BRITISH CAMPAIGNS IN THE NEARER EAST

WORKS BY EDMUND DANE

BRITISH CAMPAIGNS IN THE NEARER EAST. VOL. I. THE DAYS OF ADVERSITY.

BRITISH CAMPAIGNS IN THE NEARER EAST. VOL. II. THE TIDE OF VICTORY.

BRITISH CAMPAIGNS IN AFRICA AND THE PACIFIC. 1914—1918.

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BRITISH CAMPAIGNS IN THE NEARER EAST 1914—1918

From the Outbreak of War with Turkey to the Armistice

WITH 30 MAPS AND PLANS

BY

EDMUND DANE

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VOL I

THE DAYS OF ADVERSITY

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

WRITTEN in the early part of 1918, the first edition of this history was of necessity incomplete. It is now brought down to the close of the war.

Over and above the rôle they were called upon to play on the Western main front in Europe, British troops during the Great War, took part in twelve campaigns. They fought in Gallipoli, Mesopotamia, Syria, the Balkans and Italy; and upon them, including in the term British the contingents of the overseas Dominions, was thrown no small share of the conflict in Africa and the Pacific.

Geographically and to a certain extent politically the Eastern and Colonial campaigns fall into two groups. The Eastern campaigns were an opposition chiefly to the States confederated with the German Empire, and a resistance to the scheme of extending that Empire over the Nearer East; the Colonial campaigns were designed to withstand and defeat German world-policy in another form, and were a direct grapple with German forces abroad. Because of these evident distinctions the Eastern campaigns are dealt with in the following pages: The story of the African and Pacific campaigns is told in another volume.

Although in these campaigns events were very largely

contemporaneous, the war was a unity, and to throw light upon cause and consequence it has been advisable to keep that unity in view. Events are most clearly followed when set out in the order of time. Their historical significance is then most readily grasped. The geographical difficulties of the subject are inherent, and without unduly changing about from place to place, I have attempted to present a narrative which does not obscure relationships. In the Eastern group of Campaigns there was a period during which on the whole British arms appeared to be under a cloud. Then steadily the tide turned, and effort was rewarded with victory. That is the broad outline here adopted.

The endeavour has been made at once to tell the story in popular form, and to enable the reader readily to reconstruct the battles and combats. I have thrown round the toils and fatigues of war no false glamour. The truth, with its background of consistent devotion and unshakable valour, outdoes any flight of fancy. The more carefully the military genius and skill revealed in these Eastern campaigns is studied, the more solid and shining it appears, and the stronger are seen to be its claims to enduring appreciation.

Some brief elucidatory notes and references to authorities and official documents have been added. They will be found at the end of each volume.

From not a few who have served in one or another of the Eastern theatres of war I have received a kind assistance which I take this opportunity very sincerely to acknowledge.

E. D.

LONDON, *May*, 1919.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

Though on a minor scale as compared with the gigantic conflicts on the Western and Eastern main fronts in Europe, the campaigns in the Nearer East during the period covered by the following pages—November, 1914, to January, 1918—not only represent what would in any other war have been considered operations of the first moment, but afford lessons in campaigning of the greatest interest and the highest value. Some severe reverses sustained by British arms darken this record. On the other hand, it is not less illumined by brilliant military triumphs. Chequered as the story is, its background is consistent devotion and steady valour. In telling it I have had no purpose to serve save truth. The narration is based upon official records. No fact has been glossed, and no statement advanced as fact which is doubtful. Some opinions expressed may be open to debate, as most opinions are but the proofs are there and the reader may judge for himself. My claim is to have written without bias.

Since the events recorded are of far-reaching political importance, I have thought it advisable to begin with a rapid sketch of the origin, progress and influence of German policy in Turkey. This appeared necessary both as assisting to understand the part played by the

Turkish Empire in the War, and how and why that Empire was dragged into the struggle.

The narrative covers the British campaigns in Gallipoli, the Balkans, Egypt and Mesopotamia. The Expedition to Gallipoli is here dealt with largely from the aspect of its strategy.

E. D.

LONDON, 1918.

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CHAPTER I

GERMAN "PENETRATION" IN TURKEY

Origin of Germany's Eastern policy—The Crisis of 1875 and the troubles in the Balkans—Alliance with Austria a sequel of the Russo-Turkish War—The Real Eastern Question—German "Reforms" in Turkey—Their undermining tendency—Financial dependence on Berlin—The Bagdad railway scheme—Its military character—Armenian massacres a disguise of German projects—The remodelling of the Turkish Army—Formation of the Balkan League—Germany and the Young Turk movement—The lure of Egypt—Dethronement of Abdul Hamid and the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria—Outbreak of the Balkan War—Failure of German military changes—Independence of the Turkish Empire sapped.

EARLY in 1875 the German Ambassador at St. Petersburg was granted by his Government an absence on leave. To fill his place for the time there was sent from Berlin Herr von Radowitz, a high official of the German Foreign Office, believed to be in the confidence of Bismarck. Intended outwardly to signify the suspension of any business of moment, since it would naturally be inferred that the accredited Ambassador would be the channel of important communications, these changes covered a special and secret mission.

Herr von Radowitz, it is now known, went to St. Petersburg in order to suggest to the Tsar, Alexander II, a Russo-German pact. The main conditions proposed were on the one side a free hand for Germany in Western Europe; on the other a free hand for Russia in the Nearer and Farther East. Each Power was on this basis mutually to support the policy of the other.

Every precaution was taken to veil this *démarche* because at that date, in accordance with a plan drawn up by the German General Staff, Bismarck had in contemplation a renewal of the war with France.

The reasons for the intention can be briefly stated. Bismarck had favoured the establishment of the French Republic. That form of government he believed would keep France politically feeble. But following the rapid liquidation of the War Indemnity of 5,000 millions of francs imposed upon France by Prussia under the Treaty of Frankfort in 1871—the indemnity had been paid off in a few months—France had in 1875 recovered so signally from the disasters of the War of 1870–71, that there then came before the Chambers at Paris the project of forming the cadres for a reconstitution of the French Army on a footing of universal conscription.

For Germany the project was of grave omen. On the one hand the plans for a renewed attack upon France had already been drawn out. On the other the French scheme, perfectly within the rights of the Republic as a sovereign State, and necessary in view of the armaments of Germany, infringed no clause of the Frankfort compact.

As usual, the pretext for the contemplated fresh outbreak of hostilities was remote from the true motive. More important to Germany, however, than a pretext, true or false, was the disposition of Russia and of Great Britain. Neither of those Powers, it was evident, could, without misgiving, view the rise of the German Empire, recently reconstituted under the headship of Prussia, to a situation of unchallengeable military supremacy in Europe, and the less so because of the now known principles of Prussian polity. Towards that result the ruin and depression of France would be a long step.

Germany, as yet without allies, was not prepared for a war which might involve Great Britain and Russia. German diplomacy, therefore, was at this date exerted to foment mutual distrust between Great Britain and Russia in regard alike to affairs in Turkey, Persia and India.

Their mutual distrust was relied upon to keep them from acting together even in matters of common interest. The interest of each, however, in the strength and security of France as a counterpoise to the ambitions of the German Empire was too palpable to be ignored.

Sweeping aside other considerations, the Tsar Alexander rejected the Radowitz proposal. His rejection was final.

It remained to test British opinion. If Great Britain could be counted upon to stand aside, war might still be risked, though the attitude of Russia remained in doubt. Accordingly, when he had returned after the non-success of his St. Petersburg mission, Radowitz was made the channel of a calculated indiscretion to the French Ambassador at Berlin, M. de Gontaut-Biron. By apparent inadvertence he blurted out the plan of intended aggression. Assuming that France was rearming for the purpose of revenge, Radowitz, in the course of a seemingly informal and private conversation, asserted that neither on political, philosophical, nor Christian grounds could Germany wait to re-attack until France had formed alliances which would aid her scheme. This incident, reported forthwith to the French Government, was without delay disclosed by the French Ambassador in London to the British Government and the disclosure led to a public declaration by the Earl of Derby, then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Though guarded in its terms, the tenour and meaning of the declaration could not be mistaken. Great Britain would not stand aside. There were in German newspapers outbursts of anger inspired from the Wilhelmstrasse. None the less, what is now known as " the Crisis of 1875 " was averted.

That crisis marks the starting point of German " penetration " in Turkey. Since along the road contemplated Germany dared not then venture, it became necessary to find another avenue of expansion, and it became necessary because such expansion is the vital principle of a militarist empire. In an empire of that type, founded upon the supremacy of force, the prestige

of the governing class rests upon success in arms, and upon material prosperity attributed to success in arms. Intrigue is one form of preparation for war.

Hardly had the commotion caused by the Radowitz incident died down when—in August, 1875—a revolt broke out in the then Turkish provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The outrages which marked the Turkish measures of repression of course brought Russia to the forefront. At Constantinople, Ignatieff, the Russian Ambassador, presented protests, and, these being without avail, passed to threats. Then, on the initiative of Austria, it was proposed, and to all appearance agreed, that the Great Powers in concert should instruct their Ambassadors at Constantinople to draw up a scheme for the reform and government of the revolted provinces, and press its acceptance upon the Divan. Despite protracted discussions at Constantinople and an International Consular Inquiry on the spot, the scheme came to nothing. Whenever an agreement seemed on the point of being reached the German Ambassador announced his dissent.

The cause of this procrastination lay partly in the fact that meanwhile there had taken place in the Turkish capital two of those palace revolutions which have been a feature of the later history and decline of the House of Osman. In the first, Abdul Aziz had been dethroned and Murad V set up. In the second, Murad, after a troubled reign of three months, was in turn deposed in favour of Abdul Hamid. These agitations had been accompanied by a blowing up of the fires of Mussulman fanaticism. In 1876, the Balkan trouble had spread in an aggravated form to Bulgaria.

The inner meaning of these events, little apprehended at the time, is now beyond doubt. Abdul Hamid ascended the throne as the *protégé* of Germany. It was the policy of Germany, by embroiling Turkey with Russia, to accentuate by that means antagonism between Russia and Great Britain. But while that of itself was an important point, having regard to the designs against France, postponed but not given up, another aim

was to gain stronger influence in the counsels of the Porte. Weakened by war, the Turkish Empire would have the more call for aid, diplomatic and financial. Germany was to be the friend in need. That Turkey would be beaten in the now unavoidable conflict with Russia was probable. More than ever Abdul Hamid would look for support towards Berlin.

At the same time, since no active assertion of Russian influence in the Balkans could take place without awakening the fears and jealousies of Austria, this Russo-Turkish conflict could not fail to pave the way for that offensive and defensive alliance between Germany and Austria which was the true corner-stone of Bismarckian policy. The sequel justified Bismarck's moves. In 1879, when the troops of the Tsar had at length arrived within sight of Constantinople, the alliance between Germany and Austria was concluded. From that time the real independence of Austria in foreign affairs ceased.

The growth of German influence in Turkey corresponded with these beginnings.

In form the Turkish sovereignty constituted a theocracy in which, as Padishah and Commander of the Faithful, the Sultan was all-powerful, subject to the review of his Irades by the Sheik-ul-Islam, and the College of Ulemas. With the College lay the function of seeing that no enactment ran counter to the Mohammedan Sacred Law. Any enactment so doing was *ipso facto* void. To Mohammedans this check upon arbitrary rule had a practical value. But it left the Christian and Jewish populations of the Empire without security. A distinction in legal rights based upon difference in religious belief is, however, a cardinal vice in the government of any State. Turkey offered no exception to the rule. On the contrary, this vicious principle had proved to be the parent of a brood of administrative ills. Dealing with Mohammedans and non-Mohammedans on a different footing, the integrity of the Turkish official was sapped by the practice of buying from him protection which the law denied. By degrees, indeed, the levying of

irregular exactions from non-Mohammedans had been recognised by the Government, which, pressed by debt, and by the lack of a steady revenue, left its subordinates to look to such exactions as more reliable than their pay. Under these influences the administration had degenerated into a machinery of extortion, varying in shades of badness from place to place and from time to time, but rooted in a principle fatal to public prosperity.

The existence of this political miasma was the real Eastern Question.

In what respects did German influence tend to modify the system? In none. German influence tended to make it worse. For the leverage worked upon was a professed defence of the Turkish point of view against outside protest and interference. It was no purpose of German policy to strengthen the Turkish Empire as such, and cure its ills. The surest means of hastening Turkish decline, and of reducing the Empire first to covert dependence and then to open vassalage was to confirm for the time being the fatal and paralysing political and administrative vice, and, by appealing to fanaticism, to arrest even the possibility of reform. One of the now best known expedients of German "penetration" was thus to seize upon some movement likely to weaken or disintegrate a State it was designed to absorb, and aid that movement by secret subventions, for of the fanatics and adventurers to whom chiefly such eddies of political activity appeal the first are careless and the second unscrupulous as to the origin of proffered support. This policy now applied to Turkey had preceded the partition of Poland.

German reforms, so called, there were. They took, however, a different direction. To begin with, there was introduced a spy system and secret police on lines already familiar in Central Europe. This, besides harmonising with the Sultan's temperament, opened the way for the employment of *agents provocateurs*, so that fanaticism might always be revived by alleged conspiracies to revolt. In the absence of jealousy of Christian or

Jewish prosperity and the motive of gain, the common and unofficial Turkish disposition is towards toleration.

A second so-called reform touched finance. The Turkish Government was beguiled with the prospect of finding in the German Reichsbank an accommodating and indulgent creditor, and of feeling itself freed from the embarrassments caused by its most reliable revenues being mortgaged to the International Committee of Bondholders.

The third so-called reform concerned the Army. Before the war of 1876–78 with Russia, the Turkish regular army had consisted, on paper, of 170,800 men with 540 guns. In the event of war this force could be raised, also on paper, by the calling out of the first and second redifs (reserves) and by the addition of irregular cavalry and reserve artillery to a total of some 420,000 men. Over and above there were the Bashi-Bazouks, and other irregulars, estimated at 250,000 men. The grand total of 670,000 men, more or less, represented the full military strength of the State.

The Army was recruited exclusively from the Mohammedan population. It was in accord with the general distinction already alluded to that the Faithful alone should fulfil the duty of bearing arms. Indeed, otherwise, the distinction in the civil administration could not have been upheld. Since, however, only part of the inhabitants of the Empire professed the predominant faith, the exclusion was a great source of military weakness.

After the war with Russia the Turkish Army was deficient in numbers and badly equipped, and for a long time it suited the policy of Germany to leave the Turkish forces in that condition.

The so-called reforms here touched upon were introduced one after another at considerable yet calculated intervals. It was advisable at the outset that Abdul Hamid should be made, thanks to the support of Berlin, to feel secure upon his throne. Next the financial dependence of the Turkish Government had so far to be assured that the yoke could not readily be shaken off.

Only then was the question of army reform brought forward.

As leading up to army reform the scheme was promoted of a railway from Constantinople to Bagdad. The commerce of Asia Minor was chiefly carried on by coastwise traffic. Such overland trade as was still transacted between Asia Minor and the Farther East followed the same routes and was carried on by the same means as had been employed for two thousand years. The Turk had been content to levy tolls upon traffic whether by sea or by land. But increasingly, and more especially since the opening of the Suez Canal, commerce with the Farther East had followed the Red Sea route, alike cheaper and more secure. Once it was pointed out, however, in face of this diversion, the Turk was shrewd enough to perceive that the vast distances and primitive transport of his Asiatic Empire constituted a political and military handicap of the gravest kind, and seeing his dominions in Europe now reduced to narrow bounds, he readily lent an ear to suggestions which, by apparently strengthening his power in Asia, promised further to assure what was left of it in Europe by rendering the Empire as a whole more capable of defence.

For such an undertaking as a trans-continental railway the resources of the Turkish treasury were, of course, hopelessly inadequate, but a German company came forward with an offer to find the capital. All that was asked of the Turkish Government was a guarantee of the interest on the outlay as the railroad was laid down. In the autumn of 1898 the German Kaiser paid a State visit to Constantinople, sailing up the Dardanelles in his yacht *Hohenzollern*. After that visit the preliminaries were settled without much ado. The concession, embodied in an Imperial firman, provided that for every completed kilometre of line the Porte should pay or make up in interest 14,000 marks per annum. Connected with the line from Pera, the railroad was to run to Bagdad by way of Aleppo, Nisibin, and Mosul. In due course the line was to be carried down from

Bagdad to Basra. From that place, the proposed terminus on the Persian Gulf, the estuary of the Euphrates is navigable by moderate sized ocean-going steamers.

Commercially the line had few prospects, and the military character of the scheme for all immediate purposes was evident from its trace. Ignoring the ancient trade routes, it was at one and the same time to link up Constantinople with Syria, with the districts bordering upon the Caucasus, with the Persian frontier, and finally with Mesopotamia. These were military needs.

It very speedily became known that the German company which had fathered the undertaking was backed by the Deutsche Bank. The Deutsche Bank was, for all practical purposes, the German Government projected into the field of finance.

About this time, too, there began to appear in Germany the publications, afterwards numerous and popular, advocating a Greater Germany extending from the North Sea to the Persian Gulf. Writers and speakers drew attention to the potential wealth of Mesopotamia, a tract once as fertile as any on the globe, and only needing a reconstruction of the ancient irrigation works once more to convert its swamps and wastes into fruitful soil.

To such a project in itself no objection could be offered. But a scheme which, as a plan of peaceable settlement, could have aroused no opposition wore a different aspect as a probable extension into the Nearer East of the polity which had made the German people a standing army, and the German Empire an armed camp.

The aspiration of a German Empire comprising as dependent States Austria-Hungary, the Kingdoms of the Balkan Peninsula, and the Turkish Empire was by no means new. That it was believed in by the elder von Moltke, and entertained as ultimately practicable by Bismarck is not in doubt. Exact information regarding the Turkish Empire had long been collected for the

archives at Berlin. Military possibilities had been gone into in detail. It was in association with them that the scheme of a main line strategical railway had been mapped out. The surveys, when the project had taken shape, were made by German military engineers. Ostensibly they were employees of the new company, or in the Turkish service ; actually they were the pioneers of the German Army.

Diplomatic difficulties were foreseen, for the essentially military character of this railroad could escape no attentive eye. How were the difficulties forestalled ? The first of the massacres of Christians in Armenia took place in 1896. Marking at once a defiance of Russia and of the Western Powers, these atrocities stirred up Mussulman fanaticism afresh, and diverted the attention of the world from the real impending issue.

The atrocities, however, had another purpose, and one more important. The railroad project having been launched, the way was cleared for the proposed reorganisation of the Turkish Army on the German model. With many Turks that professed reform remained a subject of some delicacy, certain to arouse suspicions and strong jealousies. But the bad odour into which, by the Armenian massacres, Abdul Hamid had been brought, not alone in Russia and Western Europe, but in the United States, furnished a plausible excuse for urging the apparently best of all means of self-protection —a Turkish army that could defy attack. That the child unborn should be cut out of its mother's womb in Armenia, and hapless and unoffending peasants done to death with every circumstance of ferocity in order to promote a policy and advance an ambition may at the time have appeared incredible, but history has to lay the infamy at the doors of its authors.

In these circumstances the plan of army reform was accepted, and under the cloak of Pan-Islamism the most decisive step so far was taken to destroy Turkish independence. At the same time, the Armenian troubles helped to keep the army reform proposal as much as

possible in the background. The arrival at Constantinople of General Liman von Sandars at the head of a Commission of German officers attracted little attention.

Hitherto the Turkish Army had consisted of corps based on the various vilayets. Before the war with Russia there were twenty of these provincial governments. They had been reduced owing to that war to fifteen, for the Empire had lost a fourth of its territory, and more than a fourth of its population. Of the corps some were fit for service in the field; most were not. The first procedure therefore was to create divisions on the European plan, and to group these bodies round certain strategical bases of supply. The chief bases were Constantinople (four divisions), Damascus (four divisions), Erzingnan (three divisions), Mosul (one division), Bagdad (one division), plus the two divisions employed, one in Arabia and the other at Adrianople.

After this beginning the army administration was step by step mapped out on German lines. That characteristic feature of the German system, periodical inspections, was introduced. The syllabus of training was equally German, and although the Turkish conscript was set to learn a number of things entirely foreign to him, it was apparently never doubted that he would as a fighting man be raised in the scale of efficiency. As time went on the number of German officers attached to the Turkish Army increased. The engineering branch of the service indeed passed almost entirely into their hands. In these matters the adviser of the Turkish Government was General von der Goltz. He had seen service in the war of 1870–71, and he was an accepted German authority on strategy and tactics.

Seemingly the policy of penetration was prospering. There were, nevertheless, two disturbing symptoms. The Balkan States, concluding that this reorganisation of the Turkish Army boded ill, both increased their armaments and formed a League. Next, many Turks had misgivings. Among them was Abdul Hamid

himself. He had begun to find German control irksome. On their part the German Government equally distrusted the Sultan, for it is the mark of a policy without scruple to discard its instruments when they have served its turn. "Abdul the Damned" had helped on the policy of penetration; he was not to be allowed to stand in the way of it. The "Young Turk" movement, therefore, began to be heard of, and Abdul and the "Old Turks" became the objects of an alleged revolutionary agitation. Two then obscure officials in the Turkish service at Salonica, Enver and Talaat, adventurers with a talent for intrigue, set on foot the Committee of Union and Progress. The Committee successfully defied Abdul and his secret police, because his secret police were in this matter not trustworthy. German policy played the one party off against the other.

The chief grievance held up by the Young Turks was the British occupation of Egypt, which, since 1882, had reached a prosperity in glaring contrast with any other part of the nominal Turkish Empire. This, it was asserted, lowered the prestige of Islam. The cause of the contrast unquestionably was that under British administration the fatal vice of Turkish rule had given place to legal equality. The fellah in Egypt now tilled his fields in the assurance that he would reap the fruits of his labours. But, instead of ascribing the prosperity of Egypt to its true cause, the Young Turks looked only to the millions sterling a year which they saw might, for a time, be wrung out of the country, and considered themselves robbed by the British occupation. The party's watchword, "national efficiency," derived point from this example of infidel aggression. Not only was it worked upon as a grievance against the Sultan and the Old Turks; it very usefully withdrew attention from other examples of infidel aggression much more grave.

In Egypt meanwhile intrigue was at work promoting a so-called National Party, whose professed aim was independence. Thus at Constantinople the plot was to hand Egypt back to the Turks; at Cairo to expel the

Turk and every other intruder. With the Cairo movement the Khedive, Abbas Hilmi, was an undisguised sympathiser. He at Cairo and the Young Turks at Constantinople looked equally to Berlin for support of their respective though conflicting aims.

An event which disconcerted this web of deceit was the conclusion, in 1904, of the Anglo-French Entente. Among other effects it freed the Egyptian treasury from mischievous restrictions imposed in the supposed interest of the bondholders, and both allowed of relief of taxation and of the application of larger funds to public works, including the completion of the Nile barrage. For German designs the event was a sharp setback.

It was made use of, however, in Turkey to popularise the so-called Party of Union and Progress, and in 1908 that movement was at last judged to be ripe. Two developments then occurred in rapid succession. At Constantinople a rising of Young Turks drove Abdul Hamid from the throne. At Vienna the Austrian Government, in defiance of the Treaty of Berlin, annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina.

From this time the nominal rulers of Turkey were Enver, created a pasha, and Talaat, raised to the dignity of bey. Owing their elevation to German influence, they were from that very fact its tools.

So far as the Balkan League was concerned these developments changed distrust into certainty, and in 1910, being then ready, the League attacked. There was confidence at Constantinople among the adherents of the new *régime* that the Germanised Turkish army would be readily victorious. That army turned out a failure. Not in all the five hundred years of Turkish rule in Europe had the forces of the Empire been more decisively beaten. The good native fighting qualities of the Turk were hampered by methods he had not assimilated. Germany could not avert this defeat because she could not openly appear in the struggle without bringing about a European conflict. For that her Government were not yet ready.

The effects of the policy of penetration were now seen. So thoroughly had the strength of the Turkish Empire been sapped that after this disastrous Balkan War it could no longer stand alone. Germany controlled its finance, its railroads, its army, and its Government. The Great War was not opened until the foundations, at any rate, of a Greater Germany, were believed to have been laid.

CHAPTER II

THE INTRIGUES OF AUGUST-NOVEMBER, 1914

Political importance of the Serbo-Greek alliance—The assassination of King George of Greece and the policy of Constantine—Its unconstitutional character—Relations between Constantine and the German Emperor—Repudiation of the Serbo-Greek treaty—The *Goeben* and *Breslau* episode—Enver Pasha and the Germans force the situation—Attacks on Russian Black Sea ports—Effect of German reverses on the West and of Austrian reverses in Russia—Need of a diversion in the Near East—German inducements to the Turks—War declared—Military resources of the Turkish Empire—Advantages and disadvantages to Germany of this extension of the conflict.

GERMAN influence in Turkey having taken the course already outlined, what were the circumstances in which Turkey was, in November, 1914, dragged into the conflict, as it then was, between Germany and Austria on the one side, and France, Great Britain and Russia on the other ?

The first step on the part of the German Government was concerned with the attitude of Greece.

Constantine succeeded his father on the throne of Greece after King George had been assassinated at Salonica at the close of the second Balkan War. The murdered King had been one of the promoters, not only of the Balkan League, but of the Serbo-Greek alliance. Having little confidence in the policy of Ferdinand, King of Bulgaria, who had assumed the title of Tsar, and distrusting alike the new *régime* in Turkey and the designs of Austria, the two States of the Western Balkans at the end of the first Balkan War sought by an alliance mutually to assure themselves.

