lost to the Italians. Reserves were behind them, and there was no possibility of rushing the defences with tired troops and insufficient artillery. The Italian line was straightened out by a withdrawal from some of the more advanced positions occupied, and once more the two armies betook themselves to the spade and the rock-drill, on the Bainsizza at least.

The first phase of the battle was over, and the second phase which followed was curiously different. The long battlefield suddenly narrowed down to one single hill, where for a long three weeks Italians and Austrians fought out the most determined struggle of the battle. During this time there was other heavy fighting at various parts of the front, but the centre point of interest was always Monte San Gabriele.

San Gabriele was now very closely beset. The Italians had long been some way up its western slopes, hanging on under Santa Caterina, a spur that juts out towards the Isonzo. North of Santa Caterina they had occupied Hill 343, a similar spur, which, like its neighbour, had long been reduced to a hateful mound of *débris*. The fall of Monte Santo had let them in with a rush up to the



AN ITALIAN GUN EMBLACEMENT.



Sella di Dol, and they had sealed the precipitous northern slope of San Gabriele, and tucked themselves in under shelter of the point known as Veliki Hrib, or Hill 526, before the Austrians were well aware how their flank had been turned.

The ridge of San Gabriele runs north-westwards from Gorizia towards Monte Santo. The ascent to its highest point (Hill 646) from the Gorizia plain is very abrupt, and thence the ridge runs for about a mile to Veliki Hrib before dropping steeply to the Sella di Dol. The eastern side is also very steep, but on the west the rise is comparatively gentle,

to face direct attack from the west. But the summit itself had been turned into a citadel, with rock trenches facing all ways. The task of the Italians who had occupied the northern end of the ridge was to push up the gradual rise, and they had the advantage of being able to use the old defences as communication trenches when they had made good an advance over the open ground. But an advance was very difficult. The Austrians had many caverns on the eastern and southern sides of Gabriele which gave cover against the Italian shells. And all their massed artillery, on the Ternova and San Daniele, at Cronberg and in



WIRE-CUTTING BY SECATEUR UNDER PROTECTION OF A STEEL SHIELD.

except for the two spurs already mentioned, until immediately under the main ridge, which rises very sharply for the last 500 feet. The total length of the *massif* from the Sella di Dol to the aqueduct below the south-eastern corner, is little more than 2,000 yards, while its extreme breadth from Santa Caterina to the saddle which divides it from Monte San Daniele is a little less. The widest part of the main ridge, between the steep drops on either side, is only about 800 yards. It seems an impossible battlefield, but on this narrow space an appalling struggle took place.

The flank of the Austrian position was turned by the occupation of Veliki Hrib and the advance in the Concha di Gargaro, for the defences had run along the ridge to the summit

the Panowitzzer wood, could be trained upon the battered hill.

On August 30 the Italians finally established themselves firmly on Veliki Hrib, and pushed forward to another strong position on the ridge known as Hill 552. During the next few days the Austrians made furious endeavours to drive back the invaders of their vital stronghold, but though they often regained some of their lost ground, they could never hold it, and in the meantime preparations for a further assault were pushed on. The Italians kept extending their hold on the ridge. Their splendid infantry, backed by a very heavy artillery fire, were slowly unloosing the enemy's grip, finger by finger. Sometimes by a furious effort the loosened finger shut again, but in



BOMBARDMENT OF SAN GABRIELE: SANTA CATERINA IN THE FOREGROUND.

the end it became finally detached from its hold. By September 2 the Italians had pushed along the ridge till they were under the last sharp rise that leads to the summit, and they had extended their occupation on the eastern side of the hill.

The fresh attack—the first attack on the summit—came on the morning of September 3, when the Italians went forward in three columns. “One column attacked straight along the coast, one worked along the north-eastern slope, while the third advanced on the right, where the first precipitous fall of the ridge meets the slope that comes up from Saleano past the jutting spurs of Hill 343 and Santa Caterina. The left-hand column was held up south-east of Hill 552 by a rocky bastion that juts out eastward from the main *massif*, but it kept the Austrians in this sector very busy and diverted their attention from the flank of the centre column. The right-hand column got well forward and performed the same service for the other flank of the main attack, which was brilliantly successful.

“Nothing could stop the centre column, which was made up of volunteer storming troops. These broke down all resistance. They stormed the machine-gun positions, careless of loss, and reached the caverns,

where the Austrian reserves were caught like rats. In less than an hour the Italians were in possession of the main peaks.

“They had thrust a wedge into the enemy position in the mountain, but their own position was precarious. The enemy still lay round them east, south, south-west, on the lower ground indeed, but for that very reason half-protected from the terrific hail of shells which had pounded the crest to fragments. Some of the enemy had remained literally underneath them, for a group of Italians who took refuge in a great shell-crater felt the ground give way beneath their feet till they fell into a cavern occupied by a company of the enemy. The Italians were the first to recover from the surprise, and the small detachment took the whole company prisoners.

“Altogether the centre column took nearly 1,500 prisoners, more than twice the whole number of the ‘forlorn hope’ that had stormed the peak. Think of what they had done. They had rushed a steep glacis that rises about 300 feet in 600 yards, a glacis not more than 200 or 300 yards wide. At the end of the last abrupt rise they had stormed trenches cut in the rock and full of machine-guns. By every law of fortune and rule of war they had no more chance of succeeding than the men who





GENERAL CADORNA AND STAFF WATCHING THE BOMBARDMENT OF MONTE SAN GABRIELE.

stormed Badajoz or Ciudad Rodrigo—less, perhaps, for in those far-off days there was no such nearly perfect engine of defence as the machine-gun.

“They had done the impossible, and now reserves came up to sit down and hold the salient, closely pressed by a desperate enemy and smitten by all the massed guns from east and south. For the Austrians to prevent the complete occupation of San Gabriele was a matter of life and death. If once it was altogether gone the way lay open to an Italian advance east of Gorizia and the consequent enfilading of the all-important positions on the northern rim of the Carso. The enemy had to sacrifice anything in order to gain time to improvise a new defence on the Ternova plateau and the low ground that leads down behind Gorizia to the Vipacco.”\*

The enemy did not stint his sacrifice. The 10 days which followed the Italian attack on the summit saw one long-continued *mêlée* at close quarters—bomb and bayonet, dagger and clubbed rifle. The fights swayed backwards and forwards along the awful *débris* of shattered rock and crushed bodies. The Austrians surged up from their caverns on the eastern and southern slopes, and the Italian line gave back under the line of the crest to let the guns have full play. Attack after attack was swept away by gusts of shell-fire, and the elastic Italian line returned to where it had been.

More caverns full of Austrians were found

within the area occupied, and some of these men refused to surrender, hoping to hold on till they should be freed by a successful counter-attack. Attempts to enter the caverns met with strong resistance, and their occupants had to be bombed into silence. A remarkable feature of the captures in this sector was the very large proportion of officers taken—the figures for two successive days amounted to 112 officers and 2,100 men. The explanation lay in the Austrian system of fighting. The men and non-commissioned officers fought in the trenches with only a few officers, the bulk of the latter remaining in caverns behind the battle-line. In this way the losses of killed and wounded was proportionately very much greater among the rank and file. As a rule, when the Italians broke through the enemy lines it was only the remnant of the men who fell into their hands, but the officers were picked out of their “funk-holes” in batches. The system of fighting does not sound “sporting,” but it was no doubt very necessary for the Austrians to spare their officers as long as possible. And the system worked. The Austrian resistance deserved all praise.

On September 12 General Boroëvic launched masses of fresh troops against the Italian line on San Gabriele and at length succeeded in reducing to some extent the salient that terminated at Hill 646. But his only success was the occupation of a part of the Italian advance lines. All efforts to push back the main line, which ran just under the summit, to the north of it, and thence slantwise down

\* *The Times*, September 14.

the north-eastern slope, were in vain. At last there came a comparative truce upon the stricken mountain. Infantry fighting ceased, and though a steady succession of shells fell upon it for a few days more, at length the fires which had been alight for more than a month seemed to burn themselves out.

The original garrison of the mountain fortress was perhaps five or six battalions, and the fierceness of the fighting may be judged from the fact that from August 27 to the middle of September no fewer than 31 fresh Austrian battalions were thrown into the struggle.

sensation of the spectator was amazement at man's capacity to resist the terrible engines of his own devising." \*

The Austrians claimed that the fight for San Gabriele resulted in a decisive victory for them, inasmuch as at the end of the long and tremendous struggle they still held half the *massif* and still blocked the Italian movement that had seemed to threaten the Austrian lines east of Gorizia. To some extent their claim is justified. Every credit must be given to the defenders for their heroic resistance, and their successful effort to prevent the complete



[Italian official photograph.]

#### INFANTRY DISLODGING THE ENEMY FROM A CAVE.

What this meant may be judged from the dimensions of the mountain already given, and from the fact that the area of the fiercest and most prolonged struggle is perhaps a little larger than Trafalgar Square. The losses on both sides were terrible, for during these three weeks the fight raged almost without ceasing. Sometimes the hammering of the artillery died down for a few hours and let the tortured ground lie bare to the light, unscreened by the foul garments of shell smoke, but there was no real rest from the battle. After each pause hell woke again with unquenched fires, and weary men resumed their incredible efforts. The mettle of both sides was tried to the uttermost, and here, as so often, "the prevailing

capture of this all-important bulwark certainly saved General Boroewic's great defeat from developing into a great disaster. But it would be wrong to regard the Italian attack on San Gabriele as an isolated action.

The attack had a two-fold object: first, the possible capture of the mountain and the possible turning of the enemy positions east of Gorizia; secondly, the gaining of time necessary to consolidate the great stretch of new line on the Bainsizza plateau. The first object was not attained, but in order to prevent its attainment the Austrians had to use up the infantry of three divisions and concentrate a

\* *The Times*, September 10, 1917.



great force of artillery. The second object was fully gained. Thanks to the threat against San Gabriele and the necessity of calculating upon its possible fall, the Austrians could not spare enough men or guns to menace the new Italian positions on the Bainsizza. These positions were certainly insecure for a time, and strong Austrian reinforcements thrown in during the first critical period of occupation might very well have met with success. It takes a long time to prepare a defensive line among those tumbled hills—about Madoni the terrain is as naked and rocky as the worst parts of the Carso—and there was only the one poor road for the transport of guns, ammunition, water, food, and material for entrenchments. The operations on San Gabriele were thus in the closest connexion with the position of the troops farther north, and the diversion of Austrian effort to this vital point prevented any attempt to take advantage of the lack of Italian communications across the Bainsizza. Every man who could be spared had to be pushed into the cracking lines on San Gabriele or held in reserve against its fall.

There was another sector which had caused the Austrians a good deal of anxiety—the

Southern Carso. During the first week's fighting the Italians had pushed up the slopes of the Hermada till they were above San Giovanni di Duino, and close upon Medeazza. Farther north, on the Carso proper, the drive of the 23rd Corps through Selo, and the hard-won progress of the 25th Corps on its left, had broken through the first line of the Austrian defences and brought the Italians to the formidable system known as the *Kappa* line, which ran from Kostanjevica across the Brestovica valley to the northern summit of the Hermada. The 23rd Corps, in fact, had passed the *Kappa* line east of Selo, and in various other places the main line was practically destroyed and had become a part of No Man's Land. For nearly a week the Austrians had clung on to their advanced trenches in the Brestovica valley when the high ground north and south of them had been occupied by the Italians. They were only there on sufferance, and a sudden move of the Italians flattened the salient, and took the line forward some distance towards the *Kappa* system. The enemy gave ground with great reluctance, making good use of the *doline* between the trench lines, and being well supported by their artillery. But they lost a good many prisoners and a number of machine-guns.



AUSTRIAN SOLDIERS CARRYING A WOUNDED COMRADE ON A RIFLE.



[Italian official photograph.]

DUINO AND TRIESTE FROM THE ITALIAN POSITIONS ON MONTE HERMADA.

By the end of August the order was given to "systematize" the Italian line, though the 23rd Corps in particular and the troops near Medeazza and San Giovanni were well placed for a further advance. A good many of their guns had been sent north to increase the weight of fire on what had come to be, for the moment, the most important sector of the front. The Third Army had to stop in order to let the Second Army go on. No doubt the enemy became aware of the movement of guns to the north, but it is probable that his counter-attack would have come in any case. It was delayed until the action of the Second Army was localized round San Gabriele, and before that time there was heavy fighting east of Gorizia, where Italian attacks near the cemetery and against San Mareo gained a little ground, but did not make any real impression on the situation. The enemy artillery in this sector had been considerably strengthened, and the Italians had no superiority in gunfire between San Daniele and the Carso. When this effort had died away, and all eyes were turned upon San Gabriele, the Austrians threw in their counter-attack against the Third Army.

The blow came on September 4, and at the end of a day's heavy fighting the enemy had gained no advantage at all. In two sectors of the front, between Kostanjevia and the sea, he began well. Between Kostanjevia and

Korite the first rush drove the Italians back for some distance. For a long time there was give-and-take fighting, but at the end of the day the Italian line was completely re-established. The Austrian left off where he began. On the foothills of the Hermada he won an initial success in the morning, but in the afternoon an Italian counter-attack regained all the lost ground. There were practically no trenches left in this sector, except the southern end of the Flondar-Duino line, which faced the Italians' right wing, and which they had never passed. On the rocky foothills it was open fighting. Between Korite and the Brestovica valley the Austrians made no impression at all, though they did not give in for two days. Their chief effort was against this sector, and they could not set foot even in the most advanced Italian posts. Their storming columns were swept away by the accurate work of the Italians with gun, machine-gun and bomb. The first three attacks—there were seven in all—got within bombing distance but the other four were broken up by artillery fire before they could properly develop. It was very hard pounding. The Austrians showed the most stubborn valour, but they were met with a resistance which made it useless. On one short sector of the front, where an entire regiment was sent in against an Italian battalion, the defenders went out to meet the attack with machine-guns, which they hid so as to command





A BRIEF HALT.

the approaches to their line. At one point the nearest Austrian was within five yards' distance when the machine-guns opened. The attackers went down like a row of ninepins, and the corpses lay in swathes. Nearly all this regiment was destroyed, and the battalion which repulsed its attack had only a slight casualty list.