But, though in the second Balkan War they had successfully upheld their territorial claims against those of Bulgaria, it was clear that their alliance directly traversed both the aspirations of Austria to control the whole eastern coast of the Adriatic and the still larger ambitions of the German Government. The second Balkan War had proved, too, that Greece, Serbia and Montenegro, acting in concert, formed a formidable Power, and it was evident that if the Serbo-Greek alliance was by effluxion of time allowed to solidify, a heavy bar would be placed, not merely in the way of the expansion of the Central Empires to the south-east, but in the way of that maritime control of the Levant to which they aspired. On the other hand, since if Greece could be detached from this combination the balance would be entirely altered, it was clearly of importance that the Hellenic kingdom should become subservient to German-Austrian aims.

That the assassination of King George was a political crime, and the first blow aimed at the Serbo-Greek compact, hardly admits of doubt, for if the origin of a crime is to be sought for in its motive, an established principle of investigation in matters criminal, the interest of the Central Powers, and especially that of the Government of Germany, in the speedy " removal " of King George is beyond debate. No other interest was or could be promoted by it. The motive of the blow was the more manifest because Constantine, professionally educated in the German Army, was both an out-and-out admirer of the Prussian military system, and had had bestowed upon him, a distinction of which he was vain, the honorary rank of a German Field-Marshal. Not least, he had married the Princess Sophia, sister of the German Kaiser. To the Kaiser and the German Government his personal views were known to run directly counter to his father's policy.

Since, too, he was a man of at best but ordinary endowments, the influence of the Court at Athens after his accession was, under the outward mask of pacific isolation, consistently exerted towards the furtherance

of German interests. Independently of the influence of Queen Sophia, Constantine's closest and most confidential adviser was Dr. Streit, born at Athens, but the son of German parents.

In the circumstances there appeared to be every assurance that when the time came to give effect to it on a military footing, the Serbo-Greek treaty would be dealt with as of no account. One difficulty alone stood in the way. Constantine was a constitutional ruler. His dynasty had been placed on the Greek throne on the express condition that the Constitution would not be violated, and Great Britain, France and Russia were, under the Treaty which had liberated Greece from Turkish rule, the guardians at once of Greek independence and of Greek popular rights. Not only then was Constantine, as a Constitutional Sovereign, bound to accept the advice of his responsible Ministers chosen by the nation, but to the obstinate rejection of that advice, and the unconstitutional course of following a contrary and personal policy, there was attached the penalty of deposition.

Now the advice tendered to Constantine in August, 1914, by M. Venizelos, then Prime Minister, was that Greece should throw in her lot with the Entente Powers. That, giving effect to the alliance, would have made it in any event most improbable that Serbia, not being isolated, could be overpowered. It would, too, have assured the neutrality of Bulgaria. The ground for the advice tendered by the Greek Prime Minister was that the Turkish Government had already entered upon a systematic persecution and despoilment of the Greek population along the Asia Minor littoral. The plunder thus obtained, then estimated at a total of five hundred millions of francs, was to be used for defraying the costs of Turkish mobilisation in the event of war. Since the Greek population of the towns and districts along the coasts of Asia Minor numbered some three millions, the issue was one of urgency as well as of moment. About a quarter of a million of these Asiatic Greeks, including the wealthiest among them, had been stripped of their

possessions, and driven forth as exiles to beg their bread.

But while in name the head of the Greek nation and the representative of Greek interests, and content in that capacity to enjoy the state and status of royalty, Constantine had so imperfect a sense of the duties of his position that he rejected the counsel of his Ministers without qualification. Venizelos resigned. The new Cabinet had not the confidence of the Greek Parliament. Yet almost their first act was to repudiate the Serbo-Greek treaty.

On August 4, 1914, the day on which Great Britain declared war, M. Theotokis, the Greek Minister at Berlin, received from the German Emperor a summons to a personal audience. When M. Theotokis entered the Cabinet of the Emperor he found the latter holding in his hand a telegram which he told the Minister had just been sent by Constantine. The purport of the telegram was not disclosed but the Kaiser William dictated to Theotokis a reply in these terms :—

> " The Emperor informs me that an Alliance has to-day been concluded between Germany and Turkey. Bulgaria and Rumania are also taking their stand alongside of Germany. The German warships in the Mediterranean are to join the Turkish Fleet and act together. By this action the King of the Hellenes will see that all the Balkan States have joined Germany in the struggle against Slavism."

To this reply the Greek Minister added his own report of a conversation which had followed the dictation.

> " In bringing these considerations to the knowledge of your Majesty " (he wrote), " the Kaiser asks you—appealing to you as a comrade, as a German Field-Marshal of whom the German Army is proud, and reminding his brother-in-law that Greece kept Kavala thanks to the Kaiser's support —to mobilise your Army, to place yourself at his

> side, and to march with him hand-in-hand against Slavism and the common enemy. If Greece does not side with Germany there will be a complete breach between Greece and the Empire. The Emperor added: 'What I ask to-day is the execution of what the two Sovereigns have often discussed.'"

As throwing light on the relations of the two rulers, the concluding passage of this note is of some significance. Constantine replied urging that his attitude of ostensible neutrality was the more desirable course. On the following day, August 5, Theotokis had an interview with the German Minister for Foreign Affairs, and in his account of it he stated:—

> "Herr von Jagow confirmed, under the seal of absolute secrecy, the conclusion of an Alliance between Turkey and Germany. When I pointed out the dangers to which our geographical situation exposed us, Herr von Jagow replied that he did not think England would act against Greece. M. Theotokis added: 'If we accept the Emperor's appeal, we should, I think, ask for clear definitions as to what he wants us to do, and what he would guarantee us in case of success. My impression is that he would not object to see us extend our territory at the cost of Serbia.'"

From these transactions it is clear that the ostensible neutrality of Constantine, covered by a refusal to fall in with the Kaiser's demands, was intended to destroy the Serbo-Greek alliance, the western bulwark of the Balkans. The destruction of that bulwark was the initial step towards involving Turkey in the war.

Meanwhile, at Constantinople another phase of the comedy was being enacted. On receipt of the news of the outbreak of hostilities the Council of Ministers was called together. As Secretary for War, Enver Pasha proposed that Turkey should declare forthwith on the

side of Germany and Austria. He found himself in a minority. Next he urged the necessity of a partial mobilisation of the reserves. That was agreed to. The Sultan personally was opposed to hostilities and the majority of the Divan shared his opinion. Negotiations were accordingly set on foot for concluding with the Ambassadors of the Entente Powers a formal agreement of neutrality. While these negotiations went on the tidings came of sweeping German successes in France. As the bulletins arrived—from Berlin—Enver at every successive meeting of the Council showed himself more urgent and aggressive. The shrewder Ministers had their misgivings. The Council, however, was already divided when *Goeben* and *Breslau* steamed up the Dardanelles and dropped anchor before Constantinople. Escaping from the port of Messina in Sicily, these ships had eluded the Allied squadron in the Eastern Mediterranean, how, was never during the War explained. It has been asserted that the Allied squadron was misled by false wireless instructions into believing *Goeben* and *Breslau* would make for Pola. In any event, it did not appear a good beginning for the Allied naval operations in those waters.

The spectacle of two German warships lying off the Golden Horn, one of them, *Goeben*, one of the most powerful units of the German fleet, at once stimulated the Turkish war party and depressed the opposition, for the main point on which the peace advocates had relied was the supremacy of the Entente at sea. With the support of the Sultan they had so far held to their opinions that the neutrality compact was drawn up and awaiting ratification.

In the circumstances Enver Pasha and the German Government realised that they must force the pace. The cruisers of the Turkish fleet had been entrusted to the command of German officers. Either on secret instructions or on their own initiative they attacked Odessa and the Russian Black Sea port of Theodosia. On learning this the Turkish Government was profuse in its apologies. A deputation of Ministers waited on

the French Ambassador with the offer of an apology to Russia, and of an indemnity to defray damages.

The reply of the Entente Powers was a demand that all German naval and military instructors in the Turkish service must leave Constantinople. The demand was met by evasion. Time was sought to be gained by a counter-proposal that the matter should be referred to the mediation of Italy and the United States. This, considered a subterfuge, was rejected and the original demand insisted upon. The Divan was now in a dilemma. To accede meant war with Germany and Austria; to refuse, war with the Entente. After a prolonged and stormy meeting, the Council, swayed by Enver and Talaat, decided by a majority for refusal. Four of the Ministers, Djavid Bey, the most influential advocate of a peace policy, Mahmud Pasha, Oskam Effendi, and Boustam Effendi, forthwith resigned. The Ambassadors of the Entente Powers applied for their passports, and on November 1 they left Constantinople.

The date, November 1, on which Turkey was brought into the War has a certain import: the attack upon Odessa had only taken place some days previously. For the meaning of this hurry it is necessary to allude to events in other parts of Europe. If the question be put whether it was intended at the beginning of August, 1914, forthwith to drag Turkey into the conflict, the answer must be in the negative. Had the campaign in the West gone as at the outset it was believed in Berlin it would go; had France been speedily crushed, and Russia, held in the meanwhile by Austria, been speedily crushed in turn, then, the "friendly neutrality" of Greece assured, there would have been no necessity for Turkish assistance. A presumably victorious Germany would indeed have reaped all the greater advantage from a Turkish Empire unexhausted by war. The still untapped resources of Turkey would have been available for assault upon the British position in Egypt and India, while the scheme of penetration in Turkey would have derived impetus, and completion from heightened German prestige. In short, all the

considerations were against involving Turkey prematurely, and none, in August, 1914, in favour of that course.

By the end of October, however, the prospects had materially changed. The German expedition into France had suffered disaster on the Marne, and the Austrian first line armies had met with defeat. The remains of one Austrian army had already laid down its arms at Lemberg; the wreck of the other was cooped up in Przemysl. The first battle of Ypres had also been entered upon, and though not yet fought out had already been lost. In view also of the great German-Austrian reverse on the Vistula it had become urgent to divert as much as possible of the Russian strength from the main Eastern front, to stir up trouble for the British in the East, and not least to cut the connection between Great Britain and India through Egypt, and prevent that country from being used as a base for the transport of troops or supplies from Australia. To involve Turkey in the War meant a menace at once to the Anglo-Persian oil-fields at the head of the Persian Gulf, and to the oil-fields of the Caucasus. It meant, of course, also the closing of the Dardanelles, and the cutting of the shortest route to Russia to and from the West, seeing that the Baltic route was now barred. As an inducement, Germany could offer two apparently rich prizes—Egypt and the oil-fields of the Caucasus, once also in Turkish hands and now lost, and the source, like Egypt, of tempting wealth. Since, further, notwithstanding the Balkan War, there was a conviction among many Turks that, with the aid of German military science, these dazzling prospects would infallibly be realised, it is hardly surprising that, stimulated by cupidity, dreams of a great revival of Turkish power swept away counsels of prudence.

Essentially the bringing of Turkey into the conflict in November, 1914, was on the part of the German Government a diversion dictated by necessity. For one thing, the railway to Bagdad had not been completed. The sections were not yet linked up. For another,

Turkey was still feeling the effects alike of the Balkan and of the Italian wars.

What military advantages did Germany derive from this diversion ?

A common impression regarding the Turkish Empire is that of homogeneity. All the subjects of Turkey have often been roughly classed as Turks. But of the characteristics of the dominions under Turkish rule none was more marked than the diversity of race and language. That this was the case in Europe was well known. It furnished indeed a main reason for the policy of expelling the Turk from Europe. Not less was it marked throughout Turkey-in-Asia. In Asia Minor the non-Turkish population of Armenians, Kurds, Greeks, Jews, Syrians and Arabs formed the great majority. The followers of Osman, settled for the most part in Anatolia, became the progenitors of the hardy peasantry of that region, and from the provinces bordering on the southern shores of the Black Sea the Turkish armies had always been chiefly recruited. Those provinces formed the heart of the Empire. Armenians, Greeks, and Jews continued to be unreconciled to Turkish rule on religious as well as on political grounds. The Arab opposed it on grounds of race ; the Syrian because of its exactions. Over the wild tribes of the Kurdish highlands Turkish dominion had remained shadowy, and on the farther confines of the Empire, the region of the Lower Euphrates, the western shores of the Persian Gulf, and southern Arabia the imperium of the Turk was of relatively recent date, going back no farther than the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century.

The most powerful because the most constantly operative force making for homogeneity is a sound administration and equal laws. Where there is a diversity of peoples it promotes intercourse, creates common interests, and leads in time to the assimilation of the ruling race with the subject populations. The result is the gradual evolution of stability and strength. Turkish administration, however, instead of favouring

the fusion of nationalities, opposed the process as the easier means of maintaining supremacy. From the subject populations the Turk remained distinct—an official and military caste. As a peasant cultivator he was simple and frugal; as an official he had proved himself venal and greedy. His dominion was steadily ruinous.

Looking at these facts, the advantages immediately derived by Germany from the diversion were first the closing of the Black Sea route; secondly, the obligation thrown upon Russia of dispatching a strong force into the Caucasus, and thirdly the necessity imposed upon Great Britain of taking steps for the effectual defence of Egypt. To that extent Germany added to the embarrassments of her antagonists. And she obtained the command of a force of first-class fighting men which might be raised to a strength of 750,000. In the fifteen divisions of the Turkish regular army filled up to establishment strength there were 300,000 of all arms. Steps were taken at once to embody a further ten divisions. Later the number of divisions was raised to fifty, but on a reduced footing, giving a nominal total of three-quarters of a million men. At no time, however, in the course of the War was a force of that strength at one and the same time in the field. Allowing for the supply of losses as they were incurred, it is doubtful if the figure at any time went beyond half a million.

But if these were the advantages there were also disadvantages.

The first was equipment. Much towards the equipment of the Turkish regular army had already been done, especially in the matter of engineering supplies and artillery. After the Balkan War the Turkish Army had practically to be entirely refitted with guns, and according to the ideas then favoured in Germany a fairly high proportion were heavy pieces. With the *matériel* turned out at Essen and Skoda, came German officers, instructors, and artificers of various sorts. The outfit was paid for in Turkish bonds accepted as sufficient security, but on advantageous terms, by the Deutsche

Bank. Obligations incurred by the Turkish Government under that head had apparently reached a total of eight hundred millions of marks. On the outbreak of war it became necessary over and above to equip the Turkish Army on a maximum footing, and to continue the supply. In the earlier part of the struggle that presented no particular difficulty. Germany and Austria combined had then a superiority in the output of war material. But as time went on the drag arising from the campaigns in Turkey became serious.

Another disadvantage was cost. Not only was this a very expensive war in Turkey; it was equal in scale to that of 1870–71, and times over more prolonged, and it had not been provided for in the plans and estimates before August, 1914. Once more the drag, not greatly felt at first, became towards the end increasingly grave.

A third disadvantage was that the burden of losses in men fell chiefly upon the peasant population of Anatolia and, sweeping away the able-bodied males between the ages of sixteen and fifty, contributed towards the final ruin of the Turkish Empire by drying up the source of its power.

Finally, the economic margin in Turkey was narrow, an inevitable effect of Turkish administration. Repeated and severe requisitions for war purposes soon caused the margin to vanish altogether, and left the population, more particularly in Syria, exposed to famine. This again meant a crippling of the Empire's resources.

CHAPTER III

THE GERMAN-TURKISH OFFENSIVE

Military purpose of German intrigues in India—Their failure—A threefold plan of operations; winter campaign in the Caucasus; advance to Basra; expedition against Egypt—Scheme of Turkish mobilisation—weak points of Turks Asiatic Empire—Disasters of the Turkish Caucasus Campaign—Advance on Basra forestalled by the British—Opening of the campaign in Mesopotamia—Its conditions—Turkish reverses—British take Mazera and Kurna—The occupation of Lower Mesopotamia—First attack against Egypt—Effects of British administration—Declaration of a Protectorate—The Turkish concentration at Damascus—Character and strength of the German-Turkish Expedition—Difficulties of the Sinai advance—Battle of Ismailia.

In September, 1914, the British Government in India knew that agitators, agents of the Turkish Government, were among the tribes of the North-west frontier preaching a Jehad, or Holy War. Occupied by affairs in Turkey, the German Government had, to begin with, given but a secondary attention to the stirring up of discontent with British rule in the Indian peninsula. While the motive of revenge for the setback experienced in 1875 was always present, the influence of German agents, though exerted where and when opportunity offered, was covert and limited. Not until the conclusion of the Anglo-French Entente in 1904 did intrigue begin to take a more active form. It led to the Swadashi movement in Bengal. That died away; nevertheless, the hope of causing Great Britain serious preoccupation through native unrest had not been given up.

Some local troubles were caused on the north-west frontier by the appeal to Mussulman fanaticism, but

the preaching of a Jehad signally failed. Nor are the reasons for the failure far to seek. Though generally it is repugnant to the mind of a Mussulman that he and his kindred in the faith should be under the rule of infidels, the call to a Holy War must have a genuine basis. The faith must be manifestly in danger. In this instance that was not only not apparent, it was palpably at variance with the facts. The toleration, both practised and enforced, by the British raj and its consistent equality towards nationalities and creeds had created common political interests, and above all the interest in peace and public security. A rule of that kind, once rooted, is not easy to disturb, and a Mussulman is not of necessity a fool.

The chief effect, therefore, of these proceedings had been to put the British Government in India on the alert.

In the meantime, the military measures initiated at Constantinople by Enver Pasha, backed by Liman von Sandars and a Germanised Staff, found the regular Turkish Army, when war broke out, ready to take the field. It was decided to utilise this preparedness. The scheme for the Turkish offensive, characteristic of German methods, provided for a bold and swift stroke against the Russians in the Caucasus, a stroke which would cut off access to the oil-fields; for an expedition simultaneously against Egypt, and, finally, for the dispatch as speedily as possible south from Bagdad of a force which was to occupy Basra and, seizing the works and pipe line of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, deprive the British Navy of this important source of liquid fuel.

In pursuance of this scheme the Turkish regular army had been mobilised into two main bodies. The first, consisting of the 9th, 10th and 11th Corps, strengthened by reserves, was massed at Erzerum. It was further reinforced by the 1st Corps, transported by sea, before war was declared, from Constantinople to Trebizond. All these troops were entrusted to the command of Hassin Izzet Pasha. The second main body massed at

Damascus under the command of Djemal Pasha, consisted in addition to troops based on that " inspection," of the 4th Corps, sent from Adrianople; of the 12th Corps, transferred from Mosul, and of a division of reserves from Anatolia. In all there were at Damascus some 140,000 men. The total forces destined for operations in the Caucasus amounted to about 200,000. Other corps were retained at Constantinople as a provision against emergencies. Of the troops at Bagdad one division appears to have been deemed presently sufficient for the Basra enterprise. No immediate and serious opposition in that quarter was looked for.

The main difficulty which beset this plan of an offensive lay in the distances to be covered. In the case of the Caucasus the season of the year was against it, but in the cases of Mesopotamia and Egypt, favourable.

The distances, with the relative paucity of railways and the indifferent roads, revealed the true weakness of Turkey's Asiatic dominions. On the other hand, it was all important from the German point of view to exploit the effect of surprise.

So far, for example, as the Caucasus was concerned, it did not appear unreasonable to suppose that the Russians would not contemplate activities on a large scale until the spring of 1915. Quite possibly, therefore, they might be taken unawares. There is probably not an area in the world where campaigning in mid-winter is more hazardous or involves worse hardships than on the vast and rugged tableland between the Black and the Caspian Seas. Varying in height from 1,500 to 5,000 feet above sea-level, its backbone a chain of lofty peaks, this great upland is in winter swept by violent gales mostly accompanied by heavy falls of snow, which, freezing as it falls, lies many feet thick everywhere, and in the defiles and hollows forms drifts of great depth. The cold is so severe that the natives live during the winter underground, in spacious excavations accommodating both themselves, their cattle and their stores. Outside the towns the country then presents the appearance of a limitless snow-bound solitude. Nowhere is

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there a sign of life, save at rare intervals the smoke from the fires of some underground village.

North of the upland mass the level falls into a mighty hollow extending from the Caspian Sea to the Black Sea, the towering peaks of the main range of the Caucasus rising on the farther side of it, a wall of eternal snows. According to geologists, the Caspian Sea and the Black Sea once formed a united sheet of water. In this trough lies Tiflis, the capital of the Russian Caucasus, and along it runs the railway with Baku on the Caspian at one end and Batum on the Black Sea at the other. South of Tiflis there is in the Caucasus plateau a deep rift from north-east to south-west, narrowing as it thrusts into the highlands. Up this rift had been carried a branch of the railway, and on that line are first Alexandropol, next the famous rock fortress of Kars, and finally, close to the Russo-Turkish frontier and near the summit of the pass, Sarikamish, another but more modern fortress and a Russian military base. The natural and easiest way across the highlands into the Tiflis trough, or *vice versa*, is through the rift. For ages, therefore, the defile has been the site of military works. The road across it is the main and ancient trade route between Tiflis and Erzerum, but the railway ends at Sarikamish. The sixty miles between that place and Erzerum have to be covered on horseback or on foot.

It was into this wintry wilderness with no railways at their disposal that the Turks, inspired and guided by their German advisers, resolved to plunge.

The Russians had in the Caucasus under the command of General Wozonoff an army three corps strong. Within a fortnight after the declaration of war part of this Russian force began a forward movement. An advance was made from Sarikamish along the Erzerum road. Occupying the summit of the pass the Russians on November 20 crossed the frontier. It was they who after all had taken the Turks by surprise, for they met with no serious opposition until the vanguard had reached and taken Koprikeui. Further progress was then checked by the 11th Turkish Corps, pushed forward

from Erzerum to arrest them. It was necessary for the Russians to wait until their main body came up.

Possibly the Russian General suspected that, after the German manner, some stroke was afoot, and had determined to anticipate it. If so his inference was speedily confirmed. He learned that a Turkish army corps, the 10th, were executing a movement designed to attack him in flank. Frontally to force the defile, with its strong places, was to all intents impossible, but from Erzerum northwards a road runs through the hills to Olti, then, by a roundabout route leading over the Bardus pass, it is possible to descend upon Sarikamish from the north-west. It was hazardous to the last degree to attempt this remote pass in winter, but unquestionably the Turks were bent upon doing it. Meanwhile on the right of the troops moving over the Bardus pass, the 9th Turkish Corps pushed on from Hassan Kala over the mountains into the upper valley of the Araks with the manifest intention of approaching Sarikamish simultaneously from the south-west.

These three movements of the 10th, 9th and 11th Corps branched out from Erzerum like the fingers of a hand. Reaching the frontier, where they would be farthest apart, they would then converge, and close in on the Russian forces.

But the supreme Turkish adventure of this campaign, directed in fact and in person by Enver Pasha and a Headquarters Staff mainly of German officers, was represented by the march of the 1st Corps from Trebizond. The plan was for this Corps, moving south to Ardasa, to strike the valley of the Choruk, to follow that valley along the greater part of its length, more than 100 kilometres, to reach at its upper end the road from Batum, then to follow the lofty pass which zigzags across the shoulder of Mount Yalagaschamski, and finally to descend by the valley of the Kara to Ardagan. From there, assuming the Russian forces to be engaged in the defile round Sarikamish, it should be feasible to debouch upon the road and railway from Kars in the rear of that stronghold. In short, if not the whole

Russian army, at any rate a great part of it ought to be caught cooped up in the "rift," and possibly compelled to surrender.

The plan was on paper attractive. Plainly, however, those who drew it up had only a very imperfect idea of the Caucasus in winter, or of what was involved in negotiating in winter the high passes of such a region.

The long march of the 1st Corps from Trebizond was assuredly a remarkable feat of endurance. As the road along the Choruk valley is rugged, and they would have to cut their way through snowdrifts, they were compelled to discard all artillery save mountain guns. The advantage of the move was that until they approached Ardagan they would be lost to view, and should descend upon that place as a surprise. The toils of the march may be judged from the fact that it occupied the greater part of two months.

This delay proved fatal to the scheme.

Withdrawing his advanced troops, Wozonoff concentrated in the first instance against the 10th Turkish Corps, and after an obstinate battle defeated it. The action followed by an energetic pursuit, uncovered the flank of the 9th Corps, which, caught in the Upper Valley of the Araks, and its retreat cut off, was destroyed. Its commander, Ikan Pasha, and his staff surrendered.

After this the attack was directed against the 1st Corps. Those troops had reached Ardagan on January 1, but reduced in strength and severely fatigued. When assailed they fought well, for their situation was desperate, but the lack of sufficient artillery was decisive. Driven back over the mountains into the Choruk valley, they were compelled to face the weary return march broken, dispirited, and short of supplies. January is the worst part of the winter and the month of severest storms. High up in the Choruk valley one such storm overtook them. Few survived.

It now remained only to deal with the 11th Corps. Meanwhile, reinforced, its resistance during a three days' battle at Kari Arga—January 17 to 19—proved

determined, but faced by superior forces, and sustaining heavy losses, it was compelled to retire upon Erzerum.

Strictly, this part of the war does not enter within the scope of the present volume. The first campaign in the Caucasus, however, had so material an influence on the whole of the subsequent conflict in the Near East that apart from it later events can hardly be grasped in their true bearings. Enver Pasha's enterprise destroyed a large part of the Turkish first line forces.

With ports on both the Caspian Sea and the Black Sea, and a main line of railway linking them up, the Russians had much better facilities for sending troops and supplies into the Caucasus than had the Turks, and so long as communications by sea with Batum were not seriously threatened, they thus enjoyed a signal advantage. Unable seriously to threaten communications with Batum, the German-Turkish plan had been to offset the advantage by an unlooked-for move. For the moment General Wozonoff found himself in an awkward situation. His conduct, however, was marked by prudence, energy and ability, and those qualities altered the aspect of affairs.

These, nevertheless, were not the opening activities of the War. The initial thrust had come from the quarter where it was least expected—British India. In putting the Government of India on the alert the Germans had acted rashly. While they failed to shake British authority, they left it evident that an expedition to the head of the Persian Gulf was among the near probabilities. The German aim had been to make the dispatch of any armed force from India impossible. Their intrigue had an opposite effect. So far from disclosing discontent with British rule in the Peninsula, the outbreak of war brought from Indian princes and States an impressive, and as events proved a sincere, demonstration of attachment to the Imperial Power.