In the work of breaking up the enemy counter-attacks a British group of six-inch howitzers performed very useful service and received the special thanks of the Italian command. This was not the first or last time that the British gunners with the Third Army were specially commended for their services. On many occasions they earned the warm appreciation of those who commanded them and those who worked with them, and the tribute to their skill and devotion which was given so frequently and so ungrudgingly spoke well both for Italians and Englishmen. Our performances were worthy of recognition, but it is seldom that recognition is given so freely. The entire absence of professional jealousy in the Italian Army was very remarkable.

On the Carso itself the Austrian counterblows had no effect whatsoever. On the foothills of Hermada they were more fortunate. The fighting on the morning of September 5 ended as it had done the previous morning—the Italians being driven down to Flondar and Lokavac, and losing San Giovanni di Duino. The general commanding this sector was pro-

pared to retake the lost positions in the afternoon, as on September 4, but the order came from Army Headquarters to accept the position for the time being. The Austrian *communiqués* made great play with this local success and the enemy is certainly entitled to the credit of having regained all the ground lost in the sector. On the other hand, the Italian Command was probably well advised not to persevere at the moment. Experience had shown that the positions half way up the Hermada were entirely unsuitable for defence, and perhaps it may be said that even experience was not necessary to this conclusion. The lie of the ground was clear indication of the fact. The line which the Italians had twice gained and twice lost was only fit to be used as a stepping-stone to a further advance. In May the hope of that advance had to be given up for lack of munitions. In August the line had been reached as a result of the initial pressure, but the course of the battle had taken the main effort elsewhere. No real push was made against the Hermada. It was the intention of the Italian command to attack the Hermada in earnest when the Second Army had finished its work.

On September 8 General Cadorna announced that the number of prisoners taken during the offensive was 30,671, including 858 officers, and two days later a list of captured war material was published, with the reservation that the count of the booty was not complete. The list

read:—145 guns, including about 80 of large or medium calibre, 94 trench mortars and mine-throwers, 322 machine-guns, 11,196 rifles. Among the heavy guns were two 12-inch howitzers with their tractors, which were left undamaged on the Bainsizza. These and many other guns had already been turned against the enemy. The offensive of the Second Army was now practically over. Before September came to an end there were two successful local actions on the part of the Italians, which resulted in the capture of over 2,000 prisoners and the occupation of useful positions, but the great effort was finished.

The first of these actions was on September 28, when the Italians made a surprise attack upon the Austrian lines on the flank of the Veliki ridge of San Gabriele. After the first surprise the Austrians reacted at once, and for two days endeavoured to win back their lost positions. They failed altogether, and lost heavily. The second action, on September 29, was on the south-eastern corner of the Bainsizza plateau, and its original aim was a mere rectification of the line. But it began so well that it was found possible to do more than had been intended. The preliminary bombardment was short, but very intense, and the Italian infantry was very quick off the mark. A company of storming troops quite upset the enemy's equilibrium, so that detachments from the Venice and Tortona

brigades which followed them overran the Austrian positions, and made short work of all attempts at resistance. A good many of the enemy were killed on the spot, and others who fell back down the slopes to the Chiapovano valley came under heavy artillery fire, and suffered considerable loss. The positions taken were important, and the Austrians made several gallant efforts to win them back. The only effect of these was to add largely to their losses. Effective artillery fire caught the advancing troops, and the machine-guns did the rest. The Austrian prisoners, some 1,500 in number, were mostly Poles and Ruthenians who had recently arrived from Galicia, and had been sent to the Bainsizza after eight terrible days on San Gabriele. They were dog-tired and very much upset by the kind of warfare with which they had suddenly been brought in contact. They had come from well-made, comfortable trenches, where they lounged all day and slept all night. They had almost forgotten what fighting was like until San Gabriele showed them. Their corner on the Bainsizza promised a chance of rest till a sudden whirlwind of gunfire smashed up their rocky trenches and shook their nerves anew. When the waves of Italian infantry were flung at them they were brought to breaking-point.

On September 10 Lord Derby, British Secretary of State for War, arrived at Italian Head



*[Italian official photograph.]*

PREPARING A MACHINE-GUN EMBLACEMENT ON THE CARSO.



Bainsizza Plateau.

Chiapovano Valley.

Ternova Forest.



THE CHIAPOVANO VALLEY.



ITALIAN SOLDIERS REPAIRING A BOMB-PROOF SHELTER AFTER BOMBARDMENT.

quarters. He was accompanied by Generals Macready and Maurice, and the party spent five days on the front. As in the case of most other visitors to the Italian "zone of operations," what they saw was a revelation—a revelation of difficulties not hitherto understood and of effort and accomplishment not fully appreciated. Perhaps an earlier and a longer visit might have been fruitful of important results for the Allied cause. Perhaps it might have induced a more favourable consideration of the suggestion that the Austrian front offered the chance of a great

terics of medium guns, with an ample supply of shells, would have led to markedly better results. A great stride forward had been taken, but at two important points it had been impossible to make the effort that the situation demanded. The threat to Tolmino and its bridgehead remained a threat, and the Austrians had been able, by an immense effort, to check the movement which had for its aim the turning of their positions east of Gorizia. The fact that the Austrian line north and south of the Bainsizza still held firm detracted from the value of



TRANSPORT OF MUNITIONS BY OX-CART.

military and political success, if only the weight of the attacking force could be increased. In any event, the visit did do something to bring home to Italy's allies the comparative shortage of artillery upon the Italian front. It was as a result of representations already made and now confirmed that a considerable reinforcement of French artillery (26 batteries of medium calibre guns) was hastily dispatched to the Italian front.

The more important part of the second big offensive planned by General Cadorna in 1917 had already come to an end, and it was very clear to those who watched it that 40 or 50 bat-

teries of medium guns, with an ample supply of shells, would have led to markedly better results. A great stride forward had been taken, but at two important points it had been impossible to make the effort that the situation demanded. The threat to Tolmino and its bridgehead remained a threat, and the Austrians had been able, by an immense effort, to check the movement which had for its aim the turning of their positions east of Gorizia. The fact that the Austrian line north and south of the Bainsizza still held firm detracted from the value of

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soldier had won great honour for the Army to which he belonged. In the crossing of the Isonzo, the breaking of the Austrian lines east of the river, and the open fighting on the Bainsizza, he had shown splendid dash and resolution, and a great capacity for bearing weariness and hardship. On San Gabriele the personal test was even more severe. The desperate struggle on that battered hill, under an artillery fire that had not hitherto been equalled for prolonged intensity, against an enemy who fought with the

to follow up the advance of the Second Army by an attack in force upon the Hermada, and by a further effort near Tolmino. Preparations were well advanced towards this second phase when he decided that he could not afford to make the attempt. Enemy troops were coming westward from the Russian front in increasing numbers, and he had a much stronger force to cope with, both in men and guns, than had been allowed for when his plans were first made. His own casualty list for the summer had been very



*[Italian official photograph.]*

#### A CAPTURED AUSTRIAN SEAPLANE.

most stubborn valour, compelled an awestruck admiration for the men who attacked and held in such conditions.

The Italian losses were, naturally, very heavy. Including about 10,000 prisoners, the bulk of them taken in the uncertain fights which swayed backwards and forwards between San Gabriele and the sea, they totalled 155,000 men. The Austrians lost over 34,000 prisoners, and their killed and wounded certainly exceeded 100,000. In this second offensive the Italian casualties were considerably less than in the May and June fighting. The Austrians, on the other hand, lost still more heavily than in the previous battle, the counter-attacks on San Gabriele and near Selo costing them very dear.

It was part of General Cadorna's original plan

heavy. Between the two offensives on the Julian front and the action in the Asiago Highlands the Italian losses, killed, wounded, and missing, had reached over 350,000. The Armies had been further weakened by much sickness. The Second Army, in particular, had suffered heavily from an intestinal disease which had been very prevalent in the Natisone and Judrio valleys, while there had been a good deal of malaria in the marshy ground near Monfalcone. A severe type of jaundice had also made its appearance in certain sectors of the front. Altogether the casualties for the summer, including sickness, amounted to more than 700,000. Taking into account his own losses and the fact that the enemy was now able to draw freely upon the Eastern front for reserves,



*[Italian Naval official photograph.]*

#### MOTOR-CYCLIST MACHINE-GUN SECTION.

General Cadorna calculated that he could not hope for any decisive success. Nor could he hope to hit so hard as to do away with the possibility of an enemy counter-stroke. There was already evidence of preparation for such a

stroke, and he had to consider the best way of meeting it. If he attacked and gained ground he would have to face the counter-attack in unprepared positions and with an army still further weakened by the heavier losses which



*[Italian official photograph.]*

#### A HEAVY FIELD HOWITZER ON THE CARSO.



fall to the offensive. There was the added fact that the recent heavy casualties had meant the filling up of many units with drafts from the depôts which were hardly fit as yet for the tremendous test of a big battle. The argument has been used that the best way to meet the enemy offensive was to anticipate it. There is much to be said for the theory, and in practice it has often worked, but in this case the special circumstances which have been indicated all weighed against its application. Perhaps the crowning factor in General Cadorna's decision to abandon further offensive action was his conviction that Russia would soon be out of the war altogether, and that in the spring he would have to be prepared for a bigger effort than any hitherto made.

As a result of General Cadorna's change of plan, which was announced to the Allies towards the end of September, the French guns which had been sent to Italy were withdrawn before most of them had reached the sector assigned to them. Eleven of the sixteen British batteries were also withdrawn. There was an unfortunate misunderstanding in regard to General Cadorna's change of plan and its communication to the Allies, which emphasized the draw-

backs, if further emphasis were needed, of the absence of a central War Council.

It may be that if a permanent Allied War Council had been appointed in the winter of 1916-17 the course of the fighting in the summer of 1917 would not have been altered. It may be that the claims of the Western Front (in the limited sense of the term) would have prevailed over the arguments of those who believed that the Italian front offered a great chance to an Allied offensive. The reasons against making the Italian front the scene of a great united effort were certainly persuasive. They have been indicated shortly in Chapter CCXXI. On the other hand, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that a permanent Allied Council might have brought about a different view of the general position. Such a Council, sitting continuously, might have realized sooner that events in Russia were swinging the balance against us and called for an immediate and thorough review of the plans which had been made at an earlier date. Such a Council might even have questioned the overworked theory that time was inevitably on the side of the Allies, and come to the conclusion that time is on the side of those who will use it.



## CHAPTER CCXXXIV.

# THE SHIPPING PROBLEM (II.).

THE BRITISH SHIPPING SITUATION IN 1917—LOSSES AND NEW CONSTRUCTION—ECONOMY OF AVAILABLE TONNAGE—THE WORK OF THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING—AN IMPORTANT LAW CASE—NEW REQUISITION SCHEMES—ADVISORY SHIPBUILDING COMMITTEE—APPOINTMENT OF NAVY CONTROLLER—DEMAND FOR THE TRUTH ABOUT TONNAGE—LORD PIRRIE, CONTROLLER OF MERCHANT SHIPBUILDING—PUBLICATION OF FIGURES—PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN—APPEALS TO THE SHIPYARDS—STANDARDIZATION—FABRICATION—THE TASK OF THE YARDS.

**A**N earlier chapter (Vol. XI., Chapter CLXIX.) described the dilatory and inadequate attempts which were made to solve the British shipping problem during the first two and a half years of the war, and the account closed with the remark that early in 1917 the problem was being closely tackled in a way that had never been attempted before. Measures were being actively adopted to ensure that more efficient and effective use was made of the tonnage available for naval, military and commercial purposes.

It was well that the necessary administrative machinery had at last been devised, for as time passed the necessity for putting every ton of shipping to the best possible use became ever more imperative. In the first two years of the war much had been heard of the large profits earned by some shipowners, and the outcry against these profits threw the main features of the shipping problem out of perspective. In spite of the fact that many owners could show that in various periods before the war their earnings were very meagre, some of the profits realized in the earlier period of the war were obviously unmerited. The situation was bound to cause criticism and ill-feeling. As the war progressed it became apparent to everyone who gave any thought to the subject that high freights were not the disease itself from which

the nation was suffering, but merely the symptoms. Freights had risen because of the competition among traders for the ever-declining supply of tonnage. This wasting of the tonnage resources of the country, brought about mainly by the enemy's unprecedented submarine warfare, was the real disease. But the public, which heard that freights had risen to preposterous levels, concluded that, in spite of such excess profit taxation as was imposed, shipowners were "profiteers" of the basest kind, and were almost the enemies of the people. The position was really seen in its true perspective at the end of 1917. Practically the whole of British shipping was then requisitioned in one form or another by the State, and the movement of all British tonnage was directed by the Ministry of Shipping so as to get the utmost service out of the tonnage for the Allied cause. It is necessary to use the term "Allied," for British shipping had been placed, to a considerable extent, at the service of Great Britain's partners in the war. Yet, while British shipping was so directed, and all profits above the requisitioned rates of hire were being taken by the State, rates of freight were advanced to levels to which shipowners, if they had been conducting their businesses on ordinary lines instead of working them for the State, would never have felt justified in raising them. It is true that the wages of the crews



were advanced very considerably, and all other working costs tended to rise, but it was understood that even after making all due allowance for these, very substantial amounts remained to the credit of the State as the result of the voyages. The public could afford to pay high freights, but it suffered severely from the lack of tonnage to bring supplies of foodstuffs and other essential commodities. It was this inadequate supply of tonnage which was responsible for such restrictions on food consumption as had to be imposed in 1917. The fact was that Great Britain had been in the habit of importing the bulk of her foodstuffs in the years of peace, and this situation could not suddenly be reversed when the enemy instituted his submarine war. Whether it was the lack of imported feeding-stuffs for home-grown cattle or the serious diminution of such an article of consumption as sugar in the dietary of the people, it was all a question of shipping. There was plenty of wheat and meat, for instance, in Australia and New Zealand, but lack of tonnage effectually prevented its being brought to England.

For far too long British shipping was regarded as a kind of inexhaustible widow's cruse. The public had a vague idea that it consisted at the outbreak of war of many million tons, and that while it was inconvenient that the enemy should go on sinking a number of fine ships, no serious impression could be made on Great Britain's maritime resources. Certain vital facts were overlooked. One was that the number of ocean-going vessels was strictly limited, and the supply of vessels of large size and good speed much more so. Another was that something like half the total amount of tonnage was definitely allocated for the service of the fighting forces, the Allies and the Dominions Overseas. As vessels which were sunk while employed in these services had at all costs to be replaced, the losses fell upon the tonnage in the service of the civilian population. As this tonnage declined, the same amount of shipping sunk represented a larger proportion of the total available, and the difficulty of providing the shipping for essential requirements of the nation gradually became more and more formidable. The importation of



THE KING'S VISIT TO THE CLYDE, SEPTEMBER 18-21, 1917: WATCHING THE OPERATION OF A RIVETING MACHINE.



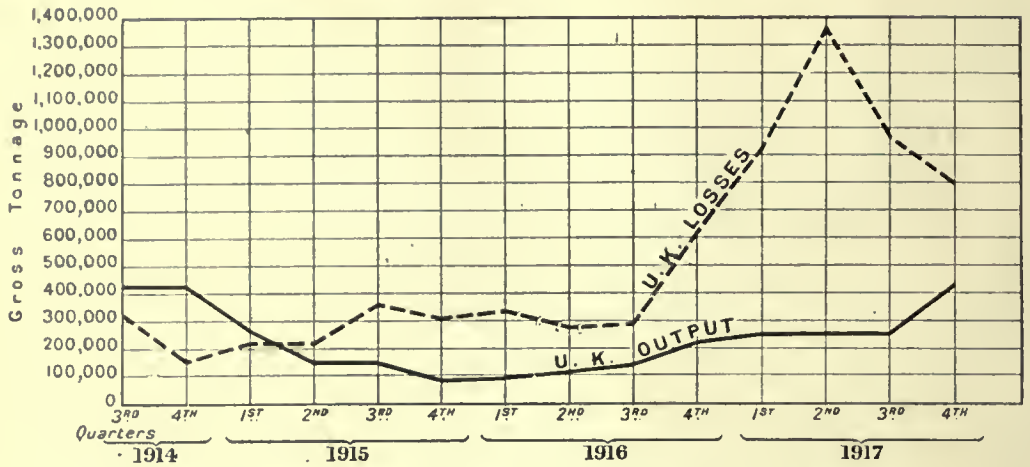
THE KING'S VISIT TO THE CLYDE, SEPTEMBER 18-21, 1917: WITNESSING A LAUNCH AT MESSRS. BOW, McLACHLAN & CO.'S SHIPYARD.

many so-called luxuries had been prohibited or restricted, so that losses of tonnage in 1917 meant reduced imports of what were regarded as essential commodities.

That the limitations of the Mercantile Marine had not been appreciated was shown by the very serious reduction in shipbuilding output. This was due, of course, to the many claims upon man power and material. Skilled men had left the shipyards under the old volunteer system of recruiting, who, as time showed, were badly wanted in the shipyards, and others had gone into the munition factories. The munition factories had also for a long time the first claim upon the steel. In a normal year the production of tonnage in Great Britain was about 2,000,000 tons gross—in 1913 it reached the equivalent of 2,280,000 tons. During the whole of 1915 only 650,000 tons of merchant shipping were produced in the United Kingdom, and only 541,000 tons were turned out in 1916. Yet 1,100,000 tons were lost by enemy action and marine risks in 1915, and in 1916 the losses, at about 1,498,000 tons, were nearly three times the output. Sir Joseph Maclay, when appointed Shipping Controller, saw the imperative necessity of under-

taking a large shipbuilding programme. Ship-owners were not in a position to place orders themselves, partly because they could never adequately advance their claims against those of the Admiralty, whose demands on the private shipyards of the country were naturally very great. No private persons could "compete" with the Government for men and material. A further reason was that they were not in the same position as a Government Department to come to terms with the builders. The adoption of a State programme was naturally not entirely approved of by owners, who regarded the building of a State Mercantile Marine as threatening the future of private enterprise; but in the circumstances it was unavoidable. Sir Joseph Maclay called to his assistance a committee of builders, and under their auspices plans for a large programme of cargo tonnage took shape. The Controller and his committee decided upon the construction of ships of standard models, several types being settled upon. Standardization had been strongly advocated in the Press, and, while there were those who criticized it, the method had for its chief object rapid construction, the effects of which would only be





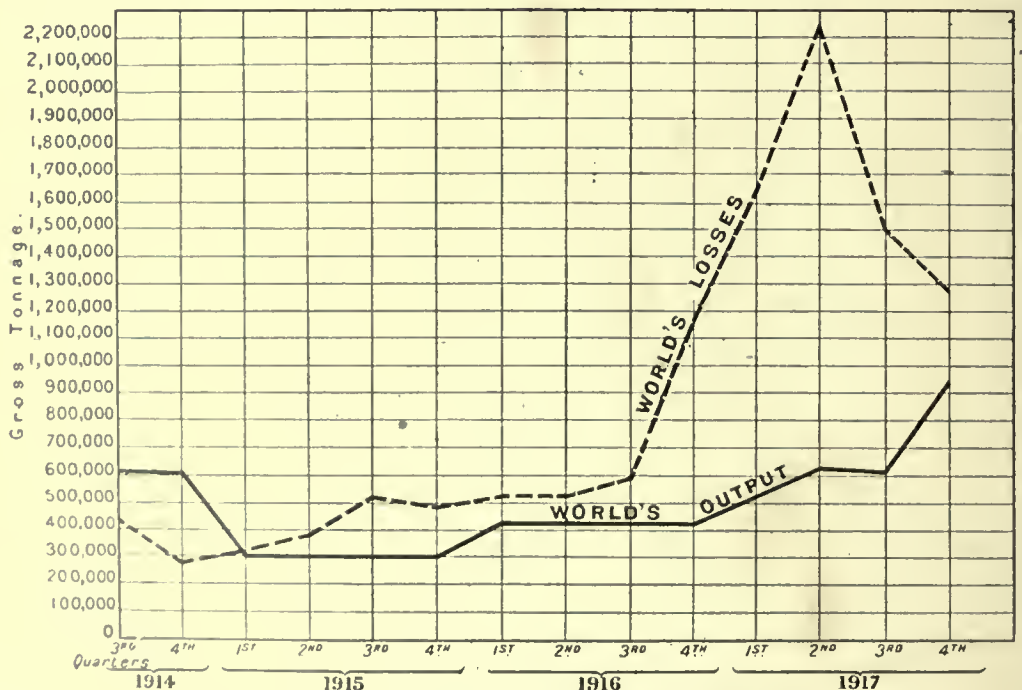
SHIPPING LOSSES AND OUTPUT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM.

fully shown after the existing plant had been adapted. The view of the Ministry of Shipping that construction must be expedited was strongly supported by the events in the first and second quarters of 1917. In the first quarter of 1915 the losses of British tonnage amounted to nearly 216,000 tons; in the third quarter of that year the total was raised to nearly 357,000 tons; and in the last quarter it fell back to 307,000 tons. There was no marked increase in the losses until the fourth quarter of 1916, when the amount of British tonnage lost advanced to 617,000 tons. In the first quarter of 1917 the total jumped up to nearly 912,000 tons, and in the second quarter

to nearly 1,362,000 tons, the losses due to submarine action reaching the highest total in April. They subsequently fell back, as is shown in the following table, extracted from a statement issued by the War Cabinet in March, 1918.

United Kingdom and World's merchant tonnage lost through enemy action and marine risks in 1917:

Period.	British.	Foreign.	Total for World.
First Quarter ...	911,840	707,533	1,619,373
Second Quarter ...	1,361,870	875,064	2,236,934
Third Quarter ...	952,938	541,535	1,494,473
Fourth Quarter ...	782,889	489,954	1,272,843
Total for year ...	4,009,537	2,614,086	6,623,623



THE WORLD'S SHIPPING LOSSES AND OUTPUT.

With losses on such a scale it was not to be wondered at that the shipping authorities saw the necessity of hurrying on construction by every possible means, but they, by themselves, could not take all the necessary steps for increasing the rate of output, especially as the call on man power was insistent, from various quarters. The construction of mercantile tonnage was, however, only part of the problem with which the authorities had to deal in tackling the submarine menace. Their main concern was with the net amount of tonnage available. This amount could be preserved by curbing the enemy's efforts, namely, by destroying his submarines, preventing their movements in and out of their nests, by safeguarding tonnage while afloat, or by building ships to replace what was lost. The first part of the problem was mainly the task of the Navy, and to carry out these purposes the Navy required a large output of warships of different types. Another phase of the same problem was the importance of improving the facilities for the repairing of damaged ships, since it was a far easier task to make seaworthy again ships which had been attacked by the enemy and had reached port crippled than to build tonnage. The building and repairing of warships and of mercantile vessels was therefore really part of the same problem, and it was realization of this which prompted the subsequent transfer of responsibility for merchant tonnage construction from the Ministry of Shipping to the Admiralty.

It will now be desirable to review briefly the work of the Ministry of Shipping. At first Sir Joseph Maclay had quarters at the Admiralty, but at the end of February 1917 the Ministry of Shipping moved into new quarters in a building recently erected in St. James's Park. The Transport Department, formerly under the Admiralty, was then incorporated in the Ministry of Shipping; but it was pointed out that the Admiralty would continue to exercise control through the Director of Transports and Shipping as regards essential naval work, the term "naval" being interpreted as including the transport of troops and such military services as formed an integral part of joint naval and military policy. Mr. Gracme Thomson, C.B., who had been Chief of the Transport Department of the Admiralty, was appointed chief executive officer of the Ministry of Shipping with the title of Director of Transports and

Shipping. The Control Committee, over which under the previous régime Lord Curzon had presided, became the Shipping Controller's Committee, under the Chairmanship of Sir Joseph Maclay. The members consisted of Mr. Thomas Reydén, Mr. F. W. Lewis (after-



[Russell.]

SIR ALAN GARRETT ANDERSON, K.B.E.,  
Admiralty Controller.

wards Sir F. W. Lewis, Bart.) and Sir Kenneth Anderson, K.C.M.G. A large number of ship-owners joined the Ministry in an advisory capacity, notably Sir Percy Bates, Sir Lionel Fletcher and Mr. F. W. Lund.

By the end of 1917 the great bulk of purely cargo tonnage had been requisitioned. Control had been exercised over 80 per cent. of the cargo in the North Atlantic trade, and a requisitioning had long been arranged, at the instigation of owners themselves, of all the refrigerated space in all the insulated steamers. This scheme had been found to work without a hitch and to ensure, as a consequence, that the utmost use was made of the refrigerated space. The great feature of the work of the Ministry of Shipping in 1917 was a scheme for dealing systematically with the employment of liners. It provided that all the vessels should be requisitioned by the State at what were known as Blue-book rates, that the ships should be employed in any trade where their services were most required, that the owners



should place their organizations at home and abroad at the disposal of the Government, and that all profits over and above the Government Blue-book rates should go to the State. Early in March a beginning with the new method was made with vessels in the Australian and New Zealand trades, than which none probably, even under the system then existing, were better organized or more economically employed. Within a few days the control was extended to the Eastern and Far Eastern services, and then to the South and East African, South American, and finally North American trades, until every line of service was brought under the new system. The elaboration of the scheme involved much labour and negotiation. Committees of owners for each trade were appointed, the chairman of each committee being the representative of the Shipping Controller. The underlying idea was to do away with all overlapping consequent upon any semblance of competition. The committees of owners were to try to allocate such vessels as were available to the best possible service in the different trades. With this scheme in operation vessels could be diverted from the long-distance routes to the

short-distance trade, where they could be used best in the interest of the nation, irrespective of any personal considerations of the owners. In carrying through this scheme owners undoubtedly sacrificed much. The liner services had been built up over many years at heavy cost. Connexions had been built up which, under the new conditions, had really to be absolutely or practically destroyed. Beyond such personal considerations, the liners formed the connecting links between the different parts of the British Empire and between the different parts of the Empire and foreign countries. A serious reduction of the liner services meant heavy loss and discomfort for the inhabitants of Great Britain overseas; but all this was really inevitable as one of the effects of the war. The scheme appeared to work very satisfactorily, and at the end of the year it came prominently before the public by reason of the judgment given in the famous case of *The China Mutual Steam Navigation Company*, the head of which was Mr. Richard D. Holt, *versus* Sir Joseph Maclay. Mr. Holt had fallen in with the scheme, but he had decided to try the question in Court as to whether owners' services could be requisitioned. Mr. Justice



THE KING AND QUEEN'S VISIT TO THE NORTH-EAST COAST, JUNE 1917:  
AT MESSRS. GRAY'S SHIPBUILDING YARD AT HARTLEPOOL.

Bailhache, who gave the decision, did not question the right of the Shipping Controller to requisition the ships. He held, however, that the Controller had no right to requisition the services of the owners. He pointed out that the scheme had three essential features:—

(a) The steamers were requisitioned;



["Times" photograph.]

**MAJOR-GENERAL COLLARD, C.B., R.E.,**  
Director-General of Administration, Department  
of Controller-General of Merchant Shipbuilding.

(b) The owners were to work them exactly as if they were still running for their own account;

(c) They were to run them, in fact, for the Government, accounting to the Government for all profits after deducting working expenses, hire of the steamship, and remuneration for their services.

The Judge pointed out that the two last items were to be settled by agreement, or, failing agreement, by arbitration. The scheme purported to be mandatory in all these respects. It was obviously a scheme which could only be worked as a whole. The scheme was *ultra vires* in its second essential respect. After having delivered judgment he made two observations. One was that if such a scheme as the Shipping Controller desired was to be carried out the services of the owners must be obtained by negotiation and not by command. The other was that he was so impressed with the advantage of the management of lines of steamers remaining where possible with the owners that he trusted

that in the grave times through which the nation was passing owners would fall in of their own free will and on reasonable terms with such arrangements as the Shipping Controller might think necessary.