In all, up to the end of 1916, 290,000 men, 210,000 of them native troops, had been sent from India overseas. Part of these forces were destined for service in France, the others for service in Egypt and East Africa. In

September, 1914, Sir Edmund Barrow, military secretary at the India Office, had drawn up a memorandum urging the occupation of Basra on the three grounds that it would tend to safeguard Egypt, to impress the Arabs and to protect the Anglo-Persian Oil Installation. Upon that recommendation the 6th Division out of the troops intended for service in Europe was reserved for an expedition to the Persian Gulf. For many years the British authorities in India had had political relations with the semi-independent Arab sheiks who ruled the territories at the head of the Gulf or adjoining its western shores, and Sir Percy Cox, selected to accompany the expedition as political officer, received instructions to get into touch with the Sheiks of Koweit, Murrammah, and Najd. In view of the call for prompt action the Poonah brigade, part of the 6th Division, in the middle of October embarked under the command of Brigadier-General W. S. Delamain, as an advance force. It was to occupy Abadan, the island in the Shatt-el-Arab on which were situated the Anglo-Persian Oil Company's refineries.

Consisting of the 2nd Dorsets, the 20th Punjaub Infantry, the 10th (Wellesley) Rifles, the 117th Mahrattas and two batteries of light guns, the advance force reached Barhein, at the head of the Gulf, on October 23. The first operation was to capture the Turkish fort of Fao, at the mouth of the Shatt-el-Arab. Following a bombardment by the gunboat *Odin*, the garrison of the fort were overpowered. Having secured this post, General Delamain sailed with his flotilla up the estuary, and disembarking his troops at Saniyeh, on the Turkish shore opposite Abadan, proceeded, on November 7, to form an entrenched camp.

From Bagdad to Basra, following the course of the Tigris, the distance is 502 miles, and to follow the river in traversing this region was the only practicable course. At the very best rate of marching the Turkish troops ordered to Basra, if they advanced from Bagdad on foot could not complete the journey in much less than six weeks. With the means of river transport at their disposal the march had to be carried out in that manner,

the guns, stores, and other impedimenta accompanying the troops on tugs and barges. In summer, the sandy loam of the Mesopotamian wastes is often blown by the wind into great clouds of dust. In winter, the rainy season, however, the soil becomes an adhesive mud. It then is heavy going. Save in the beds of the Tigris and the Euphrates, no stone is found in the country. The surface is one vast alluvial deposit, for the most part as level as an inland sea, and, indeed, giving the impression as much of water as of land, an impression strengthened by the rare ridges rising out of the expanse like islands, by the equal rarity of trees, and by the far-spreading shallow lakes or swamps which fill the depressions. This state of things has resulted from the ruin of the ancient system of irrigation, traces of which, existent after long ages of neglect and decay, add to the melancholy monotony of the prospect.

There was every reason why the Turks should move to occupy Basra in force. Apart from the military damage that must result to the British from the occupation of the Anglo-Persian oil-field and the seizure of the refineries, the vilayet of Basra from below Kurna included a tract of country, not merely fertile, but populated and well tilled. Joining at Kurna, the Tigris and the Euphrates unite to form the estuary of the Shatt-el-Arab. From Basra, fifty miles below Kurna, the eastern shore of the estuary is Persian territory, the western nominally Turkish—nominally because Turkish authority on these confines of the Empire was at best uncertain and disputed. An essential feature of the German scheme, nevertheless, was command of the outlet to the Persian Gulf. Alike to establish that command and to anticipate the landing of a hostile force, troops had been sent south from Bagdad at the end of September and by what was in effect a forced march, had arrived at Basra on or about the same day that the British advance force landed at Saniyeh.

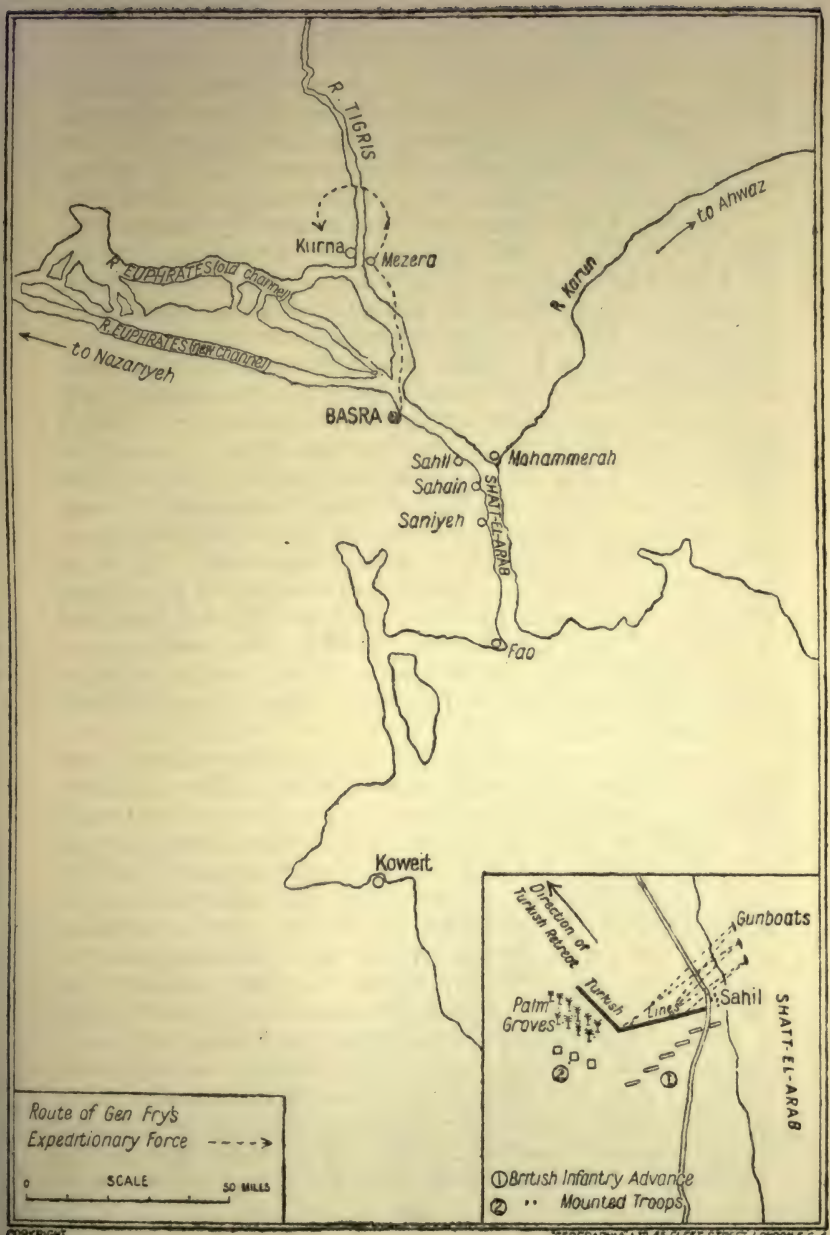
News of the British landing must have reached the Turks at Basra immediately on their arrival. No time was therefore lost in pushing down to Saniyeh a strong

reconnaissance. On November 11 the reconnaissance came within a short day's march of the British camp. The Mahrattas and Punjaubis were sent out to deal with it. In the skirmish the Turks were defeated.

Decidedly the Turks' best opportunity was to attack the British camp forthwith with all the strength at their disposal. Unfortunately for them their men were little fit for immediate campaigning. Reinforcements were sent from Basra, and proceeded to entrench at Sahain, four miles north of Saniyeh, thus cutting the route to Basra by land.

Two days later, however, on November 13, Lieut.-General Sir A. A. Barrett sailed up the Shatt-el-Arab from India and reached Saniyeh with the remaining troops of the 6th Division—the Ahmednagar Brigade, and the Belgaum Brigade. The first (Brigadier-General D. H. Dobbie) was formed of the 1st Oxford L.I., and the 103rd and 119th Mahrattas; the second (Brigadier-General C. I. Fry) of the 2nd Norfolks, the 110th Mahrattas, the 7th Rajputs and the 114th Rajputanas. With the force were the 48th Pioneers, the 3rd Sappers and Miners, and the 33rd Cavalry.

As soon as practicable after the disembarkation the Turks at Sahain were (November 15) attacked by the Poona brigade and dislodged. But on the 17th word was brought in that the main Turkish force from Basra was advancing. A general British attack was accordingly decided upon, and the whole force moved out. At Sahil, nine miles north of the British camp, the Turkish army was discovered posted with its left on the estuary, and its right, where its artillery was chiefly in position, covered by groves of date palm. In front was a bare and level plain. As it seemed advisable to throw the weight of the British attack towards the enemy's left, where the gunboats were able to assist by enfilading the hostile trenches, while holding his right, and thus to turn him off the river, and by forcing him at the same time off the Basra route imperil his retreat, the British infantry had to advance in open order across this exposed tract. They carried out the manœuvre,



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however, with dash and coolness, and this intrepidity so impressed the Turks that they broke before the British could close. The Turkish casualties chiefly suffered in the pursuit, were reckoned at 1,500 men. Those of the British force were 353, but the killed only numbered 38.

Not only was the road to Basra cleared by this action; the Turks had been disorganised. To follow up the blow, part of the British force was embarked on two river steamers, and preceded by the gunboats made for Basra by water. The rest of the troops meanwhile pressed the retreating enemy by land. Some distance below Basra an attempt had been made to block the fairway by sinking three steamers across it. A battery of Turkish guns posted to cover the barrier was rapidly put out of action and some hours' work sufficed to blow up the obstruction. On November 22, that having been done, the flotilla and advanced troops pushed on at full speed. They reached Basra early on the same day. Rumour had affirmed that the Turks had evacuated the place, and the report was found to be true. The Turks had withdrawn the day before, leaving the town to be plundered by their auxiliaries. In the course of that afternoon (November 22) the main body of the British force marched in.

Measures were taken for converting Basra into a base camp, but the difficulties were various. There were no quays for landing either men or goods, no warehouses or buildings suitable for storage. Everything had to be improvised. General Barrett had brought with him two months' supplies, and these had somehow to be accommodated. Unfortunately, the only public building in the place useful for such a purpose, the Turkish custom house, had been burned down. So far, however, as lack of material permitted the camp was put into order.

Part of the Turkish forces having retired upon Kurna, Lieut.-Colonel Frazer was on December 3 sent up the estuary with a detachment of the Norfolks and Indian troops, accompanied by three gunboats, two armed launches, and an armed yacht. Going on ahead while Frazer put his men ashore four miles below Kurna, on

the western bank of the Tigris, the gunboats found the enemy strongly posted at Mezera, on the east bank, where Turkish batteries covered the navigable channel. In this part of its course, though the Tigris is 300 yards wide, it is on the whole shallow. The deeper channel winds between the shoals from bank to bank in acute turns, and it being impossible to keep in midstream, apart from the current which runs at four knots per hour, navigation is difficult and dangerous. Shore batteries, therefore, formed a formidable obstruction.

On approaching Kurna, Lieut.-Colonel Frazer soon learned that the place was held in a strength quite beyond his small force to confront. He accordingly withdrew and sent for reinforcements.

These, the rest of the Norfolks and the 7th Rajputs, under the command of General Fry, arrived on December 7. An attack upon Mezera was then resolved upon, and the Turks were driven out.

The capture of Mezera enabled the British, if they chose, to cross the river six miles above Kurna, and the plan of crossing at that point was adopted. Though it was a dangerous service, men of the Sappers and Miners Corps gallantly swam the stream, carrying a line attached to a hempen cable which was then hauled across, and with a flat-bottomed dhow which had been towed up, formed a ferry.

In the meanwhile, the Turks in Kurna had sat tight, evidently uncertain as to the direction of the main attack, and probably thinking the crossing of the river higher up a ruse. Since the town is close to the point where the Tigris and Euphrates join, the appearance of the main British force to the north and west completely cut them off. The British troops at once began to throw up entrenchments. Seeing this, a party of Turkish officers came out under a white flag to parley. General Fry insisted on unconditional surrender, and there was nothing for it but to comply. Next day (December 9) the garrison of 1,200 men laid down their arms. The equipment taken included nine guns.

So far the British blows had proved to be swift.

The hold on the estuary and the course of the Tigris as far as Kurna, 120 miles from the sea, was secure. But the organisation difficulties with which the British commander found himself confronted at Basra in establishing a basis for future operations gave the enemy an opening. Notwithstanding the loss of Kurna and Mezera, a Turkish force advanced to the Karun, the river which flows into the Shatt-el-Arab from the east. The pipe line from the oil-fields is carried along the southern bank of this stream. Evidently these enemy troops were the reinforcements whose destination had been Kurna. Finding that place already lost they had struck east towards Ahwaz, where, as part of the plan for patrolling the pipe line, the British had established a post. In the face of overwhelming numbers the post had to withdraw, and a small expeditionary force sent up to recover the position found the Turks too strong to be dislodged.

As the Turks were also at Nasariyeh on the Euphrates, 68 miles west of Kurna, General Barrett found that to meet all the demands upon his division forthwith would have involved its dispersal over a wide extent of country. Already the force had been reduced by the placing of garrisons at Koweit, Mezera and Kurna, and by the pipe line patrol. Further dispersal would, in the circumstances, have been highly imprudent. A fourth brigade was on its way from India, and a fifth was to follow, but until the arrival of these troops, it was necessary for the General to cut his coat according to his cloth. In the region occupied, a division of troops to go round had to be carefully handled. He had no alternative in the interval save to mark time.

Nevertheless, looking at the situation broadly, the Turkish project regarding Basra had failed. Not merely had the British got in first, but with their sea communication it was clear they could not be ejected unless by an effort which geographical conditions and Turkish resources alike put out of the question.

How, meanwhile, had fortune gone with the expedition against Egypt ? The main reliance in that instance had

been on revolt. At the head of the intrigue against British authority was the Khedive, Abbas Hilmi. He had been in regular correspondence with Constantinople and Berlin, and it seemingly was not doubted either by the Germans or by the Turks that his influence would render the so-called Nationalist movement formidable. A plot had been set on foot for undermining the fidelity of the Egyptian army, and assurances given that on the first appearance of a Turkish force on the frontier the Egyptian troops might be depended upon to rise against the British occupation. In November, 1914, on the declaration of war with Turkey, Abbas fled to Italy, then neutral. Later, he made his way to Vienna, where he was received with every outward mark of respect, and from Vienna travelled through Rumania to Constantinople.

In Egypt, however, it speedily became apparent that thirty-eight years of British administration had wrought a profound change. Abbas was deposed, the country declared a British protectorate, and Prince Hussein Kamel, second and favourite son of Ismail Pasha, raised to the throne with the title of Sultan. Distinguished by his public spirit, and his consistent concern in improvements, more especially those relating to agriculture, the new Sultan had had experience of public affairs as a Minister. These changes afforded a test of British authority on the one hand and of the influence of the so-called Nationalist movement on the other. The movement showed itself factitious and hollow. Not even those who had been paid to advocate it under the guise of independence showed themselves prepared for a return to Turkish domination. The moment advocacy became dangerous, and profits from it ceased, the agitation collapsed.

Apart from that, the inflow of troops from India and the appearance in Egypt for the first time of the magnificent corps from Australia and New Zealand convinced even the most fanatical that to pit the Egyptian army against such forces was the idlest of imaginings. It would have been the idlest of imaginings

had the Egyptian army been infected with "Nationalist" sentiment, and the fellahin of a like mind. Both the army and the peasant cultivators, however, were in the enjoyment of conditions better than had ever been known—better than their less fortunate fathers had ever dreamed of. To them the movement for alliance with the Turks made no appeal. The appeal had been addressed to their religious feelings, but their religious feelings had been respected and the appeal ran counter to their everyday perceptions and to their common sense.

Briefly, the idea of the state of affairs in Egypt entertained at Berlin and Constantinople had no foundation in fact.

Since, however, Egypt was the greatest of the prizes the new *régime* at Constantinople had set out to gain, and since the *régime* had to stand by success or fall by failure, belief in the certainty of a revolt in Egypt acted as a spur, and so acted though the means were, sanely weighed, utterly insufficient. The first necessity for any successful invasion of Egypt is sea power. Apart from sea power there is no access save across Sinai, a hundred and more miles of stony and waterless desert divided from an equally arid mass of mountains on the south by a tract of waterless sand. The region is rainless. Not a cloud is ever seen in the burning sky. With the exception of the dry and stunted scrub in the hollows of the southern mountains, Sinai is dead; cursed by an everlasting thirst; silent with the silence of eternal death.

Yet it was across this tract that the Germans had persuaded the Turks that their military science would enable them without command of the coast to transport a modern army with the machinery of modern war. In part the feat was to be facilitated by the laying down of a light railway.

Sober-minded men might well have had their misgivings, and for that reason probably Djemal Pasha had been picked out for the Damascus command. More than any other of the Young Turk party he was noted for his Anglophobia.

The concentration at Damascus was intended, however, not only to supply troops for an expedition against Egypt, but to guard against a possible descent upon the coast of Syria, and against malcontents.

No time was lost in launching the Egyptian part of the enterprise. Reports were spread that the attempt was to be made on a large scale—by three or more divisions of troops. All who knew the difficulties accepted the reports with reserve. It is possible enough that Djemal Pasha, whose military abilities as disclosed in the Balkan War were not high, believed a strong force could be sent as far as the Suez Canal, and it is equally possible that the chief of his staff, a German, von Kressenstein, thought as he did. Certainly the preparations at Gaza pointed to big things. But evidently when practical details were gone into these larger designs had to be given up. The great problem, of course, was that of water. From Gaza by way of El Arish to Kantara on the Suez Canal is 120 miles. Assuming success, at least twelve days' supply of water would have to be carried both for the men and for the transport animals and cavalry mounts. In addition to the usual skins used for the purpose in the East, a large consignment of kerosine and petrol tins had been collected, and the intention was to carry them full, and employ those empty on arrival to buoy up rafts and boats on which the canal was to be crossed. On its face it looked a brilliant idea, and a cheap one besides —always a recommendation. But even this would only be practicable by moving forward in stages and establishing depots. And though failure was not counted upon, looking at the imagined imminent revolt in Egypt, still there was the possibility, and it had to be provided for.

The preparations had been in train before war was declared, and the force that set out, early in November, consisted of the 8th Corps, part of the 4th, a body of skirmishers who had been employed during the Italian War in Tripoli, and were inured to desert fighting, and as a vanguard some 2,000 Bedouin irregulars. Besides

material for rafts the expedition carried with it a number of flat-bottomed boats.

The Sinai peninsula is politically part of Egypt, and the British had a small force at El Arish on the coast, but that post had been withdrawn, and the only troops east of the canal were a battalion of Gurkhas, and the Bikanir Camel Corps at Kantiyeh, the western end of the El Arish route. Advancing without opposition to El Arish and finding that place evacuated, the enemy reconnoitred the track to the west, and on November 21 his irregulars appeared before Kantiyeh and engaged in a skirmish with the Camel Corps. Nothing more was seen of him until January 28, when there was another attack or demonstration at Kantiyeh, driven off with loss by the Gurkhas. This attack was a ruse. In the interval the expedition, leaving part of the 8th Corps in garrison, at El Arish in order to guard its communications against sea attack, had been making its way south from there along the Wady-el-Arish a stony valley extending inland from the coast to the sandy tract of the interior. From that point, by following the Pilgrims' Route from Mecca, the Suez Canal may be reached near Toussoum, where the general flatness on the eastern side of the canal is broken by sand dunes.

This undulating stretch of the desert had been selected as the point of crossing. In the course of February 2 the van of the hostile column, reaching the dunes, had as stealthily as possible spread themselves along the banks of the canal. They waited until nightfall, and then entered upon preparations to launch their boats and rafts, covered by the fire of their batteries of field guns, and two heavy pieces of 6-in. calibre transported with great labour. It was still light enough, however, in that clear air for some of these movements to be observed from Toussoum, on the farther side of the canal. The British troops were on the alert, and word was sent to right and left. Lining the embankment on the west side the British wherever boats or rafts were pushed down to the water played on the embarkation places with machine-gun and rifle fire. The fusillade

was answered by the enemy, and as more men came into action on either side rapidly extended. One after another boats and rafts were sunk. Many were crowded with men.

At daybreak on February 3 the battle became general from Ismailia to the Bitter Lakes. Three British gunboats, the armed Indian transport *Hardinge*, and the French guardships *Requin* and *D'Entrecasteaux*, entered into it, and made any crossing of the canal by the enemy out of the question. His positions were heavily bombarded both by the ships and by the British batteries. During the earlier part of the day he endeavoured to stand his ground, but towards afternoon his fire slackened. The British commander, General Sir John Maxwell, suspecting that a retirement had begun, threw over a column of Indian troops at Toussoum, and a second column at Serapeum. The dunes were speedily cleared, and 600 prisoners taken. Evidently the enemy loss had been heavy, for some 400 dead were found. The hostile guns, however, had been withdrawn as soon as an assault became imminent, and extended pursuit by infantry across the loose sand of this region was judged inadvisable. On the difficulties of the march back no light was publicly thrown, but they were deterrent enough to damp the ambition of conquering Egypt.

Such is the record of the German-Turkish offensive. The war had not opened prosperously.

CHAPTER IV

GALLIPOLI: THE NAVAL OPERATIONS

The Entente Powers and Greece—Political mistakes—Reasons advanced for the Gallipoli project—Their strategical unsoundness—Theories concerning naval attack upon land defences—Preliminary bombardment of Dardanelles forts—Turkish counter-preparations—The Allied Fleet—Attack of February 19, 1915—Its results—Arrival of Naval reinforcements—The attack of February 25—Attack of March 5—Renewed on March 7 and 10—Change in the Naval Command—The attack of March 18—Its failure.

LOOKING at the events so far narrated, there were two measures which in their earlier stages might rapidly have advanced the interests of the Allies.

The first was a steady and consistent pressure upon the King of Greece to follow a constitutional course of conduct. The grounds for the application of pressure were clear. A constitutional ruler may have personal views and opinions, but a personal policy on the part of such a ruler is not constitutional. By initiating, therefore, and carrying out a personal policy Constantine was acting in defiance, not merely of the rights of the Greek people, but of the express authority of the three Guardian Powers. In their naval strength the Guardian Powers had the means at hand of applying the necessary pressure, and the French Government were in favour of applying it. Constantine, on the other hand, had a certain influence at the Court of Russia. He was first cousin alike of the Tsar and of King George V. So far as the British Court was concerned, this relationship was negligible. But at the Court of Russia, seconded by the Empress,

the influence of Constantine counted for a good deal. At all events it was enough in face of hesitancy on the part of the Russian Government to sway the British Cabinet towards a policy of circumspection. There was a reluctance to proceed to extremes if by any possibility extremes could be avoided, and of that tolerance both Constantine and the German Government took advantage without scruple. Plainly, one of the first concerns in a war with Turkey as an ally of Germany was the isolation of Turkey. But isolation of Turkey involved active support of Serbia, and active support of Serbia meant insistence upon constitutional rights in Greece.

The second measure was a military pressure both in Syria and in Mesopotamia which would have fitted in with Russian operations in the Caucasus. The weak point of Turkey was precisely the southern confines of the Empire. In entering the war the Turks and their German advisers had counted upon hostile attack from two quarters—a land attack by the Russians in the Caucasus, and a naval attack by the Western Powers from the Mediterranean. So far as the southern confines of the Empire were concerned, in place of looking for attack, they were prepared for offence.

The basis of this latter calculation was that alike in India and in Egypt the British would be too fully occupied in dealing with disaffection on the spot to attempt any movement in Asia Minor. But, as events proved, the British possessed in India the resources for a military movement against Turkey on a formidable scale. Manifestly that introduced into the situation an element which altered the balance of affairs fundamentally. In part, however, the British Cabinet were pressed by the necessities of the war in France; in part they hampered themselves in meeting those necessities by fear of a German invasion; and they allowed themselves in consequence to be impressed by the belief that in the Nearer East a defensive policy ought for the moment to have the first place, though the situation, rightly judged, called for confidence and active energy.

And that very speedily was perceived. At this time the operations set on foot in Mesopotamia were in intention merely defensive. Something more, however, was evidently necessary. It has been disclosed in the Report of the Dardanelles Commission that this very question was on November 25th discussed by the War Council. Mr. Winston Churchill, then First Lord of the Admiralty, held, it is recorded, that "the best way to defend Egypt was to make an attack upon some part of the coast of Asiatic Turkey." To that extent Mr. Churchill's view was beyond doubt the right view. But it is further recorded that "as an extension of the idea, he suggested an attack on the Gallipoli peninsula, which, if successful, would give us control of the Dardanelles, and enable us to dictate terms at Constantinople."

Unfortunately the Dardanelles project was not "an extension of the idea" at all. It was a departure from the idea. To judge fairly we have of course as far as we can to put ourselves in the place of the War Council at that date. Activity was called for. So much was common ground. But if activity was called for it was activity at an advantage, and the real point to be decided was could the Turks be attacked in Gallipoli at an advantage? Full consideration of that point could hardly have failed to elicit an answer in the negative. It has already been shown that Turkey was dragged into the war after the check to the German Expedition on the West, and the check to the Austrian offensive in the East. Turkey was dragged in partly to redress those failures. Russia had been isolated from her Western Allies except as regarded the routes through Archangel and Vladivostock; the strength of Turkey had been added to the hostile Confederation. On both these grounds, setting aside their initial plans, the Germans were already contemplating a concentration against Russia, and in the face of that concentration it was improbable that in the Caucasus Russia could do more than stand upon the defensive. The main weight therefore of the Turkish army could be massed to resist British activity, and if there were no British activity

could be thrown into the Caucasus. British activity then had become imperative. But for that very reason in order to relieve Russia it was the more important to engage the Turkish weight where on the one hand it would tell least, and where on the other hand British activity would tell most.