Much depended on the terms of the letter written by the Controller to the owners. Presumably if the wording of the letter had been slightly different and owners had been asked merely to continue to run the vessels, which was certainly the intention, there would have been no cause of action. Then followed an interesting and important correspondence in *The Times*. In the course of a letter published on November 17 Sir Joseph Maclay wrote:

It has never been claimed or supposed by myself or by anyone in my department that the Shipping Controller had the power to requisition not only ships but the services and profits of the shipowners, and this was formally stated by the Attorney-General in Court.



Vandyk.

**MR. C. J. O. SANDERS, C.B.E.,**  
Director of Shipbuilding Work, Ministry of Shipping; Chairman of Conference Committee of Shipbuilding Employers' Federation; Joint Secretary of the Admiralty Shipbuilding Council.

It has been recognised from the outset that the liner requisition scheme was one which could not be successfully worked without the co-operation and goodwill of the shipowners themselves, which, as I am glad to testify, has with very few exceptions been shown in a most generous manner. The scope and details of the scheme have throughout been discussed and worked out in close and intimate connexion with the lines themselves, and the negotiations—which have been proceeding for many months with regard to the terms and conditions on which the lines are prepared to assist



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9



[Vandyck.]

#### A SITTING OF THE MERCHANT SHIPBUILDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

1, Mr. A. C. Ross; 2, Sir W. Rowan Thomson; 3, Mr. A. R. Duncan (Joint Secretary); 4, Rt. Hon. Sir J. P. Maclay, Shipping Controller (Chairman); 5, Mr. C. J. O. Sanders (Joint Secretary); 6, Sir Geo. J. Carter; 7, Professor W. S. Abell; 8, Sir Frederick N. Henderson; 9, Mr. James Marr.

The Committee was afterwards incorporated in the Admiralty Shipbuilding Council.

in carrying it out—have resulted in the settling of heads of arrangements which have been accepted by a meeting of the Chairmen of Liner Conferences. These arrangements are wholly voluntary. None of the lines have been compelled to enter into them, or have, in fact, entered into them otherwise than of their own free will. They were the result of the earnest desire of all concerned to co-operate with and assist to the fullest extent the Ministry of Shipping in its difficult part.

Sir Joseph Maclay added that it was the more unfortunate that upon technical grounds the intention of the Ministry of Shipping was defeated, because there was never any thought or desire on their part to assume powers which they knew they did not possess.

Lord Incheape, who wrote as "having had the honour of presiding at innumerable meetings of the Chairmen of the various Shipping Conferences during the past three years," bore testimony to the statement of Sir Joseph Maclay that his scheme of general requisition had been worked out in close connexion between the Ministry of Shipping and the Steamship Lines. He pointed out that under the scheme the shipowners had been freed from all charges of profiteering, as any profits made on the pre-war rates of hire went to the Government and helped to pay for the

war. Costs of running were then greatly in excess of what they were three years before, and he thought that in some cases the Blue-Book rates might have to be reconsidered.

There also followed correspondence from Sir Frederick Smith, the Attorney-General, who had charge of the Government case, and sought to defend his action. This correspondence was reflected in the House of Commons. On November 27 he was called to account for a letter which he had written to *The Times* on the subject, and he denied that the letter reflected in any way upon the judgment of the Court. He added that "the spirit of reasonableness shown by the parties concerned in this serious controversy, much assisted by the suggestions of the learned Judge, afford great promise of a settlement which will be very much in the public interest." Asked by Mr. Hogge whether he had read and understood the comment of *The Times* on his letter, "Certainly I did," he replied indignantly, "and I was astonished at the ignorance of technical questions disclosed in that comment." The House, however, showed by its laughter that it was by no means convinced that the Attorney-General had the better of the encounter.

The situation developed rapidly. Four days after the delivery of the judgment owners received a letter from the Ministry of Shipping giving formal notice of the requisition by the Shipping Controller of all liners which were affected by the original requisition scheme. The letter pointed out that, "in view of the tenor from the outset of the negotiations which have been proceeding between the Controller and the Chairman of the Liner Conferences during the last nine months," the Controller felt that he could rely upon the willing co-operation of owners in managing the vessels so requisitioned. The letter pointed out, however, that it had "become desirable" that the Controller should receive at the earliest possible moment a formal assurance on this point. On receipt of this assurance, the letter explained, owners would be invited to sign, if they had not already done so, the heads of arrangements, the terms of which had already been accepted by the Chairmen of the Liner Conferences, with the exception of Mr. Holt. A significant paragraph then followed in which it was stated that the Controller did not anticipate unwillingness on the part of any owner to take his appropriate share in the administration of the Liner Scheme, but that, in the event of any owner being unwilling to give the assurance, "it is essential that the Controller should be informed at once in order that he, in his position as charterer of the vessels, may make such alternative arrangements as may be necessary." The communication added that "it will, of course, be understood that this letter is without prejudice to any action which, on further consideration, it may be found expedient to take for the purpose of meeting the situation created by the judgment of the Court so far as relates to the past."

In his letter Lord Inchcape had said that, "while I have no authority to say so, I judge that he [Mr. Holt] is satisfied with the vindication he has secured, and that he will fall in with the agreement he has done so much to arrange and which his fellow-shipowners have adopted." Mr. Holt did, in fact, soon show his determination to continue to co-operate whole-heartedly in the working of the scheme.

A good deal of light on the real shipping position was shed in a statement published early in August reviewing the work of the British Mercantile Marine. This statement pointed out that—

(1) The ocean-going tonnage on the United

Kingdom Register before the war represented between 17,000,000 and 18,000,000 tons gross. Of this tonnage over 15,000,000 tons were regularly employed in trade with the United Kingdom, the remainder being engaged in trades between foreign countries, the various parts of the British dominions, etc., and incidentally rendering by their earnings important services to the Mother country. The ocean-going shipping on the Register in August was a little over 15,000,000 tons, of which 14,000,000 tons were employed in home service.

(2) Of the 14,000,000 tons thus employed,



SIR GEORGE J. CARTER, K.B.E.,  
President Shipbuilding Employers' Federation;  
Chairman Merchant Shipbuilding Advisory Committee;  
Managing Director of Cammell, Laird & Co., Ltd.

however, only about one half was available for the trade of the country. About 6,500,000 tons were allocated entirely to the needs of the Navy, the Army, the Allies, and the Dominions Overseas. A further 1,000,000 tons or thereabouts were being used for these purposes on the outward voyage, and were therefore lost to our export trade, although available for imports.

The situation had then reached a stage at which it had become necessary to take complete control of all British shipping, in order to



ensure the employment of every vessel in the manner and on the terms as to rate of freight most consistent with the national interest. The statement pointed out that, apart from the effect on shipping interests, the country generally had also had to suffer great and increasing sacrifices by the short supply of tonnage caused by war requirements and submarine losses. Thus (1) The diversion of liners from long-distance to short-distance trades inflicted injury upon many British export trades (particularly those with India

Shipbuilding Council to advise him on all matters connected with the acceleration of merchant ships under construction and the general administration of a new constructive programme. This body, acting under the Shipping Controller, was responsible for the preparation of a large programme of standard ship construction, and it was known that, subject to the severe restrictions of labour and material by which they were handicapped, they estimated for an output of about 1,100,000 tons, which was



[Vandyk.  
PROFESSOR W. S. ABELL, M.Eng.,  
Chief Surveyor to Lloyd's Register.

and the Far East), and also upon the interests of the British far-distant exporting colonies. (2) A very far-reaching programme of restriction of imports had been put into effect. Luxuries (including many commodities produced by our colonies and our allies) had been excluded, and the import even of essential articles had been reduced to the lowest level compatible with national security. (3) The restriction of coasting facilities created inevitable hardship for coast towns which had hitherto relied on sea-borne supplies of coal and other commodities, for the railway services of the country were already overstrained and could not wholly fill the place of the coasting tonnage which had to be withdrawn.

It has already been seen that one of the first acts of Sir Joseph Maclay as Shipping Controller was to appoint an expert



[Vandyk.  
SIR WILLIAM ROWAN THOMSON, K.B.E.  
(David Rowan & Co., Ltd., Glasgow).

actually just the amount secured. Larger programmes were prepared which were dependent upon obtaining more men and more material, there being at one time a considerable shortage of steel. Speaking in the House of Lords on May 10, Lord Curzon said that the programme which the Minister of Shipping was pressing for would work out at 3,000,000 tons gross per annum. But if such an output was to be realized it would be necessary to provide an additional 100,000 workmen and to double the supply of steel per week, while allowing at the same time the existing Admiralty programme to proceed. Therein lay the difficulty of the case. "While," he added, "this demand came from the Director of Shipping, the Army, Agriculture, Munitions, and the Timber Department all put in demands for men and material, and the task of adjudi-



**SIR HERBERT ROWELL, K.B.E.,**  
Chairman of R. & W. Hawthorn, Leslie & Co.,  
Ltd.



*[Collings.]*  
**SIR FREDERICK NESS HENDERSON, K.B.E.**  
Chairman and Managing Director of D. & W.  
Henderson & Co., Ltd., Glasgow.

ating between these rival claims was not merely a painful operation but an overwhelming duty."

There was inevitably a certain conflict of interests between the demands of the Admiralty and the Ministry of Shipping for men and labour. It was largely with the object of co-ordinating these demands that an important reform was brought about in May, 1917, when the office of the Controller of the Navy was revived. This was part of reorganization at the Admiralty. The official statement pointed out that one of the objects of the changes was to strengthen the Shipbuilding and Production

Department of the Admiralty, by providing an organization comparable with that which had supplied the Army with munitions. Further, it was intended to develop and utilize to the best advantage the whole of the shipbuilding resources of the country, and so far as possible to concentrate the organization under one Authority. Sir Eric Geddes had been chosen for this position, and he was to be responsible for fulfilling the shipbuilding requirements of the Admiralty, War Office, and Ministry of Shipping, so far as possible, by manufacture or purchase, whether at home or abroad. For this purpose the staffs of the



**MR. JAMES BROWN, C.B.E.,**  
Director of Scott's Shipbuilding & Engineering  
Co., Ltd.



*[Lafayette.]*  
**MR. SUMMERS HUNTER, C.B.E.,**  
Director of North-Eastern Marine Engineering  
Co., Ltd.



three departments that related to these requirements were to be placed under his control. As the duties for which Sir Eric Geddes was to be responsible at the Admiralty would include not only shipbuilding but also the production of armaments and munitions, he was appointed a member of the Board of Admiralty. He was also to be associated with the Ministry of



[Elliott &amp; Fry.]

**MR. A. C. ROSS, C.B.E.,**

Director of R. & W. Hawthorn, Leslie & Co., Ltd.,  
Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Shipping as a member of the Shipping Control Committee.

Further information on the subject was given by questions and answers in the House of Commons on May 14, when the changes were officially announced. In reply to a question as to whether the duty of superintending or supervising merchant shipbuilding would be transferred from the Ministry of Shipping to the Board of Admiralty or whether the Ministry of Shipping would have no further responsibility in the matter, Sir Edward Carson, then First Lord, replied that the Navy Controller would act with the Shipping Controller. In reply to a further question as to whether the Shipping Controller or his representative in the House would be answerable for merchant shipbuilding problems or whether it would be the First Lord of the Admiralty himself, Sir Edward Carson said that it would be the Minister of Shipping or his representative there. This reply explained why, when the control of merchant shipbuilding seemed to have passed into the hands of the Navy Controller, questions as to output were still answered by Sir Leo Chiozza Money, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Shipping. It is to Sir Leo's credit that he appeared to be at

any rate one of the first to realize the desirability of publicity, and gave facts in Parliament which enabled members and the public to get some inkling of the gravity of the position.

The following appointments, among others, to the Controller's Department were announced by the Admiralty on May 27, 1917, in the following terms:

"Mr. Thomas Bell (afterwards Sir Thomas Bell), late managing director of Messrs. John Brown & Company's Clydebank establishment, to be Deputy Controller for Dockyards and Shipbuilding. He will be responsible to the Controller for all matters relating to the construction of warships, and the maintenance, alteration, and repair of warships and armed merchant cruisers, both at the Royal dockyards and by contract.

"Major-General A. S. Collard, C.B., R.E., Director of Inland Waterways and Docks in the Department of the Director-General of Movements and Railways, to be Deputy-Con-



**MR. JAMES MARR, C.B.E.**

(J. L. Thompson & Sons, Ltd., Sunderland).

troller for Auxiliary Shipbuilding. He will be responsible to the Controller for all matters connected with the design, construction and purchase of merchant ships, transports, oilers, fleet coaling vessels, and similar vessels, and of auxiliary small craft of all kinds required by the Admiralty or other Government Departments. He will also be responsible for the alteration and repair of all such vessels, except at the Royal Dockyards."

The appointment of General Collard did not in subsequent months escape criticism. He came to the Admiralty with a reputation for

having reorganized transport in Mesopotamia and for having done much valuable work as Director of Inland Waterways and Docks. He brought great energy and enterprise to bear on his task, and, although he was at a disadvantage in not having had a long shipbuilding experience, the real value of his work was well appreciated by many whose ability to form a balanced opinion none could question.

It was known that the Admiralty and the Minister of Shipbuilding had not always approached the problem of mastering the submarine menace from quite the same angle. The Admiralty was concerned with the construction of craft designed to destroy enemy submarines; the Ministry of Shipping was concerned with building merchant ships to replace those which were sunk. Naturally, each Department felt compelled to put forward its own case with all the force at its command, and hitherto the only authority which could fully weigh the claims of each and decide what proportion of labour and material should be allotted to warships and merchant vessels respectively had been the War Cabinet. The appointment of the Navy Controller simplified the task of the War Cabinet, which, of course, remained the final arbiter, if difficulty arose in harmonizing the claims of each Department. In view of later developments, it should be



[Vandyk.]

MR. A. R. DUNCAN,  
Secretary Shipbuilding Employers' Federation;  
Joint Secretary to Admiralty Shipbuilding Council.



[Elliott &amp; Fry.]

SIR LEO CHIOZZA MONEY, M.P.,  
Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of  
Shipping.

recorded here that during the autumn and winter months a strong feeling prevailed in shipping circles that merchant shipbuilding did not receive quite adequate recognition. The view held was that it was overshadowed by warship construction.

On July 17, 1917, Sir Edward Carson resigned the office of First Lord, and Sir Eric Geddes was appointed to succeed him. This left the office of Navy Controller to be filled, to which Mr. Alan Anderson (afterwards Sir Alan Anderson, K.B.E.) was appointed. Sir Alan had a wide knowledge of shipping from his long membership of the firm of Anderson, Anderson & Co., ship and insurance brokers, and joint managers of the Orient Steam Navigation Co., Ltd. As a director of the Midland Railway Company he had also knowledge of another branch of the transport problem. Since October, 1916, he had been Vice-Chairman of the Wheat Commission. He was a business man of recognized ability and knew how to deal with other business men.

The transfer of shipbuilding to the office of the Navy Controller caused a certain amount of friction between the members of the Shipping Controller's original Shipbuilding Advisory Committee and certain members of the new Department. The truth was that the members of the Advisory Committee felt the loss of the executive powers which they had hitherto held, and that they were not always treated in the Department of the Deputy Controller for Auxiliary Shipbuilding with all the consideration to which their great services to the country





[Official photograph.]

#### IN A SHIPYARD: THE MOULDING LOFT.

had entitled them. In the early autumn there was talk of the resignation of certain members of this Committee, and towards the end of November a statement appeared that the whole of the Committee had resigned. Something like a crisis was precipitated, and on November 23 the Admiralty announced the formation of a Shipbuilding Council, under the direct chairmanship of the Navy Controller. On this Council, it was stated, representatives of the shipbuilding and engineering trades would be joined by officers of the Admiralty, and problems of naval and commercial shipbuilding and repair would be considered. The statement pointed out that the Council differed from the Shipbuilding Advisory Committee by the inclusion of Naval shipbuilding in its purview, and by being relieved from certain executive functions in the placing and following up of contracts which had been undertaken by the Admiralty Controller and Director of Contracts. All those who served on the Shipbuilding Advisory Committee and who had not since joined the Staff of the Controller's Department consented to serve on the Council.

The names were then given of the members of the old Shipbuilding Advisory Committee,

and there were added the following names of other members of the Shipbuilding and Engineering trades who had joined the Controller's Department and who were to attend meetings of the Council when matters affecting them were discussed :

- MAJOR MAURICE DENNY, partner of Messrs. Denny Brothers, of Dumbarton.
- MR. G. S. F. EDWARDES, late Director of Messrs. Smith's Dock Company.
- MR. H. M. GRAYSON, of Messrs. H. and C. Grayson (Ltd.).
- MAJOR J. W. HAMILTON, Chairman of Messrs. W. Hamilton and Co.
- LIEUTENANT-COLONEL J. LITHGOW, Senior Partner of Messrs. Russell and Co., Director of Messrs. Robert Duncan and Co., and Director of Messrs. Napier and Millar.
- LIEUTENANT-COLONEL J. MITCHELL MONCRIEFF, M.Inst.C.E.
- MR. NOEL E. PECK, Director of Messrs. Barclay, Curle, and Co. (Ltd.), Director of Messrs. Swan, Hunter and Wigham Richardson (Ltd.), ex-Vice-President of the Shipbuilding Employers' Federation, ex-Chairman of the Clyde Shipbuilders' Association.
- MR. A. W. SAMPSON, late Director of Messrs. Fairfield Shipbuilding and Engineering Company.

The non-departmental members of the Council, which included members of the old Shipbuilding Advisory Committee, consisted of the following :

- SIR GEORGE J. CARTER, K.B.E., of Messrs. Cammell, Laird and Co. (Ltd.), President of the Shipbuilding Employers' Federation.



[Official photograph.]

## IN A SHIPYARD: FRAME BENDING.

SIR F. N. HENDERSON, K.B.E., of Messrs. D. and W. Henderson and Co. (Ltd.).

MR. JAMES MARR, C.B.E., of Messrs. J. L. Thompson and Sons (Ltd.).

MR. A. C. ROSS, C.B.E., of Messrs. Hawthorn, Leslie and Co. (Ltd.).

PROFESSOR W. S. ABELL, Chief Surveyor to Lloyd's Register.

SIR HERBERT ROWELL, K.B.E., of Messrs. Hawthorn, Leslie & Co. (Ltd.).

SIR W. ROWAN THOMSON, K.B.E., of Messrs. David Rowan and Co., ex-Chairman of North-West Engineers' Association.

MR. SUMMERS HUNTER, C.B.E., of the North-Eastern Marine Engineering Co. (Ltd.), and

MR. JAMES BROWN, C.B.E., of Scott's Shipbuilding and Engineering Co. (Ltd.).

Mr. C. J. O. Sanders, formerly of the Board of Trade and afterwards of the Shipbuilding Employers' Federation, and Mr. A. R. Dunern, Secretary of the Shipbuilding Employers' Federation, acted as Joint Secretaries.

One of the main causes of friction between the old Shipbuilding Advisory Committee and the Navy Controller's Department was known to have been the question of the national shipyards. The Admiralty had decided upon the construction of three national yards, and in pursuance of this policy had requisitioned the land and plant of the Standard Shipbuilding Company, which was organized in the summer of 1916 at Chepstow. The Shipbuilding Committee had strongly urged that, until all private

shipyards of the country had been supplied with all the labour and material which they could take, it was unwise to divert energy and material to the construction of new yards. The first need, they urged, was to supply the existing yards with all they could want; the second was to extend the existing yards; and the third was to build new yards. The Committee argued that the Government policy was putting the third course of action out of place in front of the others. Private builders had freely expressed their dislike of the principle of State shipyards, and it was really natural enough that the Committee, which contained representatives of leading shipbuilding companies, should not have been enamoured of the proposal. On the Government side there were undoubtedly strong reasons to be advanced for the preparation of a certain number of State yards. Moreover, the private shipbuilders had received intimation that their yards would come first for orders, labour, and material. The builders had been assured by the Prime Minister that the Government yards would be entirely subsidiary, would fill in the gaps, and would in no way compete with the private yards. It should not be forgotten that the Navy requires a





[Official photograph.]

**DINNER-TIME AT A SHIPYARD: WORKERS LEAVING FOR THEIR MID-DAY MEAL.**

very large number of subsidiary craft directly supporting it.

It was really not until the end of 1917 and the beginning of 1918 that the nation began to realize the necessity of expediting ship construction. No tonnage figures of losses had been published and no figures of output, so that, with everything vital obscured, there was no means by which it could have learned the truth. The public began then to appreciate how far short replacements fell of the tonnage being destroyed by the enemy. On December 13 the First Lord gave some indication, although not a very clear one, of the output for 1917, comparing the results with those for 1913, which "gave the absolute peak of shipbuilding of all kinds that this country has ever known." He stated that in 1913 the equivalent of 2,280,000 gross tons was launched. This was made up of 1,920,000 tons of merchant shipping, and the equivalent, upon a converted figure of 362,000 gross tons of war vessels. He continued, "If we take the rate of output for the months of October and November, and it is fair to take them as a measure of what we have attained, the merchant tonnage completed is fully at the same rate as the merchant tonnage output of the year 1913—that is, 1,920,000." The First Lord closed a review of the shipbuilding position by saying, "We must have the ships, and more ships, and still more ships." This view was confirmed on the following day

by the Prime Minister, who declared in the House of Commons, "We need more men, not merely for the battle-line across the seas, but for the battle-line in this country. We, especially, need men to help us to solve the problems associated with tonnage. . . . Victory is now a question of tonnage, and tonnage is victory. Nothing else can defeat us now but shortage of tonnage. The advent of the United States into the war has increased the demand enormously. Tonnage must be provided for the transportation of that gigantic new army with its equipment across thousands of miles of sea. It is no use raising 10,000,000 men and equipping them, unless you get them somewhere in the vicinity of the foe."

Some doubt had been created by the figures of the First Lord given on December 13, but the position was made quite clear by Mr. Bonar Law in the House of Commons two months later when he stated that in 1917 the tonnage built in the United Kingdom was 1,163,474, while we secured in addition 170,000 tons abroad. The total was put in another form by Sir L. Chiozza Money on February 20, 1918, when he announced that 200 British-built merchant vessels of 1,600 tons and upwards were completed, which aggregated 1,067,696 tons. He added that the net loss of British vessels of 1,600 tons and over during 1917 was 598. The following figures of production of vessels of 1,600 tons and over in the United Kingdom

during the last quarter of the year were included :

November	...	22 ships totalling	130,375 tons gross
December	...	21 " "	115,752 "
January	...	11 " "	55,588 "
Total	...	54 " "	301,715 "

The gravity of the position was indicated by comparing these figures with the numbers of British vessels of 1,600 tons and over which were shown by the Admiralty weekly statement to have been sunk within the same period. In November 42 vessels were lost, in December 75, and in January 30, making a total of 147, against 54 built in the United Kingdom.

A great impression on the nation was made by a speech by Mr. Barnes, the Labour Member of the War Cabinet, in the House of Commons, on February 26. He told the House frankly that the number of ships turned out in Great Britain in January was less than half the estimate, and that, so far as he had been able to ascertain, the position in February would be no better. He declared that America was failing us so far as ships were concerned. He insisted that the winning of the war depended upon the output of ships, and that a far larger number would have to be turned out than before if we were to get through the trouble of the next few months.

The position in February was shown to be a little better by the First Lord in a statement in the House of Commons on March 5. He pointed out that, whereas the average monthly output of merchant shipbuilding in the fourth quarter of 1917 was roughly 140,000 tons, it only reached 58,000 tons in January. He continued :

"It should have been very much larger. It is true that the weather was exceptionally bad, and delays were caused thereby, also that January, due to holidays, is always in peace time a very bad month for output of ships, also that I am departing in this case from my contention that we cannot take one week or month by itself, be it good or bad. I must admit that February is, I think, going to be better, nearly twice the output of January when the figures are complete ; but still only about two-thirds of what the same yards, and fewer men, have done in a month. The number of vessels lodged and outfitting is higher than usual, and these ships will be in service shortly."

The First Lord then made certain references to labour, which, in view of the criticism which they aroused, and the good and far-reaching effect they undoubtedly had, deserve to be reproduced as follows :—

We were justified in looking for a steady and sub-



[Official photograph.]

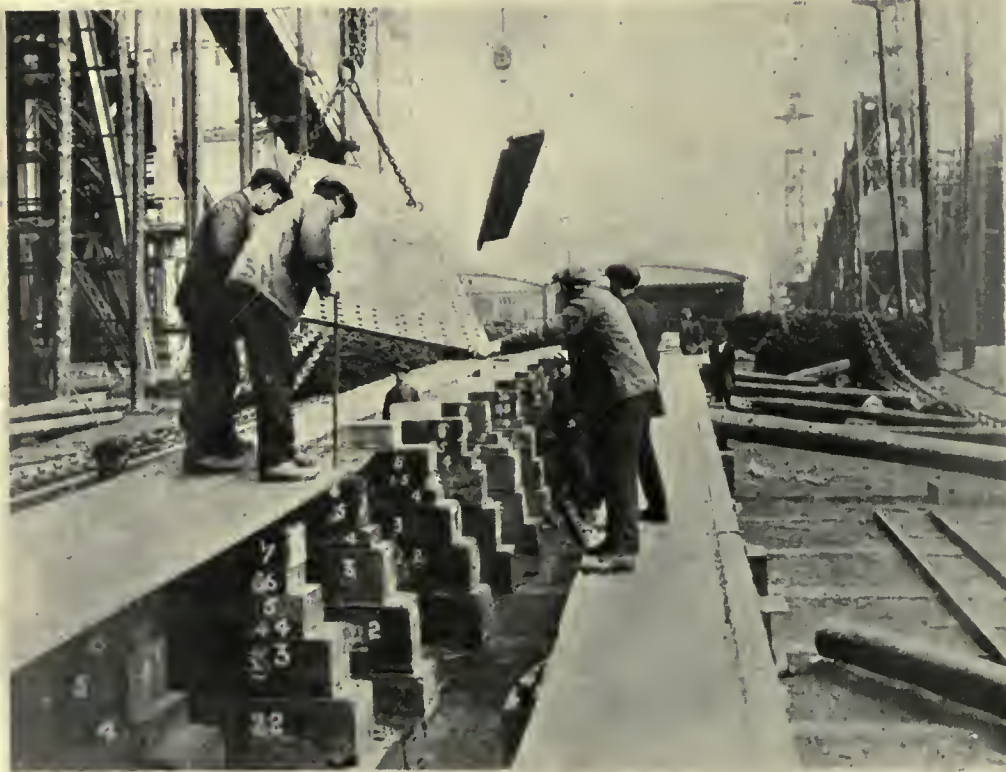
A GROUP OF SHIPYARD WORKMEN, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.



stantial rise in output. Men, material, and capacity were all there. Instead of a rise we have had a serious drop. Why is this? Many reasons may be advanced for it, but the main fact which was brought out by reports, not only from employers, but from representatives of the men and representatives of departments, is that whether due to labour unrest, due to strikes, due to difficulties of whatever kinds, the men in the yards are not working as if the life of the country depended upon their exertions, nor are they working even as they did in the fourth quarter of last year.

in the United States, and great, doubtless, as the effort of that country is, there is no doubt, and it is not questioned in official circles in America, that a considerable time must elapse before the desired output is secured.

Continuing, the First Lord declared that if employers hesitated to play their part, or if men anywhere "downed tools," or went slow for any reason, they would do so in the knowledge of the grievous extent to which they



[Official photograph.]