On the Gallipoli project there have been put forward two strongly opposed opinions. It has been held on the one side that the scheme was a brilliant inspiration. On the other side Mr. Churchill has been held to be personally responsible. Neither opinion can be considered justified. The scheme did not fulfil the condition of attack at an advantage. On the contrary it ignored the condition. At the same time when it was agreed to the personal responsibility of its proposer ceased. From that time it became a plan of the Government, and the responsibility for it collective.

The question of whether this project ought to be ranked as a subsidiary or a divergent operation has given rise to some discussion. On the facts its character admits of no doubt. It was divergent. In plain terms it was at that time off the main track of the war. Had the Turkish Empire been pressed from its weak side on the mainland of Asia, the south—the weak side because the land communications from Constantinople were both difficult and extended, and made an attack based upon sea command, west or east, easier than a Turkish defence—that proceeding must most materially have aided the Russian operations in the Caucasus and would have co-ordinated with them. On the other hand, to attack the Dardanelles was to attack the Turkish Empire, not at its weakest, but at its strongest point. Furthermore, the attack was launched before any serious attempt had been made to thin out the Turkish forces at that point beforehand. Thus left for the time in security where they had most cause to fear attack—on their southern confines—the Turks were free to concentrate the necessary resistance at the Dardanelles, and the Russian operations, in place of being promoted, were retarded alike by the resultant misapplication of

British strength, and by the starvation of the Mesopotamia campaign which the Dardanelles project imposed.

Among the reasons which dictated the latter enterprise was the belief that a forcing of the Dardanelles, leading to the capitulation of Constantinople, would bring about an immediate collapse of the Turkish power, or at any rate of the German *régime* in Turkey. There were next the advantages, too manifest for discussion, of re-opening the ice-free route to Russia through the Black Sea. It was an attempt, in a word, to find a short cut which would at the same time have afforded a spectacular triumph. But though that has been more than once asserted, the enterprise was not asked for by the Russian Headquarters Staff, for, as shown, to the Russians in the war with Turkey the project was of no real military assistance. Though undeniably it would have been of most material assistance on the Eastern main front had it been attended by success, was there from the outset on the plans adopted any probability of success ?

That question must be answered in the negative. As planned, the enterprise was radically unsound.

For the *closing* of the Dardanelles, and for keeping them closed if necessary, the occupation in force of the peninsula of Gallipoli would have sufficed, and that fact the Germans and Turks grasped at once and acted upon. But for the forcible *opening* of the Dardanelles it was essential, not merely to obtain naval command of the Straits, but military command of both shores, and that military command could not be obtained unless and until the Turkish army had been defeated, and decisively defeated, in the field. To hold one shore even with a naval force in the Straits would not have made the Dardanelles safe for merchant traffic, and it should have been evident that to attack the Turkish army on the peninsula of Gallipoli, close to its main base, and on the most difficult ground that the entire Turkish Empire presented, and to attack it in those circumstances with a force less than its own strength was inviting disaster. Much more should this have

been evident when in the background there lay the still larger scheme of capturing Constantinople, which assuredly would not have been taken readily.

Not merely was the Gallipoli project not fully thought out; the preparations bore the traces of haste.

Before everything this was a naval operation. Only when, by naval attack upon nodal points, the effective defence of Gallipoli by a Turkish force had been made impracticable could a military attack and occupation by British forces have become an acceptable proposition. It is now evident that the three phases of any well-planned scheme in point of method should have been: (1) naval attack upon nodal points of the defence, *not* immediate attack upon shore batteries; (2) military assault in *support* and completion of the naval bombardment of nodal points; (3) naval attack upon the Narrows defences in *conjunction* with a land attack, and for the purpose of throwing troops over to commanding points on the Asiatic shore.

If the naval attack failed the enterprise failed. It was not when the British troops were withdrawn that the project was damned; the project was in fact dead and damned when the Allied battleships retired after their futile and misconceived bombardment of the forts in the Narrows from within the Straits.

In the naval attack there were engaged altogether sixteen Allied battleships, twelve British and four French, mounting sixty-four guns equal to or greater in calibre than the heaviest ordnance on the forts. It is doubtful if on the forts or in the movable batteries supporting them there were half that number of very heavy pieces. The superiority of fire on the part of the Allied fleet was theoretically overwhelming. In addition to the mass of heavy guns the ships mounted a formidable medium and lighter armament.

The question of ships *versus* forts had given rise to some controversy. It had been contended that ships ought never to be pitted against batteries ashore, a doctrine which clearly limits the value and utility of warships. In support of that view the contention,

backed by an active school of naval opinion, had been advanced that the aim of a fort, from a platform fixed and steady, was so much more reliable than the aim from a floating platform always in movement, that a fort could more than hold its own even with guns of smaller calibre. But evidently the logical consequence of this opinion, if sound, is that a modern battleship as an engine of war has much less than the power it is supposed to have. On the other hand, naval gunnery is assumed to allow for the oscillations of the ship as a platform, to be founded on that allowance, and, if efficient, very largely to overcome it. The view referred to therefore came in truth to this, that at its best naval gunnery couldn't reach the same standard of efficiency in hits as land gunnery; is, indeed, so markedly below land gunnery that a piece of, say, 9·2 inches on land might be ranged against a piece of 15 inches at sea, if the latter were brought within range of the former. Proof of this theory from experience with modern ordnance was lacking. The proof advanced was out of date.

Such conclusions unfortunately left out of account a point of great moment—that a fort is a fixed target, while ships are, in fact, movable forts. Their very power of movement is a signal advantage. They can be grouped and re-grouped as necessary, and at ranges deemed most advisable. What land fort ever built or likely to be built could withstand the combined bombardment of sixty-four monster guns?

On November 3, 1914, there was a long range bombardment of the forts at the entrance of the Straits. It served no purpose save to put the Turks on the alert. Previously to this a large German mail steamer had got through the blockade and reached Constantinople with a cargo of marine mines and heavy shells. The incident enabled the Turks to establish a field consisting of five lines of mines, and to guard the field they made use of an old warship, *Messoudieh*. On December 13, Lieut. Holbrook in command of a submarine, passed up the Straits beneath the minefield and torpedoed the guardship. The feat was brilliant, and Lieut. Holbrook

was rewarded with the Victoria Cross, but up to this time, from the point of view of war, all the score really lay with the Turks.

And save for the attack upon *Messoudieh* there were between November 3, 1914, and the middle of February, 1915, no further offensive naval operations except a seizure of the island of Tenedos.

During this interval of three and a half months a delay, largely due to discussion of the Dardanelles project and preparations, the Germans and Turks were hard at work re-fortifying both Gallipoli and the Straits. The British Government had entered on a war with Turkey without definite ideas of how such a war was to be carried on. In the blank the Dardanelles scheme had been pushed to the front. Both naval and military men had doubts, but do not seem to have insisted upon them.

At length, however, a squadron of older battleships had been formed for the purpose, and dispatched to the Mediterranean. They were *Inflexible*, *Agamemnon*, *Cornwallis*, *Vengeance* and *Triumph*. In the Mediterranean the squadron was joined by the pre-Dreadnought French ships *Bouvet*, *Suffren* and *Gaulois*. The eight mounted together thirty 12-in. guns. But if there was substance in the view that ships ought not to be employed against forts, this armament against the reinforced enemy works was palpably inadequate. *Triumph's* four heavy guns were only 10-in. The British squadron was under the command of Vice-Admiral S. Carden; the French contingent under the command of Rear-Admiral Guepratte.

On February 19, at eight in the morning, the bombardment of the forts at the entrance of the Dardanelles opened. There were four of these works: on the European side that at Cape Helles, facing the Ægean and the batteries of Sedd-el-Bahr facing the Straits; on the Asiatic side the fort on the Kum Kale promontory, and the newer fort at Orkanieh, fronting the open sea. The forts mounted no armament equal to the 12-in. guns of the battleships, for during the first hours of the

attack not a shot was fired in reply. Apparently all the forts were engaged by the squadron simultaneously, two ships attacking each work and evidently all the forts were repeatedly hit. Still it remained doubtful if they had been put out of action. In the afternoon, therefore, six ships of the squadron closed in. Then at length the forts opened fire. Their shooting was poor, which may be attributed in part to the bombardment, in part to the movement of the ships. None of the ships was hit.

By sunset all the works had been silenced except Kum Kale. At nightfall the ships were withdrawn. The bombardment had involved a heavy expenditure of shell, and it seems a fair question whether the engagement of each fort in turn by the whole of the squadron might not have economised munitions and given a more complete result.

During the next few days eight more ships arrived. They were *Queen Elizabeth, Irresistible, Albion, Majestic Lord Nelson, Ocean* and *Prince George,* and the French battleship *Charlemagne. Queen Elizabeth* mounted the newest 15-in. guns. These ships completed the force intended to attack the defence works in the Narrows.

On February 25 the bombardment of the outer forts was renewed. To begin with, part was taken in it only by *Queen Elizabeth, Irresistible* and *Agamemnon.* Firing at extreme range, they were beyond the reach of the hostile ordnance, for the total heavy armament of the forts consisted of ten 10·2-in. and four 9·2-in. guns. The guns of *Queen Elizabeth* having in a ninety minutes' attack silenced the Cape Helles batteries, *Vengeance* and *Cornwallis* were ordered to run closer in and deal with the lighter armament. At the same time, *Suffren* and *Charlemagne* closed in on the Asiatic forts, and after the Cape Helles work had been dealt with, *Albion* and *Triumph* stood in against the lighter batteries of Sedd-el-Bahr. In this second bombardment *Agamemnon* had been the only ship struck by a hostile shell. Though during the week's interval the Turks had been at work repairing the fortifications and remounting the guns, or

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mounting new ones, the hits were all on one side. This time the forts had been silenced altogether, notwithstanding that the attack had been sectional only. Minesweeping in the Straits covered by the ships and the lighter craft was at once entered upon. Next day, that having been completed, the ships proceeded to attack the inner fortifications.

The entrance to the Straits between Cape Helles and Kum Kale is not more than two and a half miles wide, but, within, the Asiatic shore sweeps away in the crescent known as Eren Keui Bay, and the channel expands to a breadth of nearly five miles. Then the opposite shores gradually approach until at the end of this outer section, the entrance to the Narrows, nine miles from Kum Kale, the width is rather less than one mile. The coast here on both sides consists of bold bluffs, Kilid Bahr on the European, and Chanak on the Asiatic shore. It was on these bluffs where there had been constructed the main fortifications. The forts at Chanak looking down the outer section of the Straits were understood to be armed with pieces of 14-in. calibre. Those on Kilid Bahr faced partly down the Straits, partly in the opposite direction so as to command the Narrows, that peculiar bend in the channel five miles in length which at its inner or northern end is marked by an outlet little wider than the access. Between the contracted inlet and the hardly less contracted outlet the Narrows expand to a breadth of more than two and a half miles.

The operations on February 26 were a reconnaissance. In advance of the main fortifications were Fort Dardanos on the Gallipoli shore, and Soghandere on the Asiatic shore. *Albion*, *Vengeance*, and *Majestic* were ordered to steam in and attack these works in order to ascertain their armament. It proved to be of no more than medium weight, but the attack drew the fire of batteries hitherto unlocated, and it became evident that the mere demolition of the permanent works would not suffice. The plan of the enemy clearly was to replace the destroyed forts by earthworks which might be abandoned when knocked to pieces, and reconstructed

elsewhere. Activities of that description were afoot behind Kum Kale, and with the plain intention when the fleet entered the channel of opening an unexpected bombardment of it from the rear, and at close range. Landing parties of marines were accordingly thrown ashore to complete the destruction of the enemy's guns in the entrance works. This, covered by the guns of the battleships, they did.

Owing to northerly winds and a heavy sea, nothing further was attempted by the Allies for a week. But on March 4, the weather having moderated, *Lord Nelson* and *Ocean* went forward and once more threw landing parties ashore. This time, however, the Turks, realising the damaging character of the manœuvre, were prepared to resist in force. The landing party at Kum Kale, after a hot fight against superior numbers, were driven back to their boats with a loss of 47 killed, wounded and missing.

Next day, March 5, the first attack began on the main fortification. It was directed against the forts at Kilid Bahr. One of them was blown up, apparently by a shell firing the magazine.

On March 6 the bombardment was resumed within the channel by *Vengeance*, *Albion*, *Prince George*, *Majestic* and *Suffren*. Neglecting the main fortifications, these ships dealt with Dardanos, Soghandere, and batteries along the shores of the outer Straits. The main fortifications were coincidentally attacked by *Queen Elizabeth*, *Ocean* and *Agamemnon* from the Gulf of Saros. From the farther side of Gallipoli they threw their shells across the peninsula on to the works at Chanak, which were well within range. One object was to prevent those forts from firing on the ships operating in the channel.

The Turks replied to this bombardment, not only from the forts, but with high angle fire from heavy howitzers posted on the heights of the Gallipoli peninsula.

On March 7 the four French battleships of the fleet steamed into the Straits and renewed the attack on Dardanos, and the works there were silenced. At the

same time, *Lord Nelson* and *Agamemnon* engaged batteries re-established at the outer entrance on both sides. Chanak took part in the defence. On the previous day the works there appeared to have been seriously damaged, and the fire of the batteries, first becoming irregular, had finally ceased. But it was now evident that all the guns had not been put out of action.

During the next two days nothing was done, but on March 10 there was both a bombardment of enemy batteries which in the interval had for a third time been put into position at Cape Helles and Kum Kale, and a bombardment from the Gulf of Saros of the Bulair lines. On March 11 the batteries at the outer entrance of the Straits had once more been silenced.

Again there was an interval of inactivity. It arose chiefly from a change in the command. Admiral Carden, obliged to retire on account of ill-health, was succeeded by Vice-Admiral J. M. de Robeck. It was under that officer that the attack was continued on March 18.

The weather was favourable—the sea smooth, the wind light, and visibility good. Admiral de Robeck decided upon an attack from within the channel.

The fleet was formed into three squadrons: the first consisting of *Queen Elizabeth*, *Prince George*, *Lord Nelson*, *Inflexible*, *Agamemnon*, and *Triumph*; the second of the French ships, *Suffren*, *Bouvet*, *Gaulois* and *Charlemagne*; the third of *Albion*, *Ocean*, *Vengeance*, *Swiftsure*, *Irresistible* and *Majestic*.

The plan was to attack the main fortifications of the Narrows. After the forts had been disabled by the heavy guns of the leading formation, the second squadron, closing in, was to attack at short range. The rear formation, supporting the second, was to finish off the demolition of the defences.

To begin with, the attack went well, and rarely has there been a spectacle more grandiose. The ordered movement of the ships; the detonations of the heavy guns; the fall of shell upon the works; and the columns of spray cast up by enemy missiles as they struck the

water, added to the rolling thunders of the battle, gave an awesome impression of energy. The powerful ordnance of the leading ships firing at visible targets, and at a range not exceeding eight miles, which was rapidly shortened to five, reduced the fire of the defences to irregularity and then to feebleness. In these circumstances the second squadron of French ships ran in, and as far as could be judged the manœuvre was effective. The forts on both sides made no reply.

It was now deemed advisable that the third squadron should advance. Confidence seemed well-founded. But in those narrow waters, and with a current in the Straits averaging four knots per hour, the retirement of the second squadron to make way for the third was a movement that called for care. It was impossible to carry it out save at reduced speed. While the movement was in progress all the still serviceable ordnance on the defences re-opened. This counter-attack, largely made with lighter ordnance, did no great material damage. Nor was it upon their guns that the defenders relied. In weight of fire they were outmatched. The reliance was upon floating mines. The channel, crowded with ships having the smallest room in which to manœuvre, was a conjuncture plainly favourable for launching and sending down with the current mines enough to make the whole of the waters dangerous. *Bouvet* encountered one of these deadly obstacles, drifted into Eren Keui Bay and sank with a loss of some 600 men. *Irresistible* was struck by another and fell out of the line with a heavy list. Despite the fire of the forts, most of her crew were before she foundered got off by the torpedo craft, an act of cool intrepidity in accord with the traditions of the Navy. Meanwhile *Ocean* had also been mined, and foundered rapidly, though most of her crew also were either taken off or picked up. After these losses, and in view of the dangers of the Channel, the fleet was withdrawn. The attempt to force the Straits was not renewed. The attempt had been premature.

CHAPTER V

GALLIPOLI : THE LANDING

Effects of the Naval failure—Arrival of General Sir Ian Hamilton—His decision endorsed—His plans—Incomplete reconnaissance—The project primarily naval—General Hamilton's difficulties—Hasty dispatch of the British troops—The dispositions for landing round the "Southern toe"—Their defects—Casson's landing at Eski Hissarlik Point—Koe's success at Y Beach—Its tactical importance—Loss of the Y Beach position—An opportunity missed—The landings at X, V and W Beaches—Faults of the operations—Attack of the Royal Fusiliers on Tekke Burnu—The "Lancashire Landing"—Tekke Burnu taken—The struggle at V Beach—A costly scheme—Landing of the Anzacs at Kaba Tepe—Its success.

EITHER, after the events of March 18, there should have been a renewal of the naval attack on effective lines, or the Gallipoli project should have been given up. Unfortunately, the contrary course was resolved upon. Not merely had the true causes of the naval failure escaped notice ; the fact was overlooked that a preliminary naval success alone could render military co-operation advisable.

General Sir Ian Hamilton, who had been appointed to the command of the military part of the expedition leaving London with his Staff on March 13, and travelling by way of Marseilles, had reached the base at Tenedos on March 17. The naval attack by the entire fleet had been fixed for the next day. The General was a spectator of it. Previously he had been informed of the course of operations up to that time by Admirals de Robeck and Guepratte, and had conferred with General d'Amade, commanding the French military contingent.

After the attack he cabled to London his "reluctant deduction" that the whole of the troops under his command would be required to enable the fleet effectively to force the Dardanelles.

This decision the British Cabinet accepted.

To begin with, and before sending his cablegram, General Hamilton had to satisfy himself that the landing of a large force on the peninsula of Gallipoli was practicable. With that object in view, he sailed along its outward shores. His conclusion was that a landing was feasible at the extreme southern point.

Seen from the sea the peninsula appears to rise abruptly out of the blue waters of the Ægean, which is of great depth. The shores of Gallipoli are bluffs, not, it is true, of imposing height, but steep, and only broken here and there by ravines marking the beds of watercourses. The peninsula, in fact, is a tableland. Though it is fifty-two miles in extreme length, and varies in breadth from three miles to twelve, presenting therefore with sinuosities more than 150 miles of shore line, the places apparently adapted to landing troops are only a limited number of small coves, all commanded from adjacent bluffs. The one exception of any consequence is Suvla Bay, on the western side. The shore here is flat, and just beyond it is a small extent of plain, surrounding a salt marsh. General Hamilton at the time, however, rejected the idea of a landing at Suvla because both from either side and from inland the plain is overlooked by hills.

Of the seemingly feasible landing places, General Hamilton picked out six as probably suitable, all at or near the extreme southern point of the peninsula. Two faced the Straits; the others the open sea. The contemplated landings in the Straits were a small beach at the east end of Morto Bay and adjacent to Eski Hissarlik Point, and a stretch of sandy beach, 300 yards wide, just east of Sedd-el-Bahr. Overlooking the beach last named was a semicircle of rising ground. Morto Bay extended between the two points. Facing the sea it appeared practicable to land

troops at a small sandy bay between Helles Burnu and Tekke Burnu; at a break in the cliffs half a mile farther to the north and on the other side of Tekke Burnu; at the mouth of a stream indenting the cliffs yet another two miles to the north; at a gully again a mile and a half farther on, and overlooked by steep bluffs overgrown with scrub; and finally besides these points, at the break now known as Anzac Cove, ten miles up the coast in the direction of Suvla.

As to the proposed landing places within the Straits, the disadvantage was that they could be commanded by the enemy's fire from the Asiatic shore. The others, General Hamilton perceived, had already been fortified. Trenches and lines of wire entanglement were plainly to be seen from on board ship, and through a glass he made out what appeared to be gun emplacements and infantry redoubts. But as he afterwards related in his despatch dealing with the landing operations, " of the full extent of these defences, and of the forces available to man them, there was no possibility of judging except by practical test."

It can hardly be said that such a reconnaissance was conclusive or satisfactory. General Hamilton evidently felt it was not. Two presumptions, however, were even at this time sufficiently clear; first that the enemy expected a land attack in force, as his preparations showed, and next that he had available and at hand a force in his opinion strong enough to repel such an attack. No other conclusion could in the circumstances be justified, and the more so since no attempt at a diversion of the enemy strength had been made. The General's judgment seems to have been that his own covering forces on landing would forthwith have to face the resistance of some 34,000 Turkish troops backed by 100 guns. This was an under estimate, more especially as regards artillery. The enemy had, in fact, taken advantage of successive delays to establish on the peninsula a mass of heavy guns, and instead of 100 pieces he had more nearly three times that number. Moreover, he had hurried the transport and emplacement

of this artillery, well knowing that bombardment by the Allied fleet in support of the land attack would render such work dangerous and difficult.

Why, in the meantime, was there no bombardment by the fleet of Maidos and Chanak and other nodal points, seeing that with the naval guns it was practicable from the Gulf of Saros, and seeing that it must have hampered, not merely the transport of hostile guns and munitions, but of supplies of all sorts, and of troops, and why was there in the meantime no such bombardment of the town of Gallipoli, and of the main road along the peninsula from north to south ? The fact that this was not done, or at all events not effectually done, appears to be proof that, whether at home or on the spot, and even at this early stage, the error was committed of looking upon these operations as having become primarily military with the fleet as a support.

It is but just to point out that General Hamilton was placed in a difficulty which he was well warranted in saying had no precedent in military history, and unhappily it was a difficulty over which he had no control. There was a lack of unified authority ; no commander invested with power over the whole proceedings as an amphibious undertaking. The Navy is in British tradition the senior Service, and it is at variance with that tradition to place an Admiral under the orders of a General. There is no need to infer that the two officers, Vice-Admiral de Robeck and General Hamilton, did not work cordially together. They did. But was that enough ?

Difficult in any case, and there is no more risky operation in war, the landing was thus handicapped by insufficient reconnaissance ; by lack of necessary information ; but most of all by failure to check the enemy's preparations. Sir Ian Hamilton proposed to get out of the difficulty by throwing his troops ashore *en masse*, and as far as possible suddenly and by surprise. This, indeed, was the only way out short of giving up the attempt.

But to do that another necessity had to be met. The

troops, sent out from England as they were ready, and with a haste which was in truth a loss of speed, had to be sorted on arrival. To do so on the Island of Mudros, already occupied by the Australian contingent, dispatched with the same haste from Egypt, proved out of the question. The transports, waiting to disbark their men, were therefore with the approval of the authorities at Home ordered from Mudros to Egypt, and the troops landed at Alexandria. Unfortunately, the necessity involved another month's delay, and that month in the enemy's preparations made all the difference. The time sufficient to take the British troops to Egypt, re-sort them and bring them back, was time enough for the Turks to transport to Gallipoli whatever reinforcements they might consider advisable. In that respect they were accepting no risks. If we, on our part, under-judged the difficulties, they did not underjudge British troops. The Germans had by this learned more than enough in France to be tempted into any such blunder. The one marvel of the matter, indeed, is that the British troops surpassed even this estimate of their prowess, and that a hostile strength calculated with certainty to drive them back into the sea did not do it. There are very few precedents in military history for a force making good its footing in the circumstances against more than its own numbers.

The British troops landed at Alexandria on March 24. It was not until April 23 that the force designed to cover the landing, the 29th Division, left Mudros for the landing beaches. Well have the 29th Division been named the "Immortal." They were to undertake a feat of arms next to impossible, and, in fact, considered by the enemy utterly impossible.

Yet these intrepid men, faced with that duty, never flinched. The leading of a forlorn hope could hardly have been more desperate. The enemy's defences had been consistently strengthened, though we had guns enough to have pounded them to powder. Preliminary bombardment—as distinguished from that covering the actual landing—seems to have been decided against on

the ground that it would disclose the points picked out for the operation. But those points could have been no secret to the enemy in any event, and bombardment might have been employed to *assist* a surprise.

Apparently another reason was that nothing was very definitely known to the fleet concerning the intended military operations until April 10, when General Hamilton with his Staff returned to Mudros from Egypt. Then committees, composed both of naval and of military officers, were formed to work out the details of the proposed landings. This working out occupied another eleven or twelve days. On April 22 the details had all been determined upon. The landing of so large a force at one time was of course a complicated proceeding.

The plan of the landing contemplated in the first place and at daybreak on April 25 throwing troops ashore simultaneously at the small beach adjacent to Eski Hissarlik Point on the eastern end of Morto Bay (S Beach) and at the mouth of the stream which, as already described, formed an indentation in the bluffs two miles to the north of Tekke Burnu (Y Beach). These landings, however, were intended to be no more than a covering for the main operation. The two points, it will be observed, were at the extremes of the line of landing places picked out as practicable. A preliminary attack at these outside points would, in the opinion of General Hamilton, have the effect at once of protecting the flanks of the main landing force, of disseminating, as he expressed it, the troops of the enemy and of interrupting the arrival of enemy reinforcements.

There is a main road running from Maidos on the Narrows, south-westward along the toe of the peninsula to Sedd-el-Bahr, its extreme promontory. This road passes just to the west of the height of Achi Baba and from it as it descends towards Sedd-el-Bahr there is observation of the seaward approaches to all the five landing places from the beach at Eski Hissarlik Point on the one side to the indentation at Gurkha bluffs (Y Beach) on the other. In the circumstances it was

expecting much to suppose that the enemy would be disconcerted by preliminary feints.