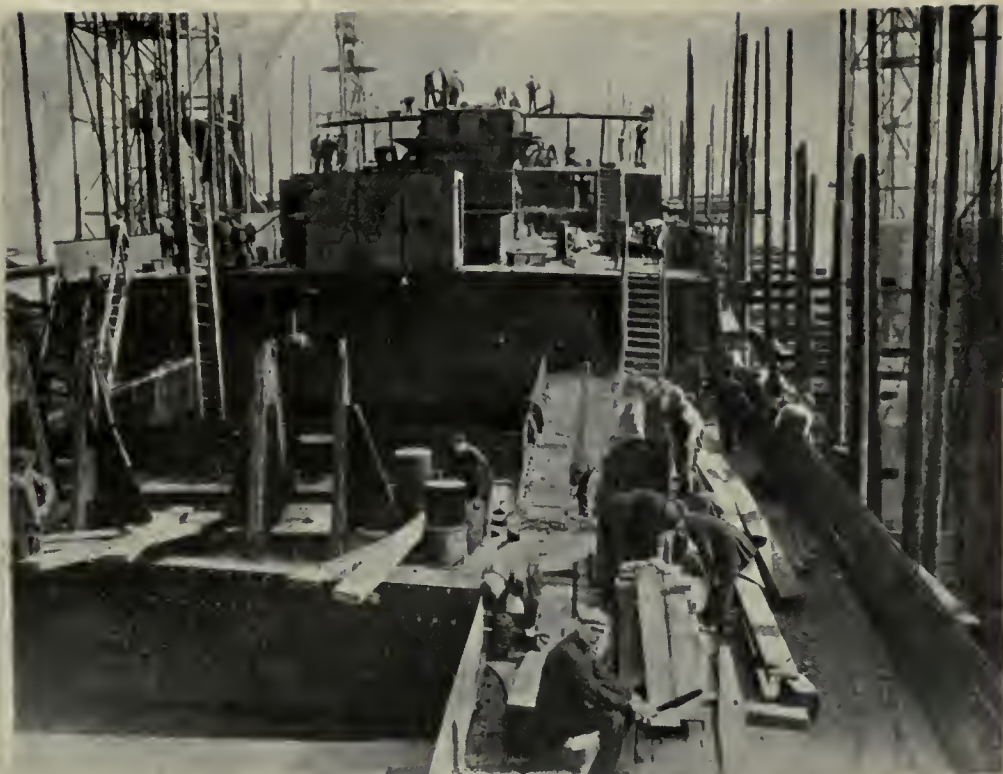
#### STANDARD SHIPS: LAYING THE KEEL PLATES.

Employers also are not perhaps in all cases doing all that can be done to increase output. The long strain of the war must have its effect on the nerves of some of them as it has on everyone else. Far be it from me to suggest that the vast majority both of employers and of men are not actuated by the call of patriotism; but the serious unrest which existed in January will have its effect on completions in later months, and the January drop cannot be fully accounted for otherwise than that it was caused by unrest in its widest interpretation.

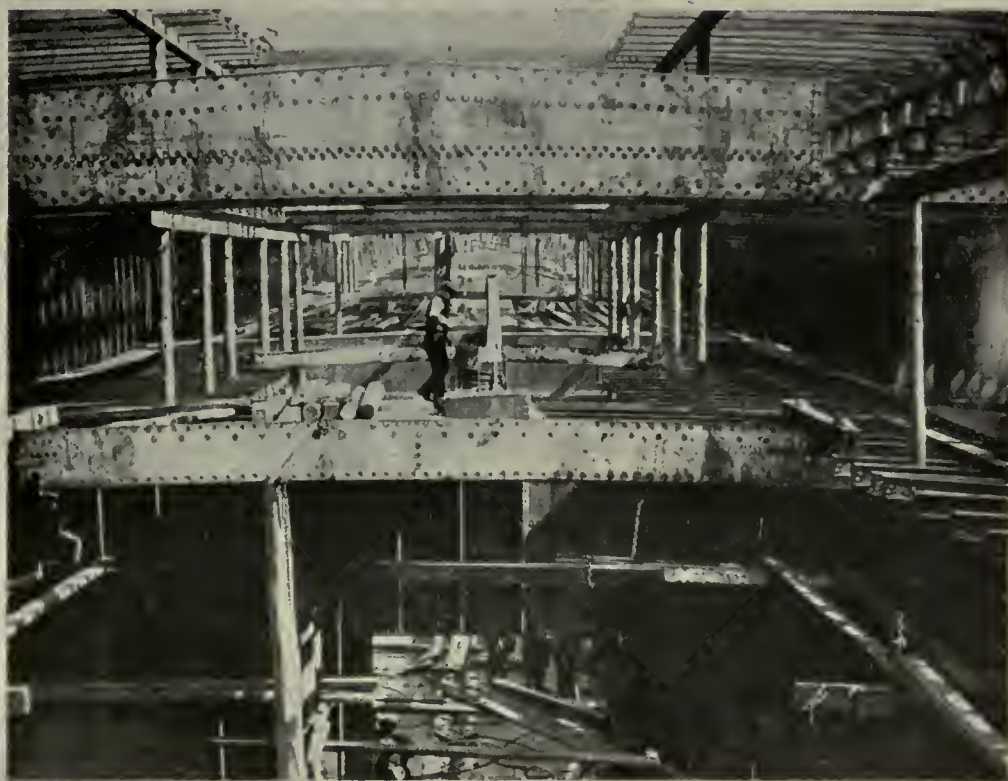
I am driven to the conclusion that even at this late date the situation is not fully realized. My right hon. friend the member for the Blackfriars division of Glasgow (Mr. Barnes) has in this House recently appealed to the working men of the country, with far greater authority than I can claim, to put their backs into the work. I believe that the individual piece-worker works as hard now as he did last year, when he is actually at work, but he seems more ready to-day to take holidays, and we cannot afford holidays while there are food queues. . . . During the critical period that confronts us we must rely in the main upon our own ships and ourselves. Our Allies are making every effort to increase the production of ships, but in spite of the glowing reports of representatives of the Press

prejudiced the vital interests of the community. The principle of one front must be recognized in the shipyards just as in the Fleets and in the trenches. Every ship which was launched and fitted out was an addition to the food-carrying power of the Allies.

The urgency of the problem was dealt with in a leading article in *The Times* on the following day entitled "The Mystery of the Shipyards." The article pointed out that: "What matters is to solve the mystery of the shipbuilding failure. The reasons for the unrest in the yards must be explored, revealed, and removed. It may be that defects in the present system—which has largely substituted official control for the individual initiative of the shipbuilder—are at the root of the visible flagging in output. Whether that is the cause, or something else, it is plain that there is deep-rooted



STANDARD SHIPS: AT WORK ON THE DECK BEFORE LAUNCHING. [Official photograph.]



STANDARD SHIPS: BETWEEN DECKS.

[Official photograph.]





*(Official photograph.)*

**STANDARD SHIP READY FOR LAUNCHING.**



*(Official photograph.)*

**STANDARD SHIPS: ERECTING DECK FITTINGS.**

inefficiency somewhere. The business of the Government is to find it out."

It happened that the annual meeting of the reorganized Chamber of Shipping was held on that day in the City, and the leading owners present seized the opportunity to urge the vital need for increased ship construction. Sir William Raeburn, the President, declared that there was no mystery about the decrease in production. The two elements responsible were the Government and the workers. "It was quite unfair," he continued, "for the First Lord of the Admiralty to have attacked the builders for the reduction. The fact was that the spirit of shipbuilders had been almost broken by the interference of the Government during the last two years. When Mr. Barnes made his serious statement on the question of shipbuilding it was a great pity he did not tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth. It was high time the country knew the facts, and when it did the facts would open the eyes of the country. . . . The Government would be well advised if they now took the nation into their confidence, and gave the tonnage of the sinkings and the new tonnage added from month to month. A material improvement in the near future might be looked for, but unless the workmen put their heart into their work, and did very much more than they had been doing, the position was bound to remain serious. . . . They had been told about the U-boat menace being entirely overcome by August next, but he had a strong belief that we should never entirely overcome it."

Lord Inchcape, the in-coming President, in the course of his Presidential address, declared that there was a curious lack of reality in many parts of the country as to the grave position with which we were faced. Tonnage was being sunk at a rate of which the people had no conception. He thought that more information might be given to the people as to what we were really losing, so that they might appreciate the gravity of the situation. He added: "I was on the Clyde last Saturday, and at noon the whistle in a large building yard sounded, and the moment it went every soul in the yard threw down his tools and bolted. Not a sound was heard in Clydesdale after 12 o'clock on Saturday. It might have been that no war was going on, and that no new ships, no destroyers to hunt submarines, were required. There is, I admit, a limit to human endurance, and, as Mr. Bonar Law said the

other day, men got tired; but unless we all put our hearts into the fight, whether we are engaged in handi-craft or in brain-craft, we shall all suffer alike."

Sir Owen Philipps proposed a resolution, which was approved, welcoming the entry into the war of the United States, and said that, while America was sending a magnificent army, he looked on the help that the country could give by its shipbuilding programme as of even more importance. He suggested that the two Governments should give them information as to how long it took to build a ship in each



SIR WILLIAM RAEBURN,  
President of the Chamber of Shipping, 1916-1918.

country, and that they should start a competition, like the competition aroused by the tanks in raising war funds, between the two countries in the matter of shipbuilding so that the greatest output should be attained.

Sir John Ellerman proposed a resolution, also adopted, to the effect "That this Chamber regrets that the progress of commercial shipbuilding in this country is still far from satisfactory, and desires to impress upon His Majesty's Government that it is of vital importance to secure the output of tonnage foreshadowed by the First Lord of the Admiralty." He maintained that the result of transferring the initiative and enterprise in shipbuilding to the State had been most disappointing. The fact that so little had been done emphasized the necessity there was for the resolution. Had the private owners been allowed to build, the output of new boats would have been very much greater than it was. Mr. A. Munro Sutherland, a large North of England owner, seconded the motion, and





LAUNCH OF A STANDARD SHIP.

*Official photograph.*

attributed the small output to the increasing of standard wages, instead of putting the men on piece work and giving them a bonus.

The comments of the First Lord were quickly answered by the Shipbuilding Employers' Federation and the Shipyard Trade Unions. On March 7 these bodies issued a statement to the effect that the remarks, so far as they reflected on employers and workmen engaged in shipbuilding, had caused much feeling in shipbuilding districts. Representatives of the trades and the employers had, it was stated, met and decided that the remarks called for a joint reply. This joint reply was to be made shortly, and it was suggested that in the interests of the nation and all concerned it would be well to suspend judgment till then. Meantime it was pointed out that the fact that a deputation of the shipbuilding employers and shipyard trade unions waited upon the Prime Minister in November and made joint proposals to the Government was a clear indication that they fully realized the gravity of the shipbuilding position. It was added that "the desire of the whole industry was, and is, to strengthen the First Lord's hands in the stupendous task before him, and

if nothing material has, as yet, resulted from the interview with the Prime Minister, the reason must be looked for within the Government itself."

The urgency of dealing with the shipbuilding problem was discussed daily in *The Times*, and on March 8, in the course of an article on the desirability of taking certain steps, the suggestion was made that more use should be made of the great organizing ability of such a leader of the shipbuilding industry as Lord Pirrie, the head of Harland and Wolff. It was pointed out that Sir Alan Anderson, the Admiralty Controller, had the complete confidence of shipbuilders, and the enterprise shown in the Department of the Deputy Controller for Auxiliary Construction was fully recognized. With the addition of some further expert knowledge and organizing ability, the work of the Departments would, the article urged, probably proceed quite smoothly.

This view was supported by "a past President of the Chamber of Shipping" in a letter published in *The Times* on the following day. "First and foremost," declared this writer, "is the absence of a Shipbuilding Controller of outstanding ability and practical experience,

clothed with ample powers and qualified by nature and training to deal with the whole situation, including arrangements with labour." The writer continued :

It seems to me that the suggestion made by your Shipping Correspondent in to-day's issue of *The Times* would form a most admirable solution of the difficulty. Lord Pirrie, the head of the famous firm of Harland and Wolff, in the building up and control of his huge establishments has displayed energy, organizing ability, and business qualities amounting to genius. If a practical shipbuilder of this commanding type could be induced to accept the position of Controller of Merchant Shipbuilding, armed with full powers to deal with the present serious situation, free from the interference of any other Departments, we should soon see our output of merchant tonnage going up by leaps and bounds, and the nation could feel sure that everything is being done which the highest practical ability and experience considers necessary to deal adequately with this important question, which calls urgently for prompt and drastic treatment in a broad and comprehensive spirit, if we are to avoid serious, if not fatal, consequences to the country and her Allies. . . . The urgent necessity of the hour is the rapid production of merchant ships, and if this requires a distinct break with existing procedure, under the direction of Lord Pirrie, nothing should be allowed to stand in the way of its speedy accomplishment.

An article which appeared in *The Times* on March 11 summed up the situation. It was headed "Need of Greater Publicity. Defects of Present Control," and it began: "It is now

quite clear that the shipbuilding situation demands very firm handling, and that the country must be prepared for a long-sustained effort in the production of tonnage. Examination of the situation shews that certain things require to be done immediately, which may be grouped under three headings: (1) Publicity, (2) Removal of Labour Trouble, (3) Reorganization at the top." As an accurate review of the conditions then prevailing, and as an indication of the steps which were subsequently taken, the following extracts may be put on record :

Much feeling has been created by the quite moderate strictures of Sir Eric Geddes respecting something lacking in the spirit of certain employers and certain men. If the First Lord returns to this subject—and it is possible that the rejoinder of the employers and men may make it desirable that he should do so—he may adopt one of two courses. He may explain that the language employed did not mean precisely what it was intended to convey. The more satisfactory course would seem to be to stick to his guns and repeat that at the time that he was speaking "the situation was not fully realized." He could with perfect truth add that the fault did not lie with either masters or men. How can men understand a situation if they are not told what it is? Estimates of production and curves of losses are interesting and have their uses. But after a time they become ineffective. Plain facts always count. If every employer, every foreman,



[Official photograph.]

STANDARD SHIPS: AT WORK ON DECK AFTER LAUNCHING.