The real means of hindering the movement of the enemy's reinforcements was by naval fire to destroy Maidos and the roads and road junctions leading to and from it, as well as the light railway connecting Kalid Bahr on the Narrows with Sedd-el-Bahr. This light railway passed to the east side of Achi Baba, as the main road passed to the west. Chanak also should have been destroyed. With the enormous armament of the fleet enemy movements on any part of the peninsula south of Maidos might, it is not unreasonable to conclude, have been rendered extremely difficult and hazardous. The extreme distance across the peninsula south of Achi Baba from the Ægean to the Dardanelles is less than five miles.

The plan, however, was to preface the landings by a thirty minutes' bombardment of the defences. This was hardly adequate in any event, and more than ever inadequate if the theory of the inutility of naval attack on land defences had the justification attributed to it.

The covering force had arrived from Egypt off the Island of Tenedos on the morning of April 24. During the afternoon of that day they were transferred to the lighter warships and mine sweepers, in which it had been decided that they were to approach the shore. Each towing a number of cutters and other small boats, these ships at midnight slipped their cables, and under the escort of the third squadron of the fleet seven battleships and four cruisers, steamed towards the rendezvous at Cape Helles. General Hamilton records that the cables were slipped silently, and that the passage was made under slow steam. These were advisable precautions, but if there existed any idea that the enemy was being taken by surprise it was, as events proved, without foundation.

As timed, the rendezvous was reached just before dawn. There was no wind. The sea was as unruffled as a surface of glass. Light mists hung motionless over

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the Gallipoli bluffs. Ashore no sign of activity, or even of life.

The battleships and cruisers of the squadron, under the command of Rear-Admiral R. E. Wemyss, took up their positions and at the signal opened fire simultaneously. From Gallipoli the enemy answered with not a shot. Some batteries on the Asiatic side of the Dardanelles alone indicated that he was on the alert.

While the bombardment was in progress the troops detailed for the preliminary landings were transferred to the boats. The landing at Eski Hissarlik Point was entrusted to the South Wales Borderers, commanded by Lieut.-Colonel Casson. Here the chief obstacle proved to be the current. Two hours elapsed before the Corps were all ashore, but the landing, covered by a heavy naval fire, was effected with a loss of not more than fifty killed and wounded, and Lieut.-Colonel Casson was able to push up from the beach and, seizing some high ground close to De Totts Battery, to establish himself there.

At the Gurkha bluffs (Y Beach) the landing party consisted of the King's Own Scottish Borderers and the Plymouth (Marine) Battalion of the Royal Naval Division, the whole under the command of Lieut.-Colonel Koe. The bluffs, at this point precipitous, proved to be undefended, and it was surmised, evidently correctly, that the Turks had judged a landing here to be out of the question. But the face of the cliffs is broken by various small cracks or gullies, and up these the men from the boats swarmed in Indian file. Fortunate in finding the higher ground deserted, they were able, before being attacked, to haul up reserves of ammunition, food and water. Not more than half a mile away the Turks were lying in wait strongly entrenched round the cove where a landing *had* been anticipated. The landing at Y Beach was supported by the battleship *Goliath*.

It appears to have formed part of the plan of the British operations that the small body of troops under the command of Koe, and those thrown ashore at Eski

Hissarlik Point, should get into touch with each other. They were separated by nearly five miles of country held by strong hostile forces, and to effect a contact would have to cross and get astride of the Turks' main line of communication with Sedd-el-Bahr. Extravagant as this notion was, Koe made an attempt to carry out his instructions. Since Casson meanwhile had all he could do to beat off the attacks upon him and maintain his ground which, though isolated during that time, he did for two days, the interposition of the Turkish force which had been watching the presumed landing place near Gurkha bluffs frustrated the manœuvre. Koe was obliged to withdraw to the head of the bluffs, and to improvise defences. Time, however, had been lost, and his men were fatigued. If, having drawn away the enemy from the cove they had been watching, advantage had been taken of that circumstance to throw another force ashore at that point, the manœuvre would have served a valuable purpose. A strong position might have been established on the enemy's flank, close to Krithia, but the landing arrangements elsewhere had been so elaborated that it was not thought advisable to vary them, even though this favourable contingency had arisen.

As might have been anticipated from this beginning, the sequel was unfortunate. On the afternoon of that day (April 25) the Turks threw a strong force against Koe's position from the village of Krithia, on the south-western slope of Achi Baba, and the opportunity of supporting or reinforcing Koe's troops not having been taken, he was attacked in overwhelming strength. That afternoon the assault began, backed by a converging fire of hostile field artillery. Despite that, one attack after another was beaten off. Very little aid was rendered by the guns of the fleet. The reason assigned is that the country between the bluffs and Achi Baba forms a wide hollow. Seemingly with their flat trajectory it was thought that the naval guns to clear the bluffs must fire beyond the enemy lines. But why was not high-angle fire resorted to? It is

manifest that the enemy surmised that this tiny British force was " in the air," and he was resolved to destroy it, for the position it occupied was important—much more important than those marked out as the main landing places.

Night fell and still the fight continued. Fresh relays of Turkish troops came into action. The attacks were led by parties of bombers. In one of these attacks there was in the midst of the assaulting column a pony carrying a machine-gun. The animal was led alive across the British trenches. In the centre of the position, and in a darkness lit only by the flashes of guns and rifles, amid the roar and confusion of a hand-to-hand struggle, the machine-gun suddenly opened fire. A party of British soldiers promptly closed in with the bayonet. In a matter of seconds the machine-gun team were annihilated. With the bayonet the Turks were driven out. But they came on again, and though repulsed, brought forward fresh troops. So the fight went on throughout the night. When day broke the British still held their trenches, filled with their own and the enemy's dead and dying, and littered with all the *débris* of the battle. They held on, worn out but grim, and so terrible that the enemy had at last for the time relinquished his effort to oust them. They had been reduced, however, to half their strength. The gallant Koe himself had fallen early in the struggle from a wound that unhappily proved mortal. In the circumstances, only one of two courses was open; either to throw ashore reinforcements, or to evacuate. The first, and better, course, was unfortunately, not adopted. Nothing, therefore, remained for it but to re-embark. Four warships, *Goliath*, *Dublin*, *Amethyst* and *Sapphire*, were told off for the duty. A rearguard of the King's Own Scottish Borderers was formed to cover the withdrawal, and kept the enemy at bay while, with the help of naval beach parties, who displayed great gallantry, first the wounded, then the munitions, or what was left of them, then the stores, were passed down the steep gullies to the boats. The men followed, and last

the rearguard, fighting step by step the enemy, who now sought to gain the tops of the bluffs in order to snipe at the boats as they pulled off shore.

This episode had proved that with the peculiar formation of the bluffs along this coast—a ridge interposed between an inland depression on the one side and the sea on the other—it was in truth a safer landing where the cliffs, though perpendicular, were broken by narrow gullies affording an ascent at an angle, than to get ashore at beaches obstructed by wire entanglements and other devices, and each commanded by an arc of defences on the higher land. Where Koe's force had got ashore without a single casualty, owing to the preference of this point to the defended cove, it is evident that, the gullies secured, other troops could follow. So long as the enemy could be kept off the tops of the bluffs such troops would in landing be sheltered by the cliffs from his fire. And manifestly the enemy realised at once upon the apparition of Koe's men that here had been left a dangerous loophole; the more dangerous because it was not more than a mile from Krithia and the main road and threatened the whole defence of the southern point of the peninsula.

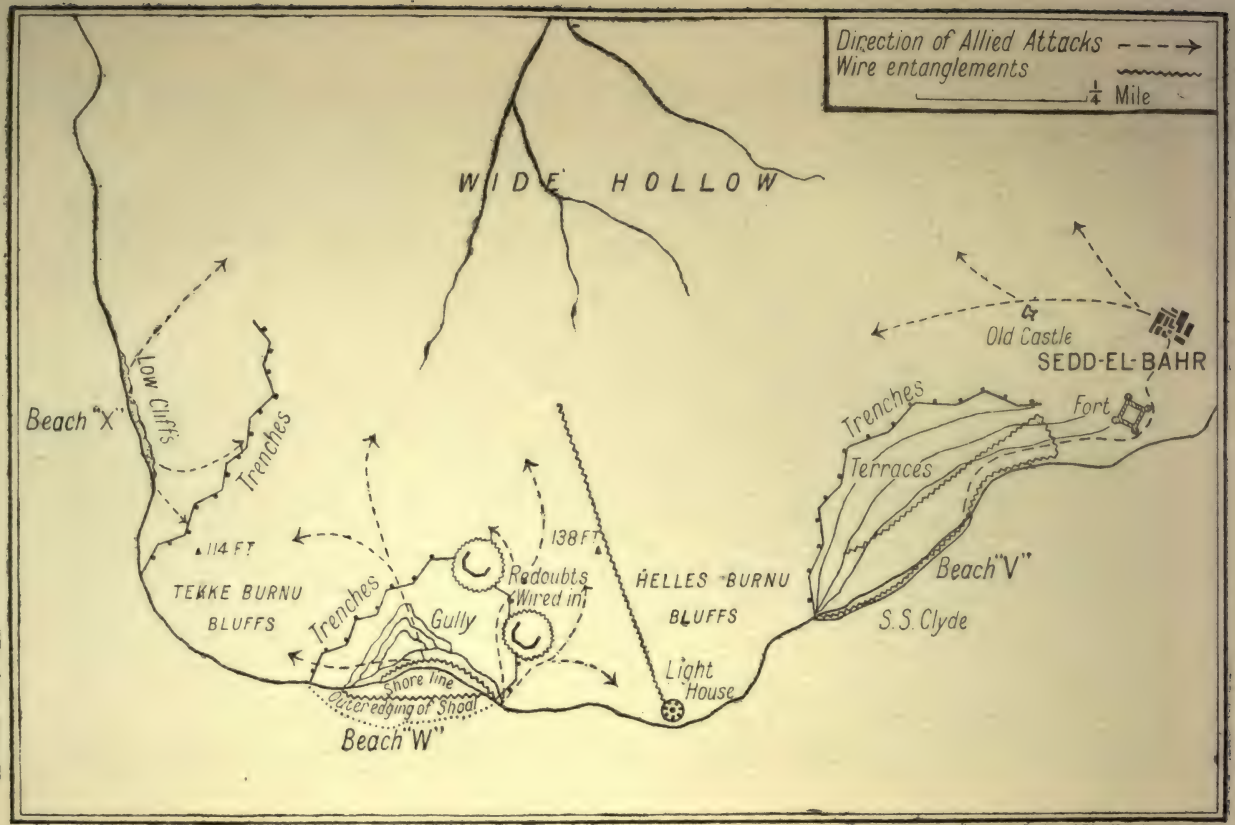
Hence the heavy sacrifices he made to repair his oversight. That very fact ought to have demonstrated the importance of holding on to such an acquisition. Koe promptly reinforced, and pressure applied at this point, what are now called the main landings might have been carried out with no more than moderate difficulty and expense. General Hamilton, commenting on this affair, observed, quite justly, that "the plucky stand made at Y Beach detained heavy columns of the enemy from arriving at the southern end of the peninsula during a very touch and go struggle." Precisely, but the heavy columns detained might have been still heavier. Fortune had offered a chance which, immersed in the execution of his plans, the General proved unprepared to seize.

This unpreparedness seemingly was related to the idea that a force landed at different, though contiguous,

points along a coast is by that disposition divided, and General Hamilton's aim was primarily to keep his troops together, and form a continuous front extending across the peninsula from coast to coast. *But a force dependent upon communications by sea though put ashore at different points is not by that fact divided even in a military sense.* Command of the sea constitutes a connecting link. Converging, yet, because of sea command, connected, attacks from different points would have been much more difficult for the enemy to resist. It would have been the less easy for him to discover from which particular quarter the next blow was to be delivered, and the result would have given greater freedom in attack because offering wider alternatives.

We can now pass on to the story of the main landings at the three beaches selected for that purpose.

At the extreme south-western point of Gallipoli there are two adjacent promontories, each presenting on its seaward face a bold bluff. One, looking towards the Ægean, is named by the Turks Tekke Burnu ; the other, just to the south-east and facing towards the entrance of the Dardanelles, Helles Burnu. Tekke Burnu is 114, Helles Burnu 138 feet high. On what may be called the outer side of Tekke Burnu, fronting the sea, is a strip of shore, X Beach, some 600 feet in length, and 30 feet in depth on the average, and behind the strip of beach a low cliff. Again, between Tekke Burnu and Helles Burnu is another strip (W Beach) rather more than 1,000 feet in length, and varying in breadth from 35 to 120 feet. The depth is greatest in the centre, for at this point there is a break in the cliffs formed by a gully and at the foot of the break a small range of sand dunes. At either end of the beach, where it narrows, the cliffs become precipitous. Once more on the farther side of Helles Burnu, facing the Dardanelles, is a third strip of shore (V Beach) also rather more than 1,000 feet in length, but narrow and the width, nearly uniform, not being more than 30 feet. This beach, a fine sand, is nearly level. Its background consists of a depression rising in grass grown and roughly semi-



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circular terraces like an amphitheatre, to a height of 100 feet. At the foot of the amphitheatre the ground falls abruptly to the level of the sand, so that, looked at from the sand, the drop of about four feet in level gives the beach the appearance of being surrounded by a low wall.

The two bluffs with the strip of beach between them and the beach on the outer side of each are the features of this part of the coast.

Such a position was naturally capable of a strong defence, but in the absence of a supporting fleet, and dependent only upon land communications, the defence had a serious weak point. Access to the position could be cut off by naval bombardment, were that means resorted to. Not only could the whole position be plastered with heavy shells, it might be effectively barraged. That mode of attack, however, does not appear to have been resorted to. Further, until it had been shown, when it came to military operations, that there were no means of turning the position, to plan a frontal assault was inadvisable. The episode at Y Beach had disclosed that there were such means. The conduct of the operations therefore had three defects. First, there was the incompleteness of the reconnaissances and information. Plans based upon incomplete information must always be more or less haphazard and as the instructions to Casson and Koe showed, there was at Headquarters no reliable idea of the enemy's strength. Next the fire of the fleet had not done all it was capable of doing. Thirdly, no measures which can be termed effective had been taken to disperse the enemy's force at the intended point of attack.

The defences were formidable. For example, along the margin of the beach on the farther side of Helles Burnu (V Beach) there was a specially strong and heavy wire entanglement, and across the amphitheatre forming the background of that beach ran another and similar entanglement, while just above and beyond it were lines of hostile trenches armed with "pom-poms." A traverse entanglement also ran near the eastern end of

the beach from the margin uphill to the wire covering the Turkish trenches. The three lines of obstruction formed, as it were, three sides of a parallelogram, and a sort of compound, which the enemy plainly intended to convert into an abattoir. As for the beach between the two headlands (W Beach), there was a barbed wire network just below the surface of the water, and a second entanglement of considerable breadth close to the water's edge. Both faces of the gully besides had been hollowed out into caves, in each of which was a machine-gun. Again, on the top of Helles Burnu were two infantry redoubts, and round each a wire entanglement 20 feet broad. A wire entanglement, too, had been carried along the top of the bluff to its seaward edge, marked by the lighthouse. The intention was to prevent any British force moving from W Beach on the one side of the bluff to V Beach on the other. These defences at the time of the attack were standing very much as they had been made.

The beach on the outer side of Tekke Burnu (X Beach) had also been fortified, but the Turks do not appear to have expected a very sharp attack at this point, probably judging that the line of low cliffs would be a sufficient obstruction. They were evidently concerned chiefly with W and V Beaches, because of the break in the cliffs in the one instance and the semicircular depression in the other.

In fact, however, the line of low cliffs at X Beach proved rather an advantage to the landing force than otherwise. The troops detailed to be thrown ashore at daybreak here were the Royal Fusiliers, and the arrangement was that they were to be towed ashore on pontoon rafts from H.M.S. *Implacable* and in two parties, each one-half the battalion, accompanied by a beach working detachment of the Royal Naval Division (Anson Battalion). To cover these landings *Implacable* stood close inshore, and with her whole armament in action swept the tops of the cliffs and the slopes and summit of Tekke Burnu. Thus supported, the troops got ashore with only slight losses. On Tekke Burnu

the Turks had entrenched themselves in positions from which they could sweep the beach end on. Consequently, the Fusiliers at once moved forward to attack the enemy's trenches on the bluff, and carried them. Strong Turkish reinforcements, however, speedily put in an appearance, and the Fusiliers were obliged to give ground. While the fighting was in progress the remainder of the 87th Brigade (two battalions) under the command of Brigadier-General Marshall, had been put ashore. In conjunction with the Fusiliers, these troops by the end of the day had cleared the slope of Tekke Burnu, and the country beyond the low cliffs to a depth of half a mile. On the lines thus established they entrenched themselves. Though wounded during the engagement General Marshall continued in command.

The beach between Tekke Burnu and Helles Burnu has been called the " Lancashire Landing " because the troops told off to lead the " forlorn hope " there were the 1st Battalion of the Lancashire Fusiliers, under the command of Major Bishop. The four companies of the battalion were distributed into thirty-two ship's cutters, and the cutters attached by fours to eight picket boats. The picket boats with their tows made for the shore in line abreast.

It was now six o'clock and full daylight, and the whole movement was plainly visible to the enemy. Nevertheless, as the picket boats headed for shore not a shot was fired. On both sides ominous silence. The warships covering the landing were standing closer in behind the tows ; the enemy reserving his fusillade.

The " Lancashire Landing " is fronted by a stretch of shallow water, and as already noted the enemy had taken advantage of that fact to put down submerged entanglements. Since, owing to the shoal, the picket boats could not approach the shore because of their draft, the tows had to be cast off and the cutters separated to pull in. It was a race for life. Twenty-four, carrying three companies of the battalion, headed straight on ; eight others, carrying the remaining company, and with them Brigadier-General Hare command-

ing the 88th Brigade, pulled towards the cliffs of Tekke Burnu. A few moments elapsed at the outside before the first among the twenty-four cutters was brought up against the underwater obstructions. Then from all sides—from the bluffs, the gully and the sand dunes—the enemy poured in a hurricane of shot. The men-of-war opened at the same time with their armament of every calibre. The wire entanglement along the beach was slashed with shell, the gully became an inferno of bursting high explosives; the sand dunes were searched and raked. Amid this tornado the Lancashire Fusiliers, working like men possessed, hacked their way through the submerged obstructions. Many fell, but the rest set foot on the sand. The broad belt of visible entanglement there had still to be negotiated. It was a feat that seemed humanly impossible. Fortunately, however, the company which had steered towards the cliffs found itself to a certain extent sheltered from the enemy's fire, and, able from this position to enfilade the beach, made it too perilous for the Turks to throw forward their forces. The hostile fire had been checked by that of the ships but not subdued.

As the manœuvre of collecting under the cliffs at one end of the beach was found to afford protection, so those of the battalion who were still afoot gathered either there, or under the cliffs at the farther end. From these positions, the companies having been reformed, they proceeded, after a breathing space, to assault the Turkish trenches. At the Tekke Burnu end there were three lines of these barring access to the height. One line, however, was carried after another. Meanwhile at this end of the beach, the obstructions having been demolished, more troops of the 88th Brigade had been landed and pushed forward. Between the lines of trenches the enemy had laid land mines, which he exploded. None of these devices checked the impetus of the assault. By ten in the forenoon the defences on the Tekke Burnu side of the gully had been cleared. A little before noon the top of Tekke Burnu was gained, and a junction effected with the troops of the 87th

Brigade, who had come up from the other side. The bluff had been won.

Under the cliffs at the farther end of the beach meanwhile the smaller body of the Lancashire Fusiliers found themselves held up by the wire entanglements and too weak to force a way through. Helles Burnu and its approaches were therefore laid under a heavy bombardment, and covered by this a battalion of the Worcesters was landed. At two in the afternoon they advanced to the assault. Here also the defence proved to have been shaken. Two hours later the hill with its redoubts was in the hands of the assaulting troops. The British line was pushed as far as the lighthouse.

Unfortunately, the attempt to land at V Beach on the farther side of Helles Burnu had not prospered, though intended to be the most important of the three disbarkations. There were told off for it the Dublin Fusiliers, the Munster Fusiliers, half a battalion of the Hampshires, the West Riding Field Company, and other details.

The arrangements for putting these forces ashore were first that three companies of the Dublins were to be towed in boats, and next that the collier, *River Clyde*, having the remainder of the troops between decks, was to stand close in shore. Through large openings cut in her sides for the purpose the men were to pass by means of gangways on to lighters which she had in tow. Having reached land and discharged their freights, the lighters were to be so placed as to form a floating bridge between the ship and the sand. Finally, when this disbarkation had been managed, the rest of the covering force was to be brought ashore in tows from the attendant warships.

Much reliance seems to have been placed on this scheme. It did not work as anticipated.

River Clyde reached the beach simultaneously with the first boats, which were delayed by the current, and as at the "Lancashire Landing," the enemy held his fire until the leading boat touched ground. Then the terraces of the amphitheatre blazed out, and the narrow strip of sand was lashed from end to end by a storm of

shot. Those of the Dublins who survived broke through the entanglement at the water's edge and dashed for the low wall or escarpment at the foot of the depression. The boats were shot to pieces.

And owing to the Dardanelles current, running at a steady four knots per hour, the placing of the lighters in position between *River Clyde* and the shore proved no easy matter. The enemy's fire was naturally concentrated largely upon the man at work, and every man of the first naval working party went down. Another party, however, at once took their places. Commander Unwin, R.N., captain of the *River Clyde*, leaving the ship, stood under a heavy fire, up to his waist in water. Eventually the work was carried through.

On its completion a company of the Munsters were mustered to dash across the extemporised gangway for shore. To gain the beach with a run was a question of seconds at most. The gangway, nevertheless, was swept by fire from right, left and centre. Most of the company were killed or wounded. Unfortunately, between the first and second lighter there was a gap which the men had to negotiate by jumping. The second lighter also did not reach the beach.

All the same, the effort was persisted in, and a second company of the Munsters mustered. As they crossed at the double, the moorings of the lighters gave way. This has been attributed entirely to the current, but it was probably also due in part to the strain of rapid movement by a mass of men, and the cutting of the moorings by shot. At all events, whilst the "bridge" was crowded with this second contingent, those on the lighter nearest the shore suddenly found themselves adrift. Every moment carried them farther into deep water, and yet to stay on the lighters, a target for the enemy's bullets, was to be shot for a certainty. Many of the men consequently, though loaded with their equipment, leaped from sheer desperation into the sea. Some contrived to reach the shore. Most, weighed down by their packs, were drowned.

Again, though shot and shell were being poured in,

the lighters were hauled into position, and refixed, and a third company of the Munsters mustered for the rush. By this time, however, the enemy had not only concentrated machine-gun and "pom-pom" fire upon the gangway, but field guns. Bursts of shrapnel fell upon the gangway like hail. The "bridge" held, but only a few out of the gallant company who attempted to pass over survived.

This "plan" for what had been presumed would be a rapid landing, formed apparently without duly taking the current into consideration, was, it should now have been evident, a failure; impracticable and murderous at the same time. There was a suspension of the attempts, but after a while they were renewed with a contemplated dash by the half-battalion of Hampshires, and the lighters were crowded with men of that corps when a second time the moorings gave way. As the lighters drifted off the troops had to lie down on them. There was nothing else for it. Even so, they were helpless targets. Among them were Brigadier-General Napier and Captain Costeker, his brigade major. Both were killed.

So far not more than one-half the intended covering force had been put ashore, and of those again half had become casualties. Further landing operations here were in the circumstances not persisted in.

Since it would be as difficult and as costly to get the men who had landed embarked again as it had proved to throw them ashore, all that could be done was to prevent the enemy from coming down on to the beach in a counter-attack. That, happily, was feasible, because of the machine-guns mounted on the deck of *River Clyde* and protected by sandbags. At nightfall there was a bright moonlight, but though on that account the enemy's fire was still formidable, *River Clyde* was enabled to discharge the troops remaining aboard. In the course of the night several attempts were made to clear the ruined fort of Sedd-el-Bahr, and the outskirts of the ruined village. They were failures. The men were fagged out.

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During that night the survivors of this disastrous operation crouched along the side of the beach under the shelter of the four-foot escarpment which was their only cover. They consisted of the remnants of the Dublins and the Munsters, and two companies of the Hampshires. The latter regiment had lost its commandant, Colonel Carrington Smith. Few, in fact, of the senior officers of any of these three corps were left, and the command was taken over for the time by Lieut.-Colonel Doughty-Wylie, and Lieut.-Colonel Williams of the Headquarters Staff, who had landed from *River Clyde*, and have been mentioned in despatches for their conspicuous contempt of danger and their efforts to keep up the spirits of the men.

The story of the disbarkations on Gallipoli is completed by that of the Anzacs. To the number of 4,000 the covering troops of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps left Mudros Bay on the afternoon of April 24. Fifteen hundred had been placed on board *Queen*, *London* and *Prince of Wales*, three of the escorting warships of the second squadron of the fleet commanded by Rear-Admiral C. F. Thursby. The remaining 2,500 were carried on transports accompanied by six destroyers. To the battleships *Triumph* and *Majestic*, and the cruiser *Bacchante* had been allotted the duty of covering the landing.

The place picked out for throwing the troops ashore was a point a mile to the north of Kaba Tepe. This part of the coast is rugged, rising abruptly out of the sea, but at the point just alluded to there is a limited stretch of beach, narrow, but judged wide enough. It was hoped that this operation might take the enemy by surprise, and that the strip of beach might not be fortified.

At about one o'clock in the morning of April 25 the flotilla, consisting of five battleships, one cruiser, eight destroyers, the *Ark Royal* seaplane ship, the *Manica*, balloon ship, and fifteen trawlers, arrived off the rendezvous. A calm night, and a smooth sea, but a bright moon. The ships kept well off the coast. At one and the same time the business began of transferring the

men on the warships to the boats and the men on the transports to the destroyers.