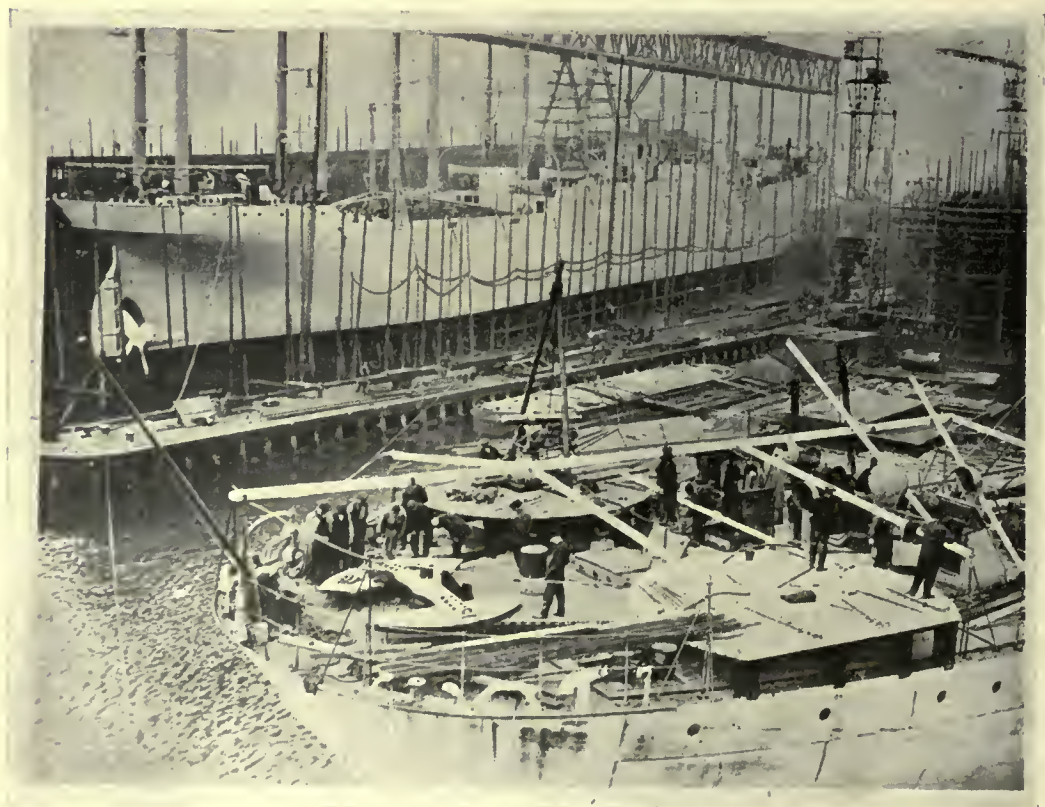


every riveter, and every wife knew what the facts were, there would be not a minute's slacking. Let everyone concerned—in the steelworks, in the shipyards, and in the homes—see the precise figures of the tonnage sunk and the amount of replacement, and then anyone who slacked would be a scoundrel. There may be traitors in the country, but at any rate they are a very small minority. As it happens there is probably nothing in the figures which the authorities need fear to disclose. For some time past the quarterly figures of losses have been on the downward grade, and the figures of new construction have been on the upward grade. The lines do not yet meet, and it is the first business of the nation to make them meet. Then it can, and must, go on to make the figures of construction exceed the losses, for the leeway is very serious. For a time the builders must continue to pull against the stream, and cannot afford to rest for a moment on their oars until the tide turns in their favour. If there are any international objections to the publication of the world's tonnage losses and replacement, are there any to the publication of the British figures? If the supreme effort will only be forthcoming when these are published, then surely there is overwhelming justification in the safety of the country.

The article urged that, apart from the incentive which would be given to sustained efforts by the publication of the facts and the resolve to face them and change them, there was a very great deal to be said for publicity about the output of the individual yards. If one yard built a standard cargo vessel within five or six months, it was reasonable that the nation

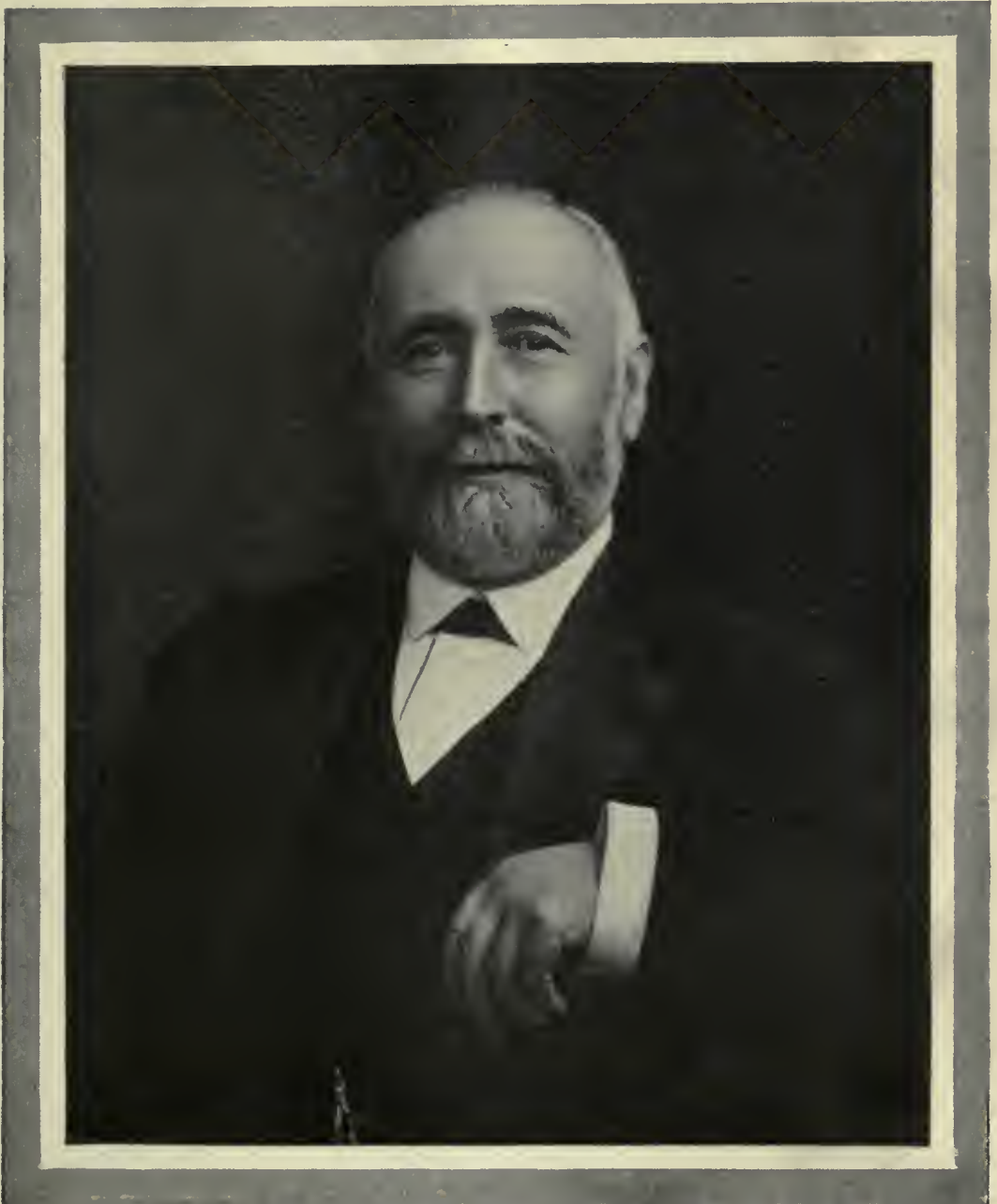
should know the fact. And if another yard took nine or ten months, was it not right that the nation should also know it? Questions might be asked as to why one yard could build so much quicker than another, but such questions could only do good. They would elucidate the facts, and the public would demand that remedies should be applied. Probably the discrepancies, under the limelight, would soon be reduced.

Reverting to the suggestion that a practical shipbuilder should be appointed to take charge of merchant shipbuilding, the article pointed out that "one man of outstanding ability is Lord Pirrie, the head of Harland and Wolff, whose record for organization and success is certainly at least second to none. A tribute to his quite exceptional powers was paid in *The Times* of Saturday by "A Past President of the Chamber of Shipping," who might have added that his close grip of affairs extends beyond amazingly successful shipbuilding to shipping companies and banking. He is not a young man, and has nothing to gain, except the further honour which the country would certainly pay him, by the acceptance of such an



STANDARD SHIPS: FINISHING ON THE WATER.  
A sister ship ready for launching is seen in the background.

[Official phot. graph.]



LORD PIRRIE, K.P.,  
 Controller-General of Merchant Shipbuilding.

[Elliott & Fry.]

onerous post. It might well be, however, that a sense of duty would prevail over other considerations, and a partnership between such a leader and Sir Alan Anderson, a younger man, should be an exceptionally happy one. The public could then believe that, with the highest skill, enthusiasm, and hard work at the top, the direction of construction would be in very strong hands."

On the following day it was announced that the views of Lord Pirrie, who had travelled

up from Glasgow to London, had been invited by the Government, and that he had already spent some hours in consultation with the Prime Minister and other members of the Government.

A day later the full reply was issued of the Shipbuilding Employers' Federation and the Shipyard Trade Unions to the statement of the First Lord in the House of Commons. Included in this statement was a reproduction of a letter addressed by these joint bodies to the



Prime Minister on November 14, 1917, expressing their satisfaction "that the Government had made arrangements to divert largely increased supplies of steel to merchant shipbuilding," and suggesting that a deputation should be received in order that certain definite proposals might be put forward for ensuring the fullest productive capacity from the labour available. It was recorded that at that meeting the Federations and the Unions proposed that a joint committee of employers' and workmen's representatives should be set up to advise the Ministry of National Service in the supply, distribution, and utilization of labour, and to advise the Ministry of Labour on matters connected with the policy or administration of labour questions. These proposals not having been accepted by the Government, the Federations and the Unions expressed their regret in a letter dated January 10, and stated that they had nevertheless decided to appoint a Joint Committee, which would be in a position to speak authoritatively "on all questions in which their help and advice may be desired, and can be advantageously enlisted." In reply, the Prime Minister had stated that he had told the Minister of National Service of his belief that this Committee would be of great assistance to him, and that he was anxious that the Committee should meet the Minister. On February 12 the Federations and Unions wrote to the Ministry of National Service enclosing a copy of the Prime Minister's reply, and on the same date they sent a similar letter to the Ministry of Labour. The Federations and the Unions pointed out that since then the Joint Committee had not been invited to meet either department. They added that they were prepared in any event to give to the Government their loyal support and active co-operation "in any steps which would have the effect of securing to the nation the fullest possible output of ships." Subsequently, negotiations between these bodies and the Government authorities were opened up with good results.

The composition of the departments of the Admiralty dealing with merchant construction continued to be the subject of much discussion. On March 13 the resignation was announced of Sir William Rowan Thomson from the position of the Director of Auxiliary Ships' Engines. The reasons which had prompted this resignation were described in a letter by Sir William, published in *The Times* of March 18.

In the meantime "a Past President of the Chamber of Shipping" returned to the charge, urging, in a letter to *The Times*, that the control of shipbuilding should be placed in the hands of the industry itself through the medium of a shipbuilder of outstanding ability and authority, who would "control with understanding and practical sympathy an industry the most technical and intricate, and a class of workmen the most efficient and hardworking, but in some respects the most wayward and difficult to lead of any in the land." The "Past President" proceeded:

Such a man is Lord Pirrie, whom your Shipping Correspondent in a moment of inspiration mentioned recently in your columns. Lord Pirrie is far and away the biggest man in the shipbuilding world. He has done the biggest things. He is noted for getting things done. He is one of our greatest national assets at this juncture, and it would be nothing short of criminal negligence in the present crisis not to enlist the services of such a man in connexion with the nation's shipbuilding. If Lord Pirrie, with his unrivalled experience and organizing genius, can be prevailed upon to come to his country's aid at the present moment and to take control of the industry, free from official interference of any kind—as Sir Joseph Maclay, the Shipping Controller, one of the outstanding successes of the Government, is free from such control—then we shall succeed in making good our losses with the least possible delay. But if neither Lord Pirrie nor any other practical shipbuilder of outstanding ability and authority is given full executive power to handle the difficulties of the situation with insight and sympathy, no shuffling of the official cards, such as has been palmed off upon us in the past, will save the country from a humiliating and irreparable disaster.

A number of important points were raised in the following passage:

I refrain from entering into such questions as to whether, and to what extent, if any, the introduction of the so-called "standard ship" has contributed to the delay in output—although I may remark in passing that Lord Pirrie's firm, who had no responsibility for the introduction of this type of ship, turned out the first standard ship in "record" time; whether the alteration and reallocation of plans and specifications after they had been passed have had a disturbing and demoralizing influence on both shipbuilders and their workmen; whether merchant ships on the stocks have been starved of men, while there has been no lack of labour for warship work; or whether labour which was badly needed in private yards to accelerate present output has been squandered in laying out and equipping the national shipyards, which, whatever they may do in the future, can have no immediate effect on the position. All these and similar questions, which are only phases of the main broad problem, would find their true perspective when left to be dealt with by a competent practical Minister of Merchant Shipbuilding like Lord Pirrie, who combines administrative capacity, technical ability, and, last, but not least, courage, and resource. These are the qualities which are essential at this crisis in the nation's history.

On March 18 it was stated in *The Times* that the appointment of Lord Pirrie to direct shipbuilding in this country would shortly be announced, and an account of his extraordinarily

successful career was published. The appointment was officially announced by the First Lord of the Admiralty in a statement of outstanding importance made in the House of Commons on March 20. Lord Pirrie, it was explained, was to have the title of Controller-General of Merchant Shipbuilding, and was to assume responsibility for the output of merchant tonnage. As Controller-General he was to be invited to attend meetings of the Board of Admiralty and of the Maintenance Committee of the Board when matters of mercantile shipbuilding were discussed. While the Controller-General was to be directly responsible to the First Lord, the latter had asked the Prime Minister to make it one of the terms of his appointment that upon all questions in which he felt that the interests of merchant shipbuilding were concerned, he should have direct access to the Prime Minister and the War Cabinet.

Shortly afterwards the members of the Shipbuilding Advisory Council informed the Admiralty Controller that, while they desired as leading members of the shipbuilding and engineering trades to continue to place their services unreservedly at the disposal of the First Lord and Controller-General for Merchant Shipbuilding, they felt that the existence of

the Council might have the effect of limiting Lord Pirrie's freedom of action. They therefore tendered their resignations. The Admiralty publicly acknowledged the great debt which the country owed to the members for the valuable advice and assistance they had given during the whole time that the Council had been in existence, and they "gratefully accepted their cordial offer of continued co-operation."