It was carried through silently, swiftly, and without a hitch, and by half-past two, all these preparations having been made, the squadron with the destroyers and tows stood towards land, making a speed of five knots. An hour later the tows were ordered to make for shore. The destroyers, kept back because more conspicuous objects on the water, and able owing to their speed to catch up, were sent off after a forty minutes' interval.

Whether through the set of the current or the difficulty of identifying features of the coast in the moonlight, the strip of beach on which the landing took place was not that set out in Headquarters' plans. It was another and a narrower strip. But the mistake, if it can so be called, was on the whole fortunate. The selected beach, as might have been expected, was watched; that where the landing occurred was not. Again the latter, though narrower, was on that account safer, since the cliffs offered a better shelter from hostile fire. At the northern end was a steep gully running into the hills; at the southern end, a narrow and deep ravine its sides overgrown with scrub. The interlying cliffs were high, forming, in fact, the seaward face of a bold spur looking as though it had been abruptly broken off. By advancing up the gully and the ravine it would be practicable to seize this spur, and in that case the strip would become a fairly secure landing place.

Approaching the shore in silence, and at moonset, when darkness had fallen on the sea, the men on the tows and destroyers were close in before signs of the enemy were perceived. Then in the dim light what appeared to be a battalion of Turks were seen running along the shore, with the evident object of intercepting the boats. Most probably these enemy troops, watching the beach where the landing was anticipated, had seen the ships outlined at sea against the moonlight, and observing that the tows were not after all making for the expected point, had hastily shifted their ground.

On board the boats the same silence as before; the same perfect order. Very soon the rip-rap of rifle shots rang out from beneath the cliffs; a fluctuation of flashes along the shore; the "ping" of bullets and their splash in the water. A number of men in the boats were hit; the others set their teeth. Not a shot in reply; not a word spoken; not a move on the part of any man not wounded. Bayonets were ready fixed. The numerous boats, urged at their fastest, raced towards the narrow shore almost in line. Almost in mass the men leaped from them, and in a mass and as with one impulse they charged home with the cold steel. With the sheer cliffs behind them the Turks were caught in a trap. Those of the enemy who could fled up the gully and the ravine, the Anzacs hot upon their heels. It was no longer an attack; it had become a man-hunt. After his experience on the beach the enemy made no attempt to stand. The mere appearance of these stalwart southern warriors was the signal for flight. Not only was the spur above the landing place cleared; a succession of ridges to right and left were carried at lightning speed. The rugged moorland country was swept bare of the foe from a point two miles north of the landing place to a point nearly as far to the south.

These covering troops consisted of the 3rd Brigade of the Australian Division. They were commanded by Colonel Sinclair Maclagan, D.S.O.

CHAPTER VI

GALLIPOLI: THE BATTLE FOR KRITHIA

Turkish attacks upon the Australian and New Zealand force—Strategical importance of the Kaba Tepe position—Misjudgments in the British dispositions—Adverse effects on the campaign—First move forward from the southern landing places—Errors in tactics—Turkish counter-attacks—Disadvantages of the British position—The battle of May 5—Costliness of frontal assaults—The Anzac force divided—Partial British success before Krithia—Anzacs reduced to the defensive—Review of the campaign to May 6—Its mistakes.

THE landing of the Australian covering troops was speedily followed by that of the 1st and 2nd Brigades of the same Division. By 2 o'clock the following afternoon (April 26), there had, thanks to the efficiency of the naval support, been thrown ashore a force of 12,000 men, with two batteries of Indian Mountain Artillery. These operations were carried out under the command of Lieut.-General Sir W. R. Birdwood. In every sense the selection of that able and distinguished officer for the command of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps was a fortunate one.

Naturally the Turks hastened to attack the Australian troops while the landing was in progress and before the guns and other equipment could be got ashore, and early on April 26 they had gathered in strength, arriving by forced marches during the night. The reinforcement apparently consisted at this time of a full division, mustering 20,000 men. The Australian covering troops were spaced out along a semi-circle of posts, as yet, save for the light pieces already mentioned, unsupported

by field artillery. To assist the attack upon the Australian line the enemy planted batteries to the left of the landing beach so as to enfilade boats as they approached the shore, and he opened upon the transports with heavy guns. The ships, which had stood in close to shore, were on that account obliged to steam farther out, and that of course prolonged the landing and increased its risks. So anxious, indeed, was the enemy to prevent the landing that he opened fire also across the peninsula from a naval squadron in the Narrows. The battleships of Rear-Admiral Thursby's squadron replied, and all the while the landing was in progress this long range naval duel against targets invisible to either side and directed from the air, went on. At the finish, the British ships, armed with the heavier guns, had the best of it. The Turkish squadron, which included *Goeben* and *Breslau*, was obliged to withdraw.

In spite of all, the landing arrangements worked with surprisingly little confusion, and the disbarkation went on rapidly.

On rapidity depended success, for already the battle ashore was in full blast. The Turkish attack had opened at 11 a.m. (April 26). After the Australian line had been severely searched with shrapnel, the hostile infantry advanced to the assault. The onset was against the whole line simultaneously. At the beginning of the action the Australian covering troops were outnumbered by at least eight to one. But they were practically without an exception dead shots, and the power of the rifle in the hands of skilful and fearless men proved crushing. The broken and confused Turkish units, however, were forthwith rallied by their German officers, and again thrown forward.

Meanwhile, as men were landed they were on the instant pushed forward up the gully and the ravine and took their places in the line. The effort of the enemy to barrage those exits was unavailing. He had himself now to stand a crashing bombardment from the warships, which both hampered his re-assemblies and played havoc with his batteries. His second attack, as it

proved, was directed more especially against the left or northern sector of the Australian position, held by the 3rd Brigade, though it extended to part of the posts formed by the 2nd Brigade. Here, apparently, the enemy thought he had found a weak spot. It is true that, under the weight of the assault, the 2nd Brigade began to retire; but the broken ground, thickly overgrown with scrub, while to a certain extent it favoured the Turks, also favoured prudent defensive tactics. And though the line bent, it did not break, for when the enemy followed up, coming on in depth, since his earlier general assault in shallow formation had proved a failure, he had as hot a reception as before. On his retirement the Australians followed up. For three hours the fight swayed backwards and forwards. Finally, at 3 in the afternoon, the enemy gave the effort up. The country, strewn with his dead and wounded, especially where the machine-guns had caught him in close formation, testified to his casualties. He gave it up because, though the attack had been pressed with determination, the Australian line was found steadily to be stiffening, and the newcomers as keen in the fray as the first men. In the course of the action the 9th and 10th battalions charged and spiked a battery of Krupp guns.

German stubbornness, however, was not thus to be denied. After a breathing space of two hours, during which the Australians were hard at work contriving cover, a powerful Turkish column was once more signalled as on the move. The point of attack was the same as in the afternoon. As it doubled forward the assaulting mass suffered heavily, but it was driven on by its officers, and the contending forces came to grips. Outnumbered though they were, the 3rd Brigade more than held their own. Though the struggle lasted for an hour or more amid a hellish uproar, the result really was never doubtful. The Turks, while naturally brave, found themselves shot and bayoneted out of all proportion. They first wavered, then broke, and finally ran.

Having attacked in breadth and depth and failed both ways, the enemy now once more changed his tactics. Waiting until after nightfall, he threw forward one local assault after another in order to harass and wear down the defending troops and hinder the consolidation of their lines. Finding that, with the rifle, the Turkish infantry were no match for these invaders, some German commander hit upon the idea of an onset with the bayonet without any preliminary fire. In the moonlight and through the scrub, covering themselves by the folds in the ground, a force of Turks stole up to the lines of the 8th Brigade, and then bounded forward with a yell. But the charge was not the surprise they had imagined. A blaze of fire at close quarters bowled over many. The rest were dispatched or dispersed.

Nor had the consolidation of the Australian position been materially interfered with. These Turkish troops had been pushed through the hills, certain apparently of driving the invaders into the sea. So far from being driven into the sea, the Australians were firmly established in a rough half-circle extending from a mile north of the Kaba Tepe headland on the one side to the high ground overlooking Fisherman's Hut on the other.

The difficulties, by no means light, of bringing up ammunition, water and supplies and distributing them to the men in the line were now tackled. Since yet more Turkish reinforcements had put in an appearance, and persistent and harassing assaults were continued during two more days and nights, four battalions of the Royal Naval Division were landed both as handymen, in which capacity they did yeoman service, and as reliefs in the line.

The prompt and heavy Turkish attack upon the Anzac force had a distinct significance. This part of the Gallipoli coast from the point where Koe's troops had landed northwards to Suvla Bay was, for the enemy, the sensitive sector. It was evident that, assuming the intention of the British to be in the first place the capture of Achi Baba, and the domination from that

height of the broad depression extending across the peninsula just to the north of the mountain, Achi Baba would be much more difficult to hold against a frontal combined with a flank attack than against a frontal attack alone. Indeed, it was highly problematical if a frontal attack alone could meet with success. It certainly would not be by itself a skilful operation of war. Of course the enemy's object was to reduce the operation to a frontal attack, and therefore to bring about a deadlock, and, unfortunately, General Hamilton, looking upon these flanking moves rather as a diversion than as an integral part of the main scheme, and, in fact, the most important feature of it, contributed unwittingly to this hostile design.

It was, of course, General Hamilton's objective to capture Achi Baba, and as preliminary to that to take Krithia. Already the fact has been pointed out that when Koe's force landed at Gurkha bluffs by a successful ruse, there was disclosed the possibility of seizing Krithia had reinforcements reached Koe in time. The village was distant from the bluffs not more than a mile, and the interlying country was then open. When, after the disasters attending the landing of the covering force at V Beach, the question was raised as to what ought to be done with the main body who were to have followed them, and whose immediate landing at V Beach was seen to be, in the circumstances, impracticable, two courses were suggested ; one that these troops should be sent to support Koe ; the other that they should be transferred to W Beach—the adjacent " Lancashire Landing." Unhappily, the second course was adopted, on the ground that the first " would have involved considerable delay owing to the distance." Since the distance is not more than seven miles at most, the delay could not have been serious. Not only did this error of judgment lead to the evacuation of a most important position ; it had, as will be seen in the sequel, the gravest effect on the later operations and on the campaign.

And there was another misjudgment, not, it is true, so serious in its results, but still unfortunate. This

was the landing of a part of the French Expeditionary Corps under the command of General d'Amade, who acted under the orders of General Hamilton, at Kum Kale on the Asiatic shore of the Dardanelles. The explained purpose of the move was to draw the fire of the Turkish batteries off the V and W landing places. Unquestionably it served that purpose, but it is an open question if the fire thus diverted made much difference. The landing of these French troops and their re-embarkation cost a fair total of casualties. If the French Corps had been thrown ashore near the Australians the effect would have been alike great and instantaneous, and the enemy would have been really embarrassed. The extreme southern toe of the peninsula was not a sensitive point in any sense of the word. It offered facilities for landing, and positions which, once seized, were strongly tenable, but it was not the point from which attack could be successfully developed. The facilities were too limited. Between this point and Achi Baba extended a broad depression running south to the Dardanelles, and the enemy had perfect and unobstructed observation over every movement of the invading army. General Hamilton, however, seems to have had misgivings about the division of his forces, not realising that the fleet at his back gave him freedom for bold dispositions.

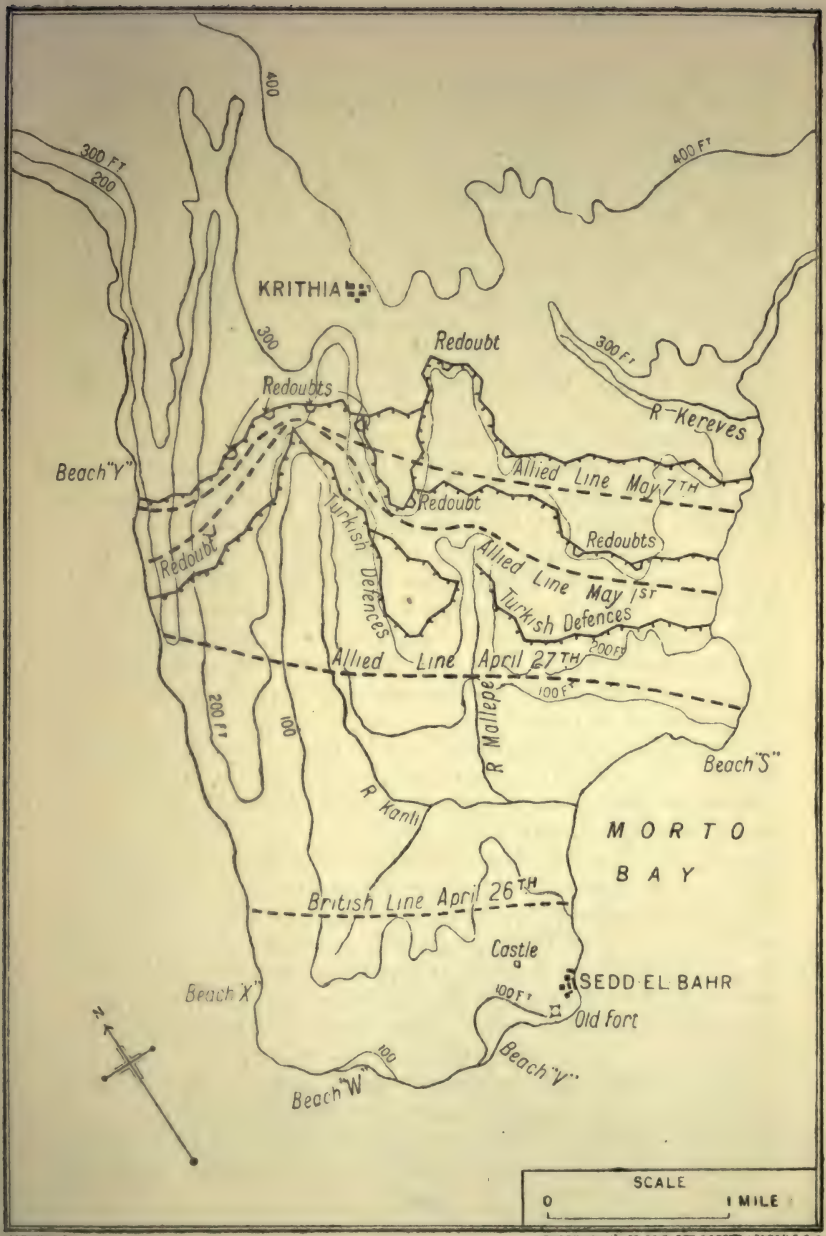
The proof of these conclusions is not merely the course afterwards taken by the operations, and their issue, but the circumstance that immediately the landing of the Australians occurred, and the effort to drive them back had failed, the first thing the enemy did was to fortify himself against them in feverish haste, and to keep his hold upon Kaba Tepe cove and upon Y Beach, surrounded both positions with a broad zone of wire entanglements.

Of the points along the coast, Kaba Tepe headland with the adjacent cove was important, for it was within striking distance of the junction of roads from Maidos, Kalid Bahr, and Krithia. That junction formed a vital spot of the defence.

As it stood immediately after the landing operations at the southern point of the peninsula, the position was that Tekke Burnu was in British hands, together with landing place "X" on the one side of it and landing place "W" on the other. Part also of Helles Burnu was in possession of General Hamilton's troops, but owing to the obstruction offered by successive lines of wire entanglements, added to the difficulties of the landing at V Beach, the enemy still held the eastern slopes of Helles Burnu together with the amphitheatre just beyond.

On the morning of April 26 one of the first necessities was to improve the position of those of the Dublins, Munsters and Hampshires who had managed to get ashore. In the course of the night, in response to a message from General Hunter-Weston, Rear-Admiral Wemyss had steamed in with the ships of his squadron, and at daybreak the enemy's positions in the amphitheatre, with points of support in the ruined fort of Sedd-el-Bahr, the ruins of Sedd-el-Bahr village, and an old castle just to the north of it, were heavily shelled. These places lay on the eastern slopes of Helles Burnu. The objective was to capture the remainder of that height.

With that in view the small force of British infantry —500 out of the original 2,000 had been killed or wounded on the previous day chiefly in the attempts to land from *River Clyde*—were led to the assault by Lieut.-Colonel Doughty-Williams and Captain Walford, R.A., Brigade-Major. They had now the support of the naval guns, and though that support alone made such an attempt practicable, were subjected on the way from the beach to the village to a galling fire. Captain Walford was among the first of those who fell. Yet despite their trying experience during the landing, and the hardly less trying night they had just passed crouched under the escarpment along the shore, these brave men did not waver. Few have been the instances in war of more unshakable intrepidity. With such troops, skilfully handled, it seemed possible to accomplish anything.



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And this valour was unquestionably not without its moral effect on the Turks, for though they offered a determined opposition, backed by machine-guns in every lurking place, they showed here little relish for fighting at close quarters. By 10 in the forenoon (April 26) the ruins of the village had been cleared. Then after the briefest pause the troops started to scale the open slope above and by 2 in the afternoon had reached and taken the old castle on the apex of the hill. Both heights, Helles Burnu as well as Tekke Burnu, being now in British hands, it became feasible to use V Beach for the landing of the French Corps.

On April 27 a general move forward was ordered. The intention was to reach a line extending across the toe of the peninsula from a point two miles to the north of Tekke Burnu to Eski Hissarlik Point, where all this while Casson had been maintaining himself. The proposed line was three miles in length. To this initial advance the enemy, engaged in withdrawing and reorganising his forces, offered no opposition. The ground gained had the effect of relieving congestion, and since it included several wells, it also, in part, eased the problem of water supply.

Considering it important, as it was, to push forward before the Turks received reinforcements, General Hamilton determined upon a second move for the morning of the 28th, though owing to the losses incurred during the several landing operations his line was not strongly held. The aim this time was to advance upon Krithia, the left brigade of the 29th Division leading. On their right were the 87th Brigade, strengthened by the *Drake* Battalion, R.N.D., then the 88th Brigade, then on the extreme right the French Corps. The 86th Brigade, now under the command of Casson, was in reserve.

To Krithia the distance was about three miles. Viewed from the British line, the ground to be covered was the *cul-de-sac* valley of the Kanli Dere, having on the left along the coast the ridge of the bluffs, and on

the right the long gradually falling southern spur of Achi Baba. At the head of the valley, and where it was narrowest, lay the village on the south-western foot of the mountain. Beyond the long spur to the right was another small *cul-de-sac* valley, that of the Kereves Dere. It was intended to seize this southern spur, so that the French Expeditionary Corps might establish itself on the line of the stream last named.

The position to be attacked offered, however, very favourable dispositions for defence. Nor had the enemy neglected to make the most of them. On the inward slopes of the coast ridge he had now thrown up defence works, and he had entrenched the Achi Baba spur, so that the Kanli valley presented the aspect of a funnel fortified along both faces. Further, a disadvantage of the attack was the lack of field artillery, not yet landed, and the difficulty, as yet, of moving ammunition supplies from the beaches.

As planned, the attack of April 28 opened at 8 in the morning. The most rapid advance was made by the 87th Brigade, which in two hours advanced two miles. That, however, was due in part to the Brigade having to move up the valley. The main opposition was on the higher ground on either side. The 88th Brigade attacking the spur had stiff fighting from the first. They pushed on, nevertheless, for three and a half hours and until their ammunition began to give out. On their right the French had coincidentally stormed the part of the spur in front of them, and the rise bordering on the Kanli Dere valley was cleared to within a mile of Krithia. Seeing, however, that the 88th Brigade had at length been brought to a halt, the 86th were ordered forward to take up the advance, and pushed on three-quarters of a mile further. Meanwhile, along the higher ground on the coast side of the valley the Inniskilling Fusiliers had likewise fought their way until close to Krithia. But the troops in the valley on their right having been held up by strong defence works, the Irishmen were ordered to withdraw into line.

This was the situation as it stood by 2 o'clock in the afternoon. An hour later the Turks launched a counter-attack. The effort was to drive the Allied troops off the part of the spur they had captured. It was a heavy counter-attack and a resolute one. The enemy came to close quarters with the bayonet, and some of the ground gained was lost, more especially on the right. This uncovered the flank of the 88th Brigade. Already tired by hours of stiff fighting, and short of ammunition into the bargain, they met, before the position could be restored, with heavy casualties. In the main, however, the ground gained was held.

Krithia had not been taken as had been hoped, and the action had not, as regards its chief objectives, proved successful. It was the expressed opinion of General Hamilton that " had it been possible to push in reinforcements of men, artillery and munitions during the day, Krithia should have fallen, and much subsequent fighting for its capture would have been avoided."

Much more evident is it now, however, that had the position taken by Koe's force at Gurkha bluffs not been evacuated, as by this time it had been, but reinforced instead, Krithia must assuredly have fallen, and at a mere trifle of the cost of this indecisive action, for the position seized by Koe lay right at the head of the Kanli valley, and since the enemy could not then have defended the coast ridge lying between this flanking force and the British main body, he would have been compelled to rely solely upon a defence of the Achi Baba spurs, where, however, he would also have found himself outflanked. It was exactly such a move that he most feared. Further, in this action itself it was unfortunate to have withdrawn the Inniskillings, seeing that they had by great dash reached once more the position which had been given up. Unhappily these mistakes proved costly.

During the next two days no movement was made by either side, beyond a readjustment of the French section of the line. The interval was made use of to land most of the British field guns and reinforcements, consisting

of two battalions of the Royal Naval Division and the 29th Division of the Indian Army.

Just before moonrise on April 30, however, the Turks launched a heavy night attack. Preceded by a hot and sudden burst of fire, their infantry came on in massed formation, three lines with no interval between man and man in any. The first line did not fire. It was found afterwards that they had been deprived of ammunition, and as the second and third lines were close behind they had no choice save to advance, relying upon the bayonet alone. This, at that stage of the war, was a characteristic German tactic. The point of the British front upon which the weight of the assault fell was that held on the spur by the 86th Brigade. Under the pressure, which was overwhelming, this part of the British line gave way. But the flank of the attacking column as it advanced became exposed, and before its dispositions could be readjusted two corps of the 88th Brigade, the 5th Royal Scots and the Essex Regiment, were thrown upon it and closed with the bayonet. In the darkness the enemy column fell into confusion, and the attack was hurled back. On the left the French Senegalese troops had been attacked by a second and similar column. There was here a swaying and savage fight. The assault was succeeded by counter-assault, and this more than once repeated.

Evidently, though in fact it accomplished nothing, his nocturnal enterprise had been expected by the enemy to yield great results. The officers of the attacking troops had been provided with red, white and green Bengal lights for the guidance of their gunners—red signalling " lengthen range " ; white, " front trenches stormed " ; green, " main position carried." And there were found on the field copies in Turkish of an army order in these terms :—

> Attack the enemy with the bayonet ; and utterly destroy him. We shall not retire one step. If we do our religion, country and nation will perish.
>
> Soldiers, the world is looking upon you. Your only hope of salvation is to bring this battle to a victorious issue, or gloriously to give up your life. VON ZOWERNSTERN.

The Turks had fought stubbornly, and their losses had been severe. At daylight, therefore, the whole Allied force was thrown forward in a counter-assault. On the left there was a marked advance, and in fact, since the French right was held, the line tended to pivot on its right. This not being in accordance with intended dispositions, the former line was fallen back upon.

In these actions, in the battle round Anzac Cove, and in the several landings the total Allied losses had been some 15,000 men. Those of the Turks, since they were also under naval gunfire, were even heavier. The confined space in which the battle for Krithia had been fought had left the ground thickly strewn, and in places even heaped, with the dead and wounded, and notwithstanding that no formal suspension of hostilities had been arranged for the purpose, enemy burial parties came out next day bearing red crescent flags. Their work of digging great common graves into which the bodies of their slain were cast was not interfered with. On the side of the Allies the proportion of killed, less than 2,000 men, had not been high, and they had already been interred with due honours. The chief difficulty had been the evacuation of the wounded, not an easy matter for either of the combatants.

A very considerable percentage of the British troops were young recruits without previous experience in action, while the Turks pitted against them were for the most part veteran regulars. But in coolness and steadiness these recruits, volunteers who had flocked to arms at the first call, had proved tactically more than a match for the foe. There had been critical moments in the action, moments in which it had seemed touch and go whether or not the struggle might end in disaster, for the enemy, powerfully reinforced, had been "out" to win at all costs, and the appeal to fanaticism had not been without effect. Always, however, at these moments, as had been proved before on many a field, the British soldier revealed his nerve in battle. The harder he was pressed the more unconquerable he showed himself. And General Hunter-Weston, who had the

conduct of the action on the spot, proved a ready and resourceful tactician. It was from no want of skill in tactics that the battle had failed to give the results expected. That failure arose from oversights in the strategical dispositions. Tactically, the marvel is that, handicapped as the Allied force was by the lack of a complete equipment and inferior in numbers, they were able to inflict upon the enemy a most costly repulse. By " all the rules " they ought to have been driven into the sea.

Though by May 1 the British line had been advanced some 5,000 yards from the main landing places, a most remarkable feat in the circumstances, the position occupied was still cramped and crowded, and since the enemy held the higher ground, and the whole of the British position, landing places included, was within the range even of his field artillery, it was clearly imperative to enlarge the area.

Hence, though his troops were tired, General Hamilton resolved on May 5 on a further attack. He now considered, however, that the force at the southern point of the peninsula was not strong enough and he did not think it prudent to risk another general engagement without a reserve. To form that reserve he constituted a new composite division, consisting of the 2nd Australian and New Zealand Brigades, withdrawn from Anzac Cove for the purpose, and of a Naval Brigade, formed of the *Drake* and *Plymouth* battalions. Another Naval Brigade, the 2nd, was assigned to reinforce the French Corps. While it had become apparently necessary, the withdrawal of part of the Anzac force to the southern toe of the peninsula cannot be considered a good move. The transfer left it out of the question for the remainder of the Anzacs to conduct the vigorous offensive which more than anything else must have aided the southern operations. Sledge-hammer blows are not necessarily skill in the art of war.

And that very speedily became evident. The object of the renewed attack on May 5 was the capture of the southern ridges of Achi Baba. Part of the southern

spur had been taken, but to the rest the enemy continued tenaciously to cling, and he had been hard at work entrenching and throwing up redoubts. The shape of this spur, dividing the valley of the Kanli Dere from that of the Kereves Dere, is somewhat peculiar. Towards its end it divides, and while one part of the rise runs south-west, the other, branching off, runs south towards the Dardanelles. Between the two lies a small depression down which flows the Mallepe Dere. The result, taking a bird's-eye view, from the south is that the bifurcated ridge presents the appearance of a very high-heeled boot. The British had seized the "heel," but the enemy still held on to the rest of the boot. The rest of the boot was now to be captured—if possible.

The attack was to be carried out by the 29th Division, stiffened by the inclusion in it of the Indian Brigade, and by the French Corps, plus the 2nd Naval Brigade. The French and the Naval men on the right were to assault the ridge between the Mallepe Dere depression and the Kereves Dere, while the 29th Division were to advance from the "heel" as a jumping-off place, and push in between the Turks and Krithia. In themselves these dispositions were sound enough, had it not been that the enemy, relieved of anxiety with regard to the Australian force which he had shown he gravely feared and had reason to fear, was able to concentrate against the British main body. And that beyond question suited him to a nicety, for on these southern ridges of Achi Baba he could fight to the greatest advantage. From his point of view it was his chosen ground.

While, consequently, the tactical plan of the action was excellent, yet, as has been proved over and over again, faults of strategy, like a bad foundation, ruined the structure. It is, of course, but just to observe that General Hamilton considered himself faced, owing to his limited forces, with a very serious embarrassment. But it is equally evident that he would in all probability have gained more by a vigorous concurrent attack on the part of the whole of the Australian and New Zealand force, launched just before these southern activities.

The assault of May 5 was led by the 29th Division. Half an hour later that by the French Corps started. The Turks contested the ground foot by foot. Positions were taken, then lost, then retaken. Others were taken and held against every effort of the enemy to recover them. It was a desperate encounter, the fighting for the most part at close quarters. Slowly, however, the Allied forces by sheer valour pushed on. In five hours of this fighting they had gone forward some 300 yards, and the enemy's advanced defences were in their hands. His main position, however, had not been reached. On the right the French had gained the summit of the ridge, but were there compelled to dig in. On the left the 88th Brigade had been held up by a plantation of fir trees converted into a nest of machine-guns. More than once they had got into this wood, but under the sweep of bullets could not remain in it.

The day was now waning, and it was plain that nothing more could be done save entrench. Night closed in on the scene of this bloody struggle, where the dead and wounded of both sides lay mingled together, and the moans of the injured formed an undertone to the sniping that, despite darkness, went on along the line on both sides. At midnight the enemy, worried by the French advance, crept up the slope from the Kereves Dere, and hurled himself on General d'Amade's troops with the bayonet. The summit of the rise had to be evacuated. At dawn, however, the French launched a counter-attack, again cleared out the Turks, and held their advantage.

Next day the battle began afresh. The British guns, having got on to the lurking places of the hostile machine-guns, knocked them about vigorously. Thanks to this searching by the artillery, the Lancashire Fusiliers, who led off, were able to make headway. The 88th Brigade then dashed forward, and this time the 5th Royal Scots cleared the firwood, dealing faithfully with the enemy snipers who had been perched aloft in the trees, some of them upon small wooden platforms. On the left of the wood, and to prevent it from being retaken

by an assault in flank, the Inniskillings successively rushed three lines of Turkish trenches. To the left of the Irishmen the Scottish Borderers also took a bite.

Affairs indeed seemed to be going well—for the enemy's taste, too well. Early in the afternoon, therefore, he came on in a counter-attack, an assault in mass with weight of numbers behind it. Once more the fir plantation changed hands. Then an enfilading fire was opened on this part of the British line from the rise on the opposite side of the Kanli Dere valley along the coast. It was decided, therefore, before daylight failed, to make a final dash, and the New Zealanders were ordered to support it. The Allied troops were tired, but they responded with spirit to this call upon them and the whole line, from extreme left to extreme right, charged forward simultaneously, and by the sheer energy, fury and momentum of the impact the Turks, resisting desperately, were borne back. Yet another 300 yards or so had been gained, and the whole of the enemy's first line passed over.

It was now the end of the second day and another night was put in on the battlefield behind hastily contrived cover. The Turks had been heavily punished. At the same time, it was palpable that they were receiving a steady stream of reinforcements. Next morning the enemy's lines and communications were vigorously bombarded by the fleet. The New Zealanders, who this time were to lead off with the 88th Brigade in support, recaptured the firwood and advanced slightly beyond it, in all some 200 yards. But no further advance proved then practicable. This arrest on the left of the line led to a corresponding arrest of the French advance on the right, for the movement had become one converging upon Krithia.

There was now, in consequence, a pause in the attack for about three hours. During that time messages were being sent to the fleet for a renewed bombardment, and arrangements made that the pounding might at once be followed by a general assault. It was half-past five in the afternoon when, after tremendous salvoes

from the ships, the move took place. Night fell while it was still in progress. Charging forward in open order along the slopes of the Kereves Dere ridge the Zouaves of the 1st French Division carried two lines of Turkish redoubts. The 2nd French Division stormed another defence work and held it against repeated efforts at recapture.

On their left the New Zealanders, in company with the 2nd Australian Brigade, who had also been thrown into the fight, pushed forwards towards Krithia yet another 400 yards. Counter-attacked by fresh Turkish troops again and again, they beat back the enemy every time. Not all his sacrifices could shake their hold. Rarely has grimmer determination been witnessed on the battlefield. The Turkish losses here were frightful, and it is certain that that alone at length put an end to the enemy's assaults, for the German officers from behind, who drove on the Turkish rank and file, seemed animated by bitter animosity. From their commanders—Brigadier-General F. E. Johnston (New Zealanders) and Brigadier-General the Hon. J. W. Clay (Australians)—downwards, not a man among the Anzacs flinched from the ordeal. Most of this fighting went on in darkness.

In the meantime, led by Major-General W. R. Marshall, the 87th Brigade had made a resolute effort to advance along the ridge bordering on the coast. The ridge was bare of cover and the enemy took care to sweep it at long range with machine-guns. Gallant though the effort was, the Brigade could only advance 200 yards. In all, during the three days' battle the front had been carried forward something like 1,000 yards.

Just previously, on May 4, the Australians at Kaba Tepe had attempted to seize that headland and the cove. With their diminished force, however, the effort could not be persisted in. An attempt on May 2 to storm a knoll overlooking the centre of the line had also not been fortunate. In tactics of the "bushranging" type the Australians were remarkably successful every time; and most probably they would have carried through both the enterprises alluded to had they been

left to do it in their own manner. In fact, their peculiar tactics, though turned down as " ragged," were the more skilful and adapted to this rugged country.

Reviewing the Gallipoli operations so far as they had gone up to May 6, there were misjudgments which have since become palpable. It was a misjudgment to employ a military force not to support naval action, but in effect to remedy a naval failure due partly to untested theory, partly to a piecemeal method. That employment of the troops amounted, in fact, to a radical change of plan, and it was a bad change. But the change in turn was aggravated by unsuitable strategical dispositions. The main attack, supported by a naval bombardment of the nodal points of the defence, should have been delivered from the Anzac flank from the first. Finally, there were misjudgments as to tactics. Even in the attacks from the southern toe the Achi Baba defences were most vulnerable to a turning movement from positions along the coastal ridge, and least vulnerable to a frontal assault. The Expeditionary Force, in short, was wrongly employed ; it was inadequate for the purpose ; and besides being inadequate its strength was frittered away.

CHAPTER VII

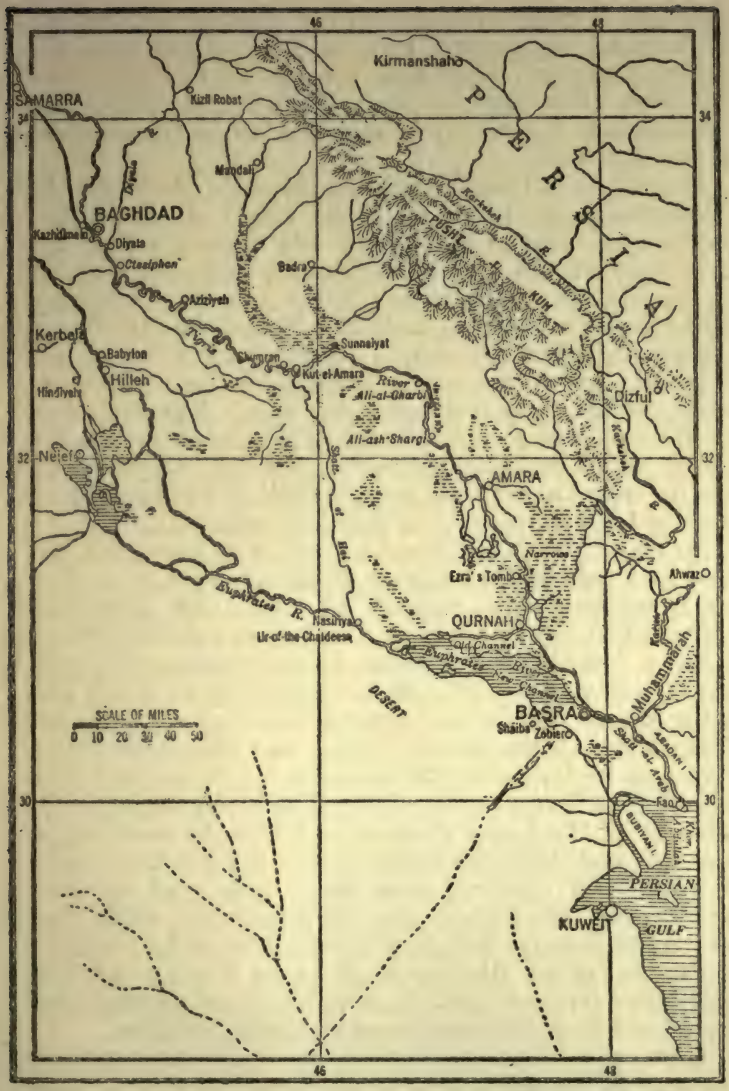
MESOPOTAMIA : THE ADVANCE TO KUT

Indecision as to policy in Mesopotamia—Advance inland decided upon —Appointment of Sir John Nixon—His demand for cavalry refused—Nixon's plans—The transport problem—Its neglect by the British Government—The expedition to Amara—"Townshend's Regatta"—Capture of Amara—Expedition to and capture of Nazariyeh—Deficiencies of medical equipment and hardships of the troops—Townshend ordered from Home to move upon Kut —Defeat of the Turks at Kut—Inception of the Bagdad project—Cautions of military authorities disregarded—Pressure upon Nixon —Information of enemy movements withheld—Townshend's inadequate force—His protest—The project rash—Advance to and Battle of Ctesiphon—Necessity for retreat.

SINCE it is clearest in narration to follow events in the order of time, we may now, leaving the story of Gallipoli, take up the relation of the Mesopotamia Campaign from the point reached in the third chapter. And it is advisable also so to proceed because the campaigns in Gallipoli and in Mesopotamia were not unrelated. The difficulties of the latter to no small extent arose from the difficulties and miscalculations of the former. But for the operations in Gallipoli, already described as off the main track of the War, a vigorous and successful offensive might from the first have been pursued in Mesopotamia, and, seconded in due course by a campaign in Syria, could hardly have failed, looking at the concurrent Russian operations in the Caucasus, gravely to have shaken German power in Turkey. An attack upon Gallipoli, assuming it to be soundly planned, might then have been undertaken with every prospect of success. It belonged to the later, not to the initial stages of the struggle.

As related, General Sir A. Barrett had occupied the country on both sides of the Shatt-el-Arab, and had pushed his advance as far as Kurna. His force—one division of the Indian Army—had not only a wide extent of territory to safeguard, but also the work of converting Basra into a suitable base. The Turks were on both sides of him—on the east at Ahwaz, threatening the oil-fields, and on the west at Nazariyeh on the Euphrates. It was by no means an easy situation, and the less easy because, notwithstanding his repulse, the enemy was known to be preparing to renew the attack. All the probabilities, if they were not promptly met, were that this renewed offensive would take the form of a converging movement, and it was plain that the way to meet it was by anticipatory blows which would defeat the several enemy forces in detail.

It was fortunate that the Turkish communications with the Lower Tigris were alike enormously long, and beyond Bagdad undeveloped, for the question of the British policy to be followed in Mesopotamia had not yet at this time been determined. Nor was it until April, 1915, that the matter was settled even tentatively. At the beginning of the year the British Government at home considered that Basra should mark the limit of the advance. And there were other impediments. In India, during the five years which elapsed between Lord Kitchener's relinquishment of his command-in-chief of the Indian Army and the outbreak of the War, there had been initiated and followed a rigid military economy. The idea that India might be called upon for aid in an imperial struggle had been definitely set aside. A re-organisation of the army was entered upon, having as its aim the limitation of military operations to possible wars on the North-west Frontier. In pursuance of that re-organisation, or more properly, reduction, the number of divisions immediately mobilisable for service in the field had been cut down from nine to seven. And the artillery arm had been cut down throughout the Service, which was left wholly unprovided with heavy guns. These economies, indeed,



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were felt in every branch, and not least in the Medical. In hospital equipment and in field ambulances the Indian Army had never been brought up to a European standard. But even the standard that had existed was lowered, and not merely in material but in the numbers of the *personnel.*

Nevertheless, though that was the state of affairs, the Government of India suddenly found itself on the outbreak of War in 1914 faced with demands from the Cabinet at home for an Expeditionary Force for France; an Expeditionary Force for Egypt; an Expeditionary Force for East Africa, and the Expedition to Basra. Blame for what afterwards occurred in Mesopotamia was laid partly upon high officials of the Indian Government, partly upon men upon the spot. The facts just cited leave it beyond doubt that the root cause was the policy which had been followed, and that whatever its motive, relief of taxation or otherwise, it had been based upon a total misreading of political portents.

So far as the Expedition to Basra was concerned, the fact was patent that affairs could not be left as they were in these first months of 1915. An additional brigade had been sent from Bombay to reinforce Sir A. Barrett, but that brigade was no more than a stop-gap. Finally, it was decided, at the beginning of April, and after much official correspondence, to increase the Expedition to an Army Corps, and Sir John Nixon was sent to take over the command. He arrived with his Staff at Basra on April 9. These measures for the increase of the force, which now was to be made up of the 6th and 12th Divisions of the Indian Army, plus a brigade of cavalry, were taken only just in time. The Turks, encouraged by the inactivity which had succeeded the first British irruption, had pushed forward again as far as Barjisiyeh, close to Basra. At that place, however, on April 14, they were met and defeated by a force under the command of General Melliss.

The enemy having thus on one flank been thrown back upon Nazariyeh, Sir John Nixon's next step was to clear him out of Ahwaz, and General Gorringe was

sent forward up the Karun River to Ahwaz with two brigades of infantry and the cavalry. He drove the Turks out and followed them up towards Bisaitin. This once more secured the oil pipe-line.

General Nixon had landed at Basra with instructions in the first place to occupy the whole of the Basra vilayet, and next, after ascertaining conditions on the spot, to report on a subsequent advance to Bagdad. His first demand was for an additional brigade of cavalry, including a British unit, and for a battalion of Pioneers. The demand for more cavalry was refused.

With the arrival on April 22 of General Townshend, who was to take command of the 6th Division, Gorringe having the 12th, the plan came up for an advance upon Amara. On military grounds, Sir John Nixon desired to make that move as soon as possible. If it were made and without delay, then it appeared likely that the Turkish force Gorringe had been shepherding towards Bisaitin would fail to reach the capital of the vilayet before the British under Townshend arrived, and would find their retreat upon Bagdad cut off. It would be an important success both as securing the British right flank as weakening the enemy, and as ensuring the capture of Amara with very little loss.

Politically the capture of Amara was of consequence, because the place was the seat of the Turkish provincial administration. The town, quite modern—it was only founded about the year 1866—lies some 200 miles up the Tigris. In comparison with other towns in Mesopotamia it was well built, with a frontage towards the river of—relatively—handsome buildings, constructed as usual of baked mud, but decorated with oriel windows of quaint Eastern design. Amara too boasted a spacious bazaar, and was one of the chief *entrepôts* of traffic on the river. The population numbered about 12,000. Next to Bagdad it was the largest town in Mesopotamia, and its capture would be a serious loss to the Turks, not merely as injuring their prestige, but from the fact that, pursuant to the policy of developing this part of the Empire as a route to the Persian Gulf, efforts to

promote the prosperity of Amara had been a consistent aim for several decades.

The occupation of Amara besides was within Sir John Nixon's instructions. Nevertheless, the project led to another round of official correspondence. The British Government at home first of all laid it down that " in Mesopotamia a safe game must be played," and then intimated that Sir John Nixon must " clearly understand " that he could be provided with no more troops.

On the spot meanwhile the preparations had been pushed forward. The chief difficulty was lack of transport. From the outset in that respect the Expedition had been badly provided for. Matters were now, however, much worse, for though the original force had been doubled, the river flotilla, barely sufficient for the half of it, had not been increased.

The real cause of this deficiency lay in the obscurity of declared political aims. To begin with, it had not been the intention to push up the Tigris at all, and the British Cabinet was opposed to such a project. Naturally, therefore, there had, to begin with, been no preparations to do so. The policy having been in that regard changed, it was irrational to expect that the equipment of the Expedition for this new task could be improvised with equal readiness. Of course, the farther up the Tigris the British force moved the more important transport became. The idea of reaching Bagdad unless and until something like adequate means for transport had been provided was impracticable. This was the kernel of the situation. The entire advantage of the British over the enemy depended on communications and on their character. It was not the number of troops which in this campaign constituted the primary factor, it was, in view of the vast and empty spaces to be traversed by either side, the facility of moving troops. Upon transport the campaign manifestly hinged.

Sir John Nixon had been instructed to report upon the transport question, and through General Kemball, the Chief of his Staff, in due course formulated his demands.

They were for six paddle steamers, three stern-wheel steamers, eight tugs, and forty-three barges, as well as *personnel* and material. He pointed out that the lack of light draft steamers and other craft caused serious delay, uncertainty, and anxiety, and that there was no provision, taking the craft at his disposal, for wear and tear. His Chief of Staff added, which was perfectly true, that a properly equipped river fleet would " double and treble the value of the army of occupation."

Unfortunately, apart from the delay due to official intercommunication, of which, on this demand, there was another outbreak, it was perfectly evident that such a demand could not be met save after a considerable interval of time—some months at least. In the meanwhile, unless the campaign was to be suspended, the army of occupation would have thrown upon it heavy additional hardship and fatigue in an exceptionally trying climate. That fact was the root of the so-called medical breakdown. The sequence of causes and consequences was—indefinite policy, no preparations, insufficient transport, hardship and overwork, sickness, inability to cope with it, reverses.

So far as transport was concerned, the men on the spot were not disposed to wait upon the workings of official machinery, which, though solid, is slow. As it stood, the military position imperatively demanded rapidity of action. Indeed, if action were not rapid, all the odds were that the favourable opportunity would pass never to return. If it managed to struggle across country and reach Amara first, the Turkish force Gorringe had been holding off would undoubtedly there make a stubborn stand, and form the nucleus of a powerful enemy counter-offensive. Inadequate transport, therefore, or not, a push up to Amara had to be essayed.

The result of this determination was " Townshend's Regatta." A flotilla of sorts was improvised. Everything that would float was pressed into service. Light craft were converted into " gunboats." All the native

boats called " bellums " that Nixon could lay hands on were collected. It was a queer and miscellaneous assortment, but this time, at all events, audacity repaired the effects of oversight. After a day and night preparation the troops of the 6th Division were embarked, and from the lofty watch-tower put up by the engineers at Kurna and commanding a vast horizon of this flat land, the flotilla could be seen breasting the current and negotiating the windings of the Tigris; a sinuous procession of gunboats, real and " camouflaged," mahelas, " bellums," and barges, flanked on either side by shore scouting parties.

This was the last thing the Turks had looked for. Unquestionably they were well informed as to the British transport entanglement, and unquestionably they were reckoning upon it. Suddenly this thing had sprung up, apparently from nowhere, and rumour no doubt magnified the phenomenon. Townshend met with no opposition worth mentioning. When on May 28 his advance force got within sight of Amara it proved sufficient for a party of twenty-two daring men, some sailors, some soldiers, to penetrate boldly into the town and announce the arrival of the " Armada " for the Turkish garrison without more ado to lay down their arms. They were 700 strong, but the force chased out of Ahwaz, having Amara as its base, had not returned, and it was not certain what had happened to it. The conclusion naturally was that the worst had happened. Next day Townshend's troops marched in without resistance.

Two days later the missing Turkish division turned up, and were close upon the town before they discovered their mistake as to its new occupants. With one British force in front of them, and another somewhere behind, and hundreds of miles from anywhere, they did not stay to offer battle. The vanguard which had walked into the trap were surrounded and taken prisoners; the main body dispersed.

So far audacity had justified itself, and it is hardly warranted to suggest, as was done in the Report of the

Mesopotamian Commission, that Sir John Nixon and his Staff acted after this stroke from over-confidence. Sir John Nixon had been placed, and from no fault of his own, in an almost impossible position—confronted with the alternative either of acting promptly and boldly, or of piling up obstacles. If he had chosen the latter alternative he would most assuredly have been condemned for failure. Those responsible for putting him in such a position were little likely to shoulder the censure. After this success Sir John Nixon's confidence was perfectly explicable and it is confidence of that kind that leads to victory in war.

For what was the commander's next step? It was not to push Townshend farther forward, which would have been rash; it was to turn attention to the Turks at Nazariyeh, which was advisable and prudent. Gorringe was dispatched with his force up the Euphrates and through the Hammar Lake, and this stroke being also swift and unexpected, he captured on July 25 the Turkish garrison, with 17 guns and a great quantity of war material. For the enemy the loss was crippling, and there can be no sort of question but that the three blows so far dealt—the capture of Ahwaz and the dispersal of the Turkish column holding that place; the capture of Amara, wiping out the Turkish administration in the vilayet, and the capture of Nazariyeh with its garrison and stores, alone made the British occupation secure when later, owing to the transport problem, the tide of fortune turned.

To render the seizure of Nazariyeh feasible the improvised flotilla had to a great extent to be drawn upon. But because it was only a makeshift, and insufficient, the fatigues imposed upon the troops were severe, and notwithstanding their spirit—and these soldiers of the Indian Army were as magnificent in patience as in valour—they went down rapidly with sickness. It has to be remembered that in the summer heats in Mesopotamia the thermometer stands between 120 and 130 degrees Fahrenheit, not merely for days together, but for weeks. And the swamps breed myriads of insect pests which

render the days, and much more the nights, well-nigh unendurable.

Here again the lack of preparation, due partly to political indecision, partly to an imaginary economy, appeared. The medical equipment of the Indian Army has been already referred to. But in the present instance even that equipment had been cut down. The two divisions had only the medical and hospital outfit for one. And the truth about that matter simply is that the huge demands made upon the previously attenuated Indian Army Medical Service had left the Mesopotamia Expedition to put up with what was left. The men on the spot, overtaken by an impossible task, had to make the best of it.

This being the position of affairs, what next happened ? The troops were tired. With marvellous gallantry they had campaigned through the worst season ; they had gained a series of swift and striking successes. Upon whom was the effect of those successes most marked ? Upon Sir John Nixon and his Staff ? Not at all. The effect was most marked on the Government of India, and on the British Government at home. In July the Government of India suggested to the Government at home that Kut should be occupied, and the Government at home agreed. The condition and fatigues of the troops were overlooked ; the problem of transport had not been attacked ; the provision of hospitals and medical necessities had not been improved. Yet in these circumstances, though it certainly was rash, and rash here is a very mild word, to order General Townshend to move on to Kut, those orders were given. With a transport barely enough to extend the communications as far as Amara, and risky even at that, it was now decided to push them yet another 180 miles farther. It may be doubted if, Gallipoli only excepted, there is in modern history an equal instance of administrative temerity.

General Nixon had conducted his operations with audacity and therefore, since true audacity is rational, with brilliant results ; there were those not on the spot

who thought they could better that by butting in and conducting operations with a dash which was merely foolish.

However, the advance upon Kut was made; a long, lonely march dependent upon a vamped-up means of communication. On September 14 Townshend had reached Sheik Saad; on September 15 his troops took by assault the strongly fortified enemy position of Abu Rammaneh; on the 29th they had reached Kut, fought and defeated the Turks, who had attempted a stand before that place, and taken 1,700 prisoners, 13 guns, and a large quantity of war material. To secure his position at Kut General Townshend very properly pushed forward his cavalry in pursuit of the Turks as far as Aziziya, 50 miles farther up the Tigris.

The effect of this success was, like the advance upon Amara, to set on foot a project for going still farther. On August 30 Sir John Nixon had forwarded to the Government of India his report as to an advance upon Bagdad. He pointed out that the Turks being in flight it would be easier to follow them up than to fight a Turkish army entrenched above Kut. Such an attack, he observed, would be more difficult and costly than anything yet met with, "and the result of a check more serious for us."

To take the ball at the bound in this manner was, as campaigning, the absolutely advisable procedure—provided that transport was adequate and necessary reinforcements were forthcoming. Kut had been reached through ekeing out the river transport, and the river transport had been eked out by marching the troops with land transport, and by lightening the vessels and employing them to tow loaded barges. By this time the enemy realised that transport was the crux of the position, and had set on his irregulars to maraud the communications, so that wrecks of mahelas sunk or stranded by the fire of his irregulars, and looted of their freight, became by no means infrequent along this reach of the river. At times even the communication was interrupted.