Lord Pirrie brought no staff of his own to the Admiralty, but (and this was bound to be much more valuable) just the right combination of keenness, practical knowledge of the highest order, and admitted great organizing abilities. While he represented a great quickening influence, it was understood that he fully recognized the excellence of much of the work long done by various departments of the Admiralty Controller's Office, which had been called upon to deal with many new, complicated, and highly important problems arising out of the responsibility for construction, and, in dealing with them, had had many difficulties to overcome.

The full statement of the First Lord was in accordance with a promise made by the Government, in reply to repeated questions, that



A CONCRETE SHIP NEARING COMPLETION.

*Official photograph.*



actual figures of tonnage losses would be given. The facts were to be given in order to enable the workers to realize that the effort they were called upon to make was absolutely vital to the country. The First Lord was supported in the House of Commons on March 20 by the Prime

**161,674 TONS**  
**- A RECORD -**

The Output of Merchant Ship-  
 building for March amounted  
 to 161,674 Tons, equal to

**32 SHIPS**  
 OF 5,000 TONS

**BUT**  
**THE HUNS SANK**  
**81 SHIPS**  
 DURING MARCH

SHIPYARD WORKERS  
**CAN & WILL**  
 PREVENT THE HUNS FROM  
 STARVING THE NATION

**MORE SHIPS WANTED**

REDUCED COPY OF A POSTER FOR  
 SHIPYARDS.

Minister, and a crowded House followed the speech with anxious attention. There was no doubt that the nation had at last come to realize the supreme importance of the subject which was to be dealt with by the First Lord. It wanted to know the whole truth and then, there was no doubt, the maximum effort would be forthcoming. The tonnage question really affected the life of every man, woman and child in the country.

Sir Eric Geddes's percentages were at first a little difficult to follow, but he stated that details would be published in a White Paper. This was issued on the following day and contained a very great deal of information. It was certainly one of the most important documents issued during the war, and two charts which accompanied it are reproduced in this chapter. In the course of his speech the First Lord described and defended the

work of the Controller's Department, and laid stress on the importance of repair work. There had been an enormous increase, he declared, in the output of repaired tonnage. "A central organization," he explained, "was created in the summer of 1917, and the increase in the average weekly output of repaired merchant tonnage in February, 1918, as compared with August, 1917, is 80 per cent.—an increased repair output of 69 merchant ships, representing no less than 237,000 tons per week in the later months. This repair figure cannot be too clearly grasped and understood. In February we completed repairs to merchant craft at an average of 166 ships per week, representing more than half a million tons." He pointed out that in order to consider correctly and adequately the tonnage situation, it was necessary to consider together three main factors: (1) Patrol and other craft to destroy submarines and to safeguard ships at sea; (2) salvage and repair to damaged ships; (3) building of new merchant ships. He recalled that members in all parts of the House, the Press, and the public had urged the Government to publish the facts, because these were needed to dispel ignorance and to quicken imagination, so that the country, including the masters and men, should thoroughly realize the position. He announced that figures of output would be given monthly and that returns of tonnage sunk would in future be published quarterly.

The first of the monthly statements showing the progress of merchant shipbuilding was issued on April 3, and showed the tonnage of merchant vessels completed in the United Kingdom yards, and entered for service during the month of March, 1918, compared with preceding periods. This very interesting statement was as follows:—

Month.	Com- pletions. Gross tons.	Year ending. 1917.	Com- pletions. Gross tons.
1917.			
March...	118,699	March 31	692,225
April ...	69,711	April 30	749,314
May ...	69,773	May 31 ...	773,116
June ...	109,847	June 30...	833,863
July ...	83,073	July 31	865,147
August ...	102,060	August 31	928,470
September ...	63,150	September 30	957,185
October ...	148,309	October 31	1,045,036
November ...	158,826	November 30	1,133,336
December ...	112,486	December 31	1,163,474
1918.		1918.	
January ...	58,568	January 31	1,173,953
February ...	100,038	February 28	1,194,540
March...	161,674	March 31	1,237,515

This statement was accompanied by a little comment by the Controller-General of Merchant Shipbuilding, the first official statement to be issued by Lord Pirrie, to the effect that the figures for March, 161,674 tons, constituted a "record," and demonstrated that the workers had taken to heart the anxiety caused by the comparatively low output of January and February. It was added that the men in the shipyards were working loyally to maintain the increased output of tonnage.

A regular campaign of publicity was then organized by the Ministry of Information for the Admiralty. This took the form of calls to patriotism in the local Press and by posters in the shipyard areas, by addresses at the yard gates by sailors who had taken part in naval fights and by Labour Members of Parliament, and stimulating messages at the cinematograph theatres. A very striking poster was issued immediately the March output was known, pointing out that the output for March amounted to 161,674 tons—a "record," and the equivalent of 32 ships of 5,000 tons—but it was added that the shipyard workers could and would prevent the Huns from starving the nation. Another poster to the shipyard workers reproduced part of Sir Douglas Haig's famous Special Order to the British Army in France and Flanders, published in the United Kingdom on April 13, in which he declared that "the safety of our homes, and the freedom of mankind depend alike upon the conduct of each one of us at this critical moment." The poster pointed out "the message applies equally to the whole nation, each one of us included, you and each one of you. The very existence of our gallant armies and the very existence of the nation itself depends on ships—ships to carry supplies to the Army, ships to fight with, ships to bring food to the nation. The nation knows that you will do your bit and give her the ships." Another innovation was a decision to include in the weekly pay-sheets photographs of scenes at the front, similar to the pictures long issued with certain brands of cigarettes. On the backs of these photographs were messages to the workers. One such message on the back of a photograph of "a full-time worker in the trenches" read: "If 'full-time' and 'a good day's work for a good day's pay' are the watchwords in our shipyards, the Hun pirates will be defeated." The administration of this highly important campaign was placed in charge of Mr. Wareham Smith.

After the opening of the great German offensive on the Western Front at the end of March a direct appeal was made by Lord Pirrie to the shipyard workers, in which he pointed out that the offensive had thrown an increased burden on the shipping resources of Great Britain and her Allies. Enormously increased numbers of men and supplies of munitions had to be transported to France not only from this



IF  
**"Full Time"**  
 AND  
**"A good day's Work"**  
 FOR A  
**good day's pay**  
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 THE  
**Hun Pirates**  
 WILL BE  
**Defeated.**

ONE OF THE CARDS ISSUED WITH PAY-SHEETS IN THE SHIPYARDS.

country but also from the United States. In these conditions the workers were asked to redouble the splendid efforts already made and thus to take an almost direct part in countering the enemy offensive.

There was a good deal of discussion throughout the year respecting the principle of standardization, and there was some criticism on the part of builders of its adoption. The case for its adoption was, however, put very strongly by Sir George Carter at a meeting of the Institution of Naval Architects held in London at the end of March, and by Sir William Rowan Thomson in a letter to *The Times* published on March 30.

Sir George Carter pointed out that the standard ships, though not all of the same type, had many features in common. For instance, similar sets of engines could be fitted in ships of different types, so that apart from the larger number built of each type, there was a still larger number into each of which a given set of engines could be placed. It might happen that either hull or machinery might be completed in one yard ahead of the other, and then the machinery originally intended for one ship could be transferred to another, no matter





SALVAGE WORK ON A TORPEDOED STEAMER: RIGGING A PUMP.

where she was being built. Such re-arrangements were of great assistance in preventing, on the one hand, congestion of engine works, and on the other delays to vessels through the machinery being behindhand. Further, the auxiliaries and fittings, including forgings and castings, being alike in vessels of each type, could be ordered in large numbers from the same maker and used in any ship or ships ready to receive them. Sir George pointed out that the contention that if builders had been allowed to proceed in their own way and to their own design the output of ships would have been greater than it was under standardization would not bear examination when the facts were considered impartially. There was undoubtedly delay in the production of standard ships, the chief cause at one time being shortage of steel. [Another reason was the conversion of a number of vessels originally designed as ordinary cargo steamers into oil-tank vessels, owing to, the First Lord had explained in the House of Commons, "the disproportionate loss of tank tonnage."] If, Sir George Carter contended, each builder had been allowed to proceed with his own type or types of ships this delay would have been greater, as, in addition to not getting the amount of steel

required, the multitudinous sections necessary would have caused great delay in rolling at the steel mills, the output of which was much increased by the simplification of sections in the standard ships.

Sir William Rowan Thomson declared that to obtain the maximum rate of output of any article, even of hulls and engines, from a group of establishments, it was necessary that these articles should be exact duplicates in every respect, and no deviation in detail should be permitted. Any delay in the rate of output while the change was being made from individual to standard construction was only of very short duration, and applied only to the first of the new series. Once the yards were started on a new design they very quickly overtook any such delay and obtained their usual rate of output. Absolute fidelity on the part of all hull and engine builders in following the standard pattern was, he maintained, necessary to ensure interchangeability, for even a very slight deviation on the part of either the hull or engine builder frequently interfered with this interchangeability and caused delay.

Interesting facts became known respecting the progress made with the "fabrication"



**SALVAGE WORK ON A TORPEDOED STEAMER: THE VESSEL PARTLY RAISED.**  
The salvage tug is seen alongside.

of ships in the United Kingdom. As supplies of steel and labour increased and promised a margin over and above the requirements of the existing controlled shipyards, the idea of standardization was carried a stage further, and fabrication, or "super-standardization," was decided upon. As all shipbuilding yards, engine factories, and boiler shops were largely occupied with standard ship work, the idea was to make use of other industrial establishments in inland centres doing work closely resembling shipbuilding and marine engineering. Among these works were the bridge-building yards and land engine factories. Every part of the complete ship could be fabricated in inland establishments near steel mills, and could be transported by ordinary means to the coast. With all the slips in private yards filled, it was necessary to look elsewhere for sites for assembling yards. The national shipyards on the Bristol Channel were laid out for this purpose and private undertakings of the same character were projected with the concurrence of the Admiralty. The labour available, the bulk of which was unskilled, was being trained in the use of pneumatic riveters and caulking tools,

and was being made sufficiently expert to put the assembled fabricated ships together. It was maintained that in the strictest possible sense of the term the output of fabricated ships was to be additional to the output of ordinary tonnage, for it involved no interference either with the contract industry or its supplies of labour and materials. The State's fabricated ships enterprise increased the tonnage output by tapping new sources which were inaccessible or impossible to the private shipbuilder. Another important development was the use of reinforced concrete for the construction of mercantile tonnage, much progress being made with the development of this idea in the United Kingdom, the United States and Scandinavia.

In a speech on March 6 the First Lord had declared that "to reach an ultimate production at the rate of 3,000,000 tons per annum was, he was advised, well within the present and prospective capacity of the shipbuilding yards and engineering shops, but that these results could not be obtained unless the maximum output was given in every shipyard and marine engineering shop by everyone concerned." This statement was reproduced in the White



Paper, with the qualification that the actual maximum output would be 1,800,000 tons. It was therefore with nothing less than this amount and a gradual speeding up to a production at the rate of 3,000,000 tons that the country could be satisfied. It was to this task that the shipyards set themselves, and with organization at the top at last obviously efficient, and with a new spirit of emulation in the shipyards, encouraged by the enthusiasm in the United States to assist the Allied cause by the rapid construction of tonnage, the omens in the early spring months were more favourable than they had ever been.

It was certain that there was no room for anything but the exercise of the utmost goodwill on the part of all concerned in the building of tonnage and the putting forth of the greatest possible effort. So long as the facts were withheld, there was some reason for the withholding of the supreme effort. Employers found their industry State-controlled in a way that must have often seemed irksome to men who had relied on their own individual judgment and enterprise in the past, and had been amply justified in the results. Shipbuilding is laborious, exposed and exhausting work, and only the absolute necessity of the nation could steel the employees, who were able to earn in fewer working hours far more than they had ever received in time of peace, to bearing the real and prolonged strain that maximum production imposed. The Admiralty pointed out in the White Paper already mentioned that as long as the publication of figures of tonnage losses and construction would encourage the enemy and stimulate his energies in a dangerous direction, they had not been able to agree to publication. But the figures published in March, 1918, would not, they declared, encourage the enemy, and they recognized that the policy of silence had had the serious defect that it failed sufficiently to impress upon the people the vital necessity for individual and united effort on their part to make good the losses caused by enemy submarines. They asserted that the results of 1917 had shown the ability of British seamen

to get upon terms with the submarine menace and gradually to gain the upper hand, although the results had been achieved in spite of an imperfect knowledge of a new and barbarous method of warfare and of a scarcity of suitable material. Our material resources for this form of warfare were, it was pointed out, already improved and were being rapidly augmented, while science was placing at our disposal means of defence and offence of which we had been in need. The recent production of new tonnage had, after making even the most generous allowance for weather conditions, fallen so much below the output in the last quarter of 1917 that, if improvement were not speedily made, the point where production balanced losses would be postponed to a dangerous extent, and even when that point was reached we should still have to make good the losses of the past. It was added that a rapid and continuous increase in the output of merchant tonnage would inevitably follow the united efforts of all engaged in merchant shipbuilding in this country.

Signs were not wanting that these efforts were immediately forthcoming. The North-East coast challenged the Clyde to competitions in rapid production, and the Admiralty was known to be at work on plans for stimulating output by competitive work. Belfast, with its plentiful labour resources, continued to produce magnificent results. The competitive spirit could not fail to make its strong appeal to the sporting instincts of British men and women, while colouring all the competition between the British centres was the knowledge that the British workers were fighting the enemy as finely in their own way as the men who attacked Zeebrugge on St. George's Day, 1918, in the dashing enterprise devised to block the channel through which German submarines passed in and out of one of their principal nests. No one who knew the quality of the brains now directing operations and the stamina of the workers doubted the effectiveness of the reply to be made by the British shipyards to the enemy's brutal and absolutely ruthless campaign at sea.

END OF VOLUME FIFTEEN.

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