On receiving Nixon's report Sir Percy Lake, Chief

of the Indian Army Staff at Simla, agreed that on military grounds the suggested pursuit of the Turks was desirable, and he forwarded the report with a memorandum to that effect to the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Beauchamp Duff. General Duff, however, considered the project out of the question unless troops could be got "from France, Egypt, or elsewhere." A week later (September 17) the Viceroy of India (Lord Hardinge) wrote to Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Secretary of State for India, emphasising the desirability of an advance from Kut to Bagdad "if sufficient troops can be made available."

The question of whether or not he could advance to Bagdad was put to General Townshend. His reply, in a telegram to General Kemball was :—

> If it is the desire of the Government to occupy Bagdad, then, unless great risk is to be run, it is, in my opinion, absolutely necessary that the advance from Kut should be carried out methodically by two divisions, or one Army Corps, or by one division supported closely by another complete division, exclusive of the garrisons of the important places of Nazariyeh, Ahwaz and Amara.

In response Kemball sent on the same date another telegram to Townshend informing him that it was General Nixon's intention to open the way to Bagdad, "as he understands another division will be sent here from France." Townshend was asked for his plan for effecting such an advance. Replying to Kemball, Townshend telegraphed : "You did not mention the arrival of a division from France in this country. That makes all the difference in my appreciation." With reference to that division he wrote in his diary : "Nothing definite known about this, and no earthly chance of its being in this country in time."

The question had been put to Townshend owing to the receipt by Nixon on October 3 of a cablegram from the Secretary of State. Nixon's reply was : "Consider I am strong enough to *open road to* Bagdad and with this intention propose to concentrate at Aziziya." Next day he wired demanding another division (of the Indian Army) from France.

Meanwhile at home the question had been (October 4) referred to Sir E. Barrow, military secretary at the India Office. Barrow's opinion was that an attempt to *reach* Bagdad with the present force would involve unjustifiable risk.

Next day (October 5) came a cablegram from Sir John Nixon stating that the Turks had ceased their retreat and taken up a position at Ctesiphon. The reply to Nixon's demand for more troops was that no reinforcements could be spared.

On October 6 the opinion of the General Staff at the War Office was taken. Their opinion was decided. They considered that an attempt to *hold* Bagdad except with larger forces and increased river transport would be to court disaster. Of that opinion the Government of India was informed, and the Viceroy cabled in reply: "Orders to stop further advance were telegraphed yesterday to General Nixon."

Seemingly the question had been settled, and it was evidently so regarded on the spot, for the troops at Kut had read out to them the following Army Order:—

> The General Officer Commanding 6th Division wishes to tender his grateful thanks to all ranks of the division for the gallant and noble spirit in which they have advanced some 180 miles from Amara, defeated the enemy in an extremely strong position, and moved on another 50 miles or so in pursuit.
>
> That we did not catch the retreating Turks is due to the fact of the shallow water of the river, and to the fact that the Turks are endowed by nature with strong knees.
>
> He wishes he could have announced to the troops the end of their labours in Mesopotamia, but these operations naturally depend on those operations now being carried out in the Dardanelles, whence we now hope for good news.
>
> He desires to tell the troops that orders have been received from Government in England that we are, for the present, to hold the position we have gained and thus our present orders are not to advance to Bagdad. It is the intention, therefore, of the G.O.C. to make the force as comfortable as it is possible to do under the circumstances; tents, etc., will be brought up as soon as possible.
>
> (Signed) R. G. PEEL,
> Colonel, General Staff.

But though the orders referred to had been received, the Cabinet had on October 5 appointed a committee

of the Foreign Office, General Staff, Admiralty, and India Office, to consider an advance on Bagdad "in all its possibilities and policy," on the ground that political reasons made such an occupation desirable.

More interchanges of views took place with the Government of India, and Sir Beauchamp Duff was again asked for his opinion. It was that while the troops available could *capture* Bagdad, they would not be able to hold the place against a counter-attack in mass, and that the effect of having to retire would be disastrous. He doubted also whether with the then insufficient number of light draft steamers the troops at Bagdad could be adequately supplied. This opinion was not sent to the Home Government in full. The Viceroy's reply was limited to the statement that in the view of the Commander-in-Chief in India it would be unwise to *occupy* Bagdad with present forces.

In the Government at home, however, the proposal was being pressed, and consequently on October 8 the Secretary of State for India sent two telegrams, one to the Viceroy, the other to Sir John Nixon. The telegram to the Viceroy ran: "The Cabinet are so impressed with the great political and military advantages of occupation of Bagdad that every effort will be made by us to supply the force necessary. We do not wish to attempt it with insufficient forces. I shall be glad to know whether you are satisfied that one division will suffice." To Sir John Nixon he wired: "Very urgent. To both occupy and hold Bagdad what addition to your present force are you confident will be necessary?"

Nixon replied that he was confident no additions to his present force were necessary to take Bagdad, but that he would need an additional division and one cavalry regiment *permanently to occupy* the city. He asked the Government of India to send him more river craft as an urgent need.

Referred to once more for their view the General Staff at the War Office at home urged that if Bagdad

was to be occupied Nixon must have another two divisions. Sir E. Barrow took the same view.

Meanwhile Kemball had been sent up from Basra to Kut to interview Townshend. The Chief of Staff arrived at Kut on October 19, and the interview took place on the very day that at home the Naval and Military General Staff reported against the project on the existing footing. Coincidentally too there was being pushed up to Townshend a feeble reinforcement consisting of five squadrons of cavalry, two battalions of infantry, and one battery of Royal Horse Artillery. About the problem of transport nothing appears to have been done. Coincidentally also pressure was being brought to bear on the Government of India. The Commander-in-Chief in India again had the matter referred to him, and this time assented to the project provided a full division of reinforcements could be guaranteed to reach Mesopotamia within two months. The Secretary of State on October 21 represented to the Viceroy that prospects in Gallipoli being very uncertain, and the German attempt to break through to Constantinople looking as though it would succeed, "we"—presumably the British Government—"have great need of a striking success in the East." He added a warning that some 60,000 Turks might be concentrated at Bagdad by January, though the Turks' then present estimated strength in that quarter was only about 9,000. To this representation the reply of the Viceroy was that in his judgment the right policy was to take the risk and occupy Bagdad without delay. The Secretary of State rejoined (October 31): "If Nixon is satisfied that the force he has is sufficient, he may march on Bagdad." The information as to probable heavy concentration of Turks by January was not sent to the Commander-in-Chief in Mesopotamia. This was explained before the Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry as arising from routine consequently upon the telegram of the Secretary of State addressed to the Viceroy being marked "private."

The circumstance remains that General Nixon was left to act without knowledge of this essential piece of

information. All the facts just outlined are given in the Report of the Mesopotamia Commission, but not in chronological order as here. Their sequence, clarifying their relationship, leaves the origin of the project beyond doubt, and equally beyond doubt the responsibility for the events which followed. There was pressure upon the Government of India ; pressure on the spot in Mesopotamia ; a " hustle " that forced on the scheme in the teeth of responsible professional advice ; a desire to snatch a political effect ; the impatience that could not realise the foundation of success in war. Very different was this rashness from the audacity that had marked Sir John Nixon's strokes earlier in the campaign. But the very success which had attended them because they were audacious and not rash prompted this interference by those who had not taken the trouble to understand the conditions.

What was the force with which General Townshend, nearly 400 miles already from Basra, was expected and directed to embark upon this enterprise ? It consisted of the 6th Division, but the 6th Division worn down by a hard campaign. Adding the cavalry brigade, under Brigadier-General Roberts, and the reinforcements sent forward, it did not muster much more than 15,000 men. The General's own estimate put the effectives at 11,000 at most. Some of the battalions were at half strength. Nor was Sir John Nixon in a situation to afford further aid. At the outside the entire force in Mesopotamia at this time did not exceed 25,000, and they were now in occupation of a vast extent of country. The march from Kut to Bagdad, nearly 100 miles, would have to be made by the troops on foot, for the transport, owing to this effort to stretch it still further, would not and could not suffice for more than the carriage of supplies. To make matters worse, information had come in that the enemy, commanded by Nur-ed-Din, was concentrated at Laj, and with 38 guns was strongly posted near Ctesiphon behind a double line of defences. The attempt to dislodge him was to be made, notwithstanding that, owing to limitation of transport, it had taken six

weeks to bring the supplies and reinforcements up from Basra.

On receiving the orders transmitted to him, General Townshend thought it his duty to protest, a course no soldier ever takes save in what he regards as extreme circumstances. He wrote, not to Sir John Nixon, but to the Viceroy of India. The passage in this letter in which he described the state of his force ran :—

> These troops of mine are tired and their tails are not up, but slightly down ; the Mohammedans are not pleased at approaching the sacred precincts of Suliman Pak at Ctesiphon—the troops are not confident and have had enough ; as it is now, the British soldier and the Sepoy, as the Roman soldier did under Belisarius, look over their shoulders and are fearful of the distance from the sea, and go down, in consequence, with every imaginable disease.

It was just because Townshend was a skilful and experienced commander that he entertained misgivings. They were only too well founded. Already it has been pointed out that in this campaign the relative strength of forces was secondary to the question of moving forces. Had a suitable and sufficient river transport been available Townshend, despite the numerical limitation of his troops might have forestalled the enemy by a swift blow, and assuming that reinforcements reached him in time, could without doubt have held on. Suitable transport, however, was not available. Though that point had been insisted upon, not only by Nixon himself, but by all the naval and military authorities in their reports, the attention of the Cabinet at home had been fixed upon reinforcements—the comparatively minor matter. What was the good of discussing reinforcements without discussing how they were to be sent forward from Basra and how they were to be supplied in addition to the troops already on the spot by a transport inadequate even for the latter purpose ? Nixon had given his assent to a strictly limited operation —that of " opening the road to " Bagdad. He had been saddled with a very much larger enterprise—the proposed capture and occupation of that place—and at the same time left without the means of carrying the enterprise out.

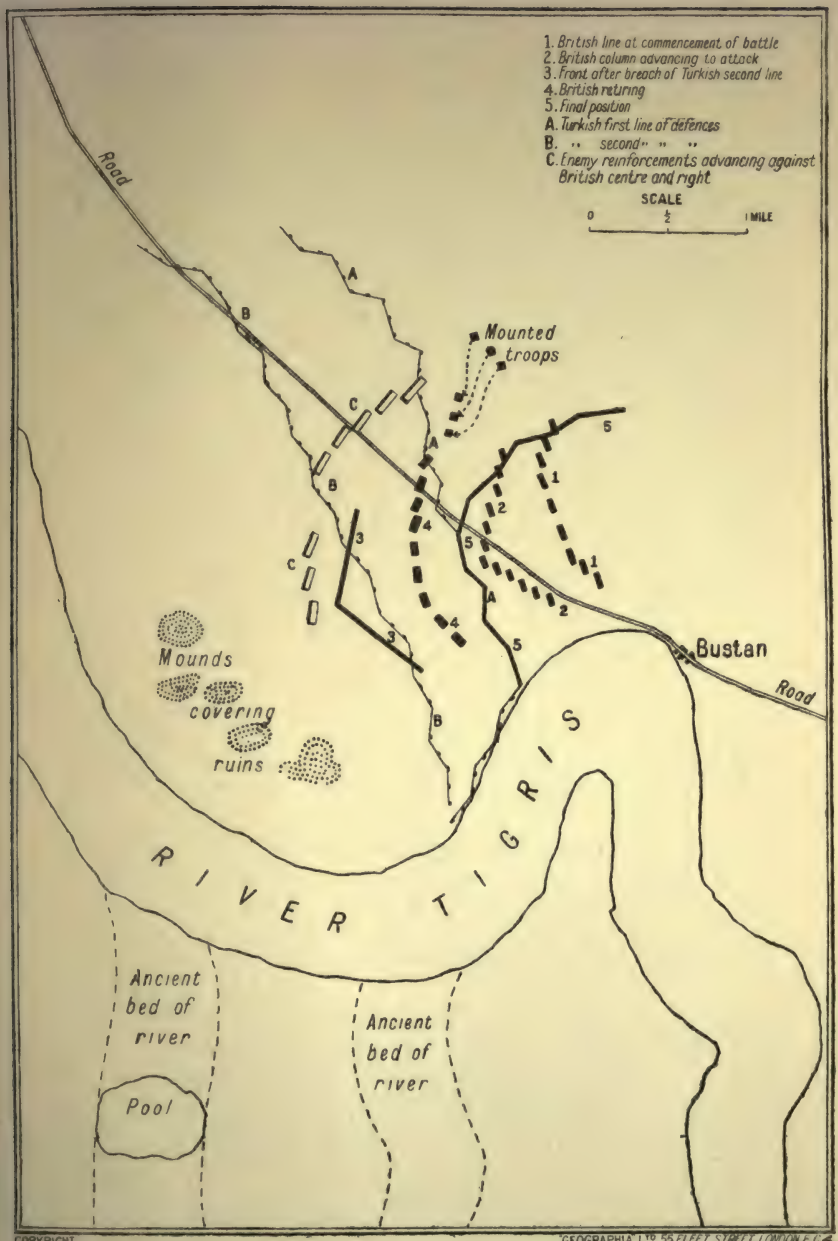
Townshend had his misgivings, since he knew that if he could not forestall the enemy the enemy would in all probability forestall him. It was certain in any event that the Turks would make every effort to do so. The Turkish communications with Mosul were enormously long, and in that fact lay the main chance in favour of this British offensive. But to take advantage of it swiftness of movement was imperative. Much time had already been lost in official beating about the bush, and the delay had been of value to the enemy. So far as the means of ensuring the success of the intended enterprise were concerned, the delay had resulted in nothing.

Finding himself so placed, there was only one thing which, short of resigning and breaking his career, Townshend could do. It was to make up for the lack of transport facilities as far as it could be done by forcing the pace of his march. This was asking much from the troops under his command, having regard to their condition, but what else was there for it ?

At the outset there was little opposition. Only skirmishing parties of the enemy were met with. The distance to Aziziya was speedily covered. From that point, half-way to Bagdad, the real defence began. As informations, previously received, had declared, the Turks were found concentrated at Laj. Behind them, within easy distance up the river, they had the fortified position at Ctesiphon to fall back upon. The enemy at Laj was attacked (November 21) and dislodged.

Having occupied Laj, Townshend, after the briefest possible delay, pushed on to Ctesiphon. It was important to anticipate the arrival of enemy reinforcements known to be on the way.

Ctesiphon, not more than 16 miles—one day's long march—from Bagdad, is not a town or village, but the site of the ancient city marked by mounds covering its ruins. Nothing but the " Arch of Ctesiphon " remains to attest bygone importance. There is, hard by the site, a wretched hamlet called Bustan, but the existence



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of these few mud huts by the riverside served merely to emphasise the surrounding solitude. It is little cause for wonder that in this lonely land, as vast as it is unoccupied, the Indian soldiers, as they marched deeper into its recesses, "looked over their shoulders."

From the enemy's point of view the position at Ctesiphon was well chosen. Besides affording a certain vantage of observation, the mounds lent themselves to the construction of defence works, and gave some cover for the guns. It would not be easy to attack from the river because just below the position there is a sharp bend which would have to be negotiated, if at all, under a concentrated fire. And on the opposite side of the great waterway also there is a tongue of land, long and narrow and marked off from the adjacent country by the ancient bed of the river, which had here ages ago formed an acute loop. The modern course of the river cuts across the neck of this peninsula, but surrounded as it is by a kind of dry moat, more than a quarter of a mile in breadth, the tongue of land could readily be held against assault. Thus established on both banks, the enemy was secure against any attempt to turn him. The attack upon him had to be a frontal attack, or none.

Again, if defeated he could reckon at least upon reaching the Diala, not more than ten miles distant, while, if victorious, he had the attacking force some 75 miles distant from its base.

Beyond all this the Turkish force was ascertained to be some 13,000 strong. Notwithstanding that strength, the enemy, in view of the proved prowess and impetuous valour of the British-Indian troops, deemed it prudent to keep behind his two lines of entrenchments, stiffened by redoubts.

General Townshend arrived at Ctesiphon after a night march of nine miles from Laj. On November 22, at daybreak, he attacked. Having regard to the ascertained and evident force of the enemy he had no other course open to him. He had gone too far to turn back without a battle.

His attack, directed against the enemy's position on the left (or East) bank of the river, had all the chances against it save one—the military virtue of his men. Despite the character of this service they had been unexpectedly called upon to perform, their discipline was firm. And the attack went well—well beyond anticipation. It cannot be said that the "artillery preparation" was adequate. There were not the guns. But, incomplete though it was, when the infantry went forward, the Turks, though they resisted stubbornly, were overpowered by the sheer impetuosity of the rush. The British-Indian troops, compelled to advance over a flat tract giving little or no cover, in the approach to the Turkish first line, lost heavily. That, however, did not shake them; it added fuel to their fury. After a sharp struggle in the enemy trenches with the bayonet, the Turks (the 45th Division) broke. The remnant bolted for their second line, a mile to the rear, the attackers close upon them. The wreck of the flying Turks and the van of the attacking column entered the second line to all intents together. The second line also was broken, and the attack swooped on to the batteries behind it. Eight of the Turkish guns speedily fell into the assailants' hands. It looked as though, after all, the battle would end in a victory.

Just at this juncture, however, a heavy column of Turkish reinforcements arrived—just at this juncture in the very nick of time. They were thrown into the fight forthwith. Townshend now found himself faced with something like a two to one superiority. The contingency he had feared had come to pass—the enemy had forestalled him. His own men, too, were spent with their exertions. Against the newcomers they could not hold the breach in the Turks' second line, wide though it was. The struggle was obstinate and bitter, the British striving to widen the breach; the enemy to press in upon the salient. Finally, weight of numbers told. The British troops were little by little pushed out. Sullenly they retired upon the Turkish

first line. Contenting himself with having closed the breach in his second line, the enemy did not follow up. He was not in a condition to attempt it. The long day was now fading into night, and the battle died down into a duel between the opposing guns.

That night and next day were occupied by the British in "turning round" the captured Turkish first line trenches. But the question arose of what was to be done. It was plain that with the force at his disposal Townshend could not go on. It was hardly less dangerous to fall back. The General saw, however, that, risky as it was, the latter was in truth the one course open. To the enemy he put on a bold front as indicating that he meant to hold on. Meanwhile he prepared for retirement, and with that in view evacuated his wounded to Laj. There were many steamer loads of these poor fellows, and for want of transport they had to be crowded together like cattle. They bore their sufferings without murmuring. Also through lack of transport and the fire of hostile guns on the right bank of the river, it took two whole days to remove them.

That was unfortunate, because during those two days more Turkish reinforcements had arrived. Eight days earlier (November 17) the India Office had wired out to General Nixon that intelligence received disclosed a Turkish force of 30,000 on the march from Anatolia to Irak (the Bagdad province) under the command of General von der Goltz. Not very cheerful news, it must be admitted. How could Nixon meet such a threat? Wherever it came from, with this further addition to his strength the enemy showed signs of passing to the offensive. And he made, as might be expected, a move threatening to envelop the British right, that is the part of the line farthest from the river, and to throw his cavalry on to the British line of retreat. Unfortunately, once more, besides his inferiority in numbers, Townshend found himself running short of supplies. The transport could not be engaged on that work and on the evacuation of the wounded at the same time. There was not enough of

it. Besides, the enemy had now posted on the right (or west) bank more batteries designed to bar the passage of the river to Laj. In the circumstances further delay was impossible. Covering the manœuvre by a feint attack the British General gave orders for a retreat.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SIEGE AND FALL OF KUT

Skill of Townshend's retirement from Ctesiphon—Turkish repulse at Umm al Tubal—Opening of the siege of Kut—Townshend's dispositions for defence—Episodes of the siege—Reasons for the stand at Kut—Enemy's first attempt to take Kut by storm—The second, and final, attempt—Preparations for relief—The transport tangle—Haste of thefirst Relief Expedition—The Turkish blockade works—Effects of transport delays on British operations—Attack on the Turkish positions at Hanna—Causes of its non-success—Townshend's measures for holding out—Enemy air attacks—Second effort at relief; the battle of Es Sinn—Causes of the British reverse—Townshend's Army Order to the Kut garrison—Supplies begin to fail—The third effort of relief—British victory at Hanna and check at Sanna-i-yat—Indecisive attack at Beit Aiessa—Attempts to reprovision Kut by aeroplane—The episode of *Julnar*—Townshend receives instructions to surrender—Preparations for capitulation—Fall after 147 days.

REDUCED by losses both on the march up and in the battle, totalling over 3,500 men, Townshend's little force set out on its retreat from Ctesiphon in the night, on November 25. The Turks at once closed in. The retiring movement had eluded what was intended to be a powerful attack, and the enemy reached the British lines only to find them evacuated. Thus began a march of eight days, which, considering the condition of the troops, the fact that it followed immediately upon a desperate battle, and that it was carried out under the pressure of superior forces, ranks it among the marvels of campaigning alike as regards endurance, daring and leadership. That the British force escaped destruction is to be attributed in part to its still remarkable mobility, notwithstanding that it was worn out—

compared with what it had been a thing of threads and patches—and in part to the dash and boldness of the cavalry. The enemy had many more guns, but he was less efficient in the cavalry arm. To destroy the British force he had first to bring it to a halt, and then to concentrate his artillery upon it. And there can be no question but that that was his design. While in furtherance of that object he sought repeatedly to envelop the retreating division by manœuvring towards its left, the difficulty was to penetrate the rearguard, supported by a cavalry his own horse could not cope with. Meanwhile, doubtless to his astonishment, the pace of the retreating column showed few signs of slackening. It was a pace with which the Turkish troops found it hard to keep up.

On scanty and insufficient food snatched in haste, with nothing more than brief intervals of sleep, unwashed, footsore, the retiring column tramped on, the boom of guns where the rearguard was in action perpetually in each man's ears. One toilsome day across the monotonous solitude followed another. Night fell, and dog-tired men threw themselves down beside their bivouac fires to rise almost more weary than before. But marvellously few fell out. The camp fires flicked upon faces set and grim, and grimy, but they were those of men who, knowing that they had done great deeds of arms, were confident of themselves, and, despite adversity, confident in their commander. Had not the brilliant episode of Amara proved that they had every reason to be ?

Then it was plain that the enemy found this chase by no means a promenade. The Turks were panting after the retreating column, but visibly panting, for the hostile force consisted largely of reinforcements which, in order to arrive at Ctesiphon in time, had already faced a succession of forced marches.

General Townshend reached Laj on November 26, and on that day and the next he rested his troops. On the night of November 27–28 he set out for Aziziya. This movement was not molested.

On November 29 there was a sharp clash between the British and the Turkish cavalry at Kutunie. The enemy, attempting to loot stranded river craft, was routed by a charge of the 14th Hussars and the 7th (Hariana) Lancers.

After another night march the main column on November 30 reached Umm al Tubal.

Here, however, a halt became for the time imperative. The flotilla, which accompanied the retreating force, had got into difficulties in the shoals of the river. Under the command of Captain Nunn, R.N., D.S.O., the light river gunboats had rendered brilliant service in covering the supply transports and barges, for it was to them most of all that the enemy had turned his attention. What with sweeping the banks, and getting off barges stranded in the shallows, the crews of the gunboats were at work night and day. Their gallantry was beyond praise.

From Umm al Tubal a Mixed Brigade under the command of General Melliss—"lion-hearted Melliss," as the men called him—was sent forward to keep open the road to Kut. It consisted of the 30th Infantry Brigade, a howitzer battery of the R.F.A., and the 16th (Indian) cavalry.

The enforced halt had enabled the enemy to catch up (November 30) and the same night the Mixed Brigade had hastily to be recalled. Happily they came back in time. They covered 80 miles in three days.

At daybreak (December 1) the Turks launched their attack in great strength. The British, facing towards Ctesiphon, were posted with their left upon the river, and the enemy, in addition to a frontal onset, dispatched a strong column with the object of carrying out a turning movement against the British right. The plan, as a plan, was good. It failed from three causes.

In the first instance the hostile troops told off for the frontal attack found themselves enfiladed from the river by the fire of the gunboats. In this duel *Firefly* was disabled by a shell which penetrated her boiler. She was taken in tow by *Comet*, but both boats grounded,

and at the finish, though *Firefly* was got off and drifted downstream, *Comet* had to be abandoned. Efforts to tow her off made by *Sumana* were not given up until the Turks had advanced and begun to bombard the vessels at a range of fifty yards. By this time, however, the gunboats had done their work.

For besides this enfilade fire the frontal attack was severely hammered by the British field guns. Townshend wisely concentrated all his artillery upon it, and in the absence of cover he broke it up.

Finally the Cavalry Brigade once more proved its dash by charging into the enemy's encircling column. The troopers, whom the Turkish fire could not check, slashed through the hostile lines, turned, and hewed their way back. The column was thrown into confusion.

In brief, though heavily outnumbered, Townshend, by a masterly use of his resources, had won. He gave the enemy no chance to rally. The march upon Kut was at once renewed in echelons of brigades, a tactic which at once covered the land transport and foiled any further effort to outflank him.

It is extraordinary how long the miles grow on a march of this kind, as day follows day. Halts had to be lengthened, stages shortened. There was no help for it. The column trailed on though still safe, still unbroken. At length, on the eighth day the slender minaret of the solitary mosque of Kut rose above the distant horizon. The guns were booming as usual to the rear, but the toils of this desert tramp were over. In its way, though the reverse manœuvre, the retreat had been as great a feat as the dash of the " Regatta."

The vanguard reached Kut on December 2 ; the main body marched in on the 3rd. Not until December 7 could the enemy, after his rough handling at Umm al Tubal, arrive in strength sufficient to attempt an investment. The interval of four days was precious. Kut was already full of wounded who had come down from Ctesiphon in shiploads. Those who could so be disposed of, as well as the Cavalry Brigade and many of the transport animals, were sent downstream to Ali-el-

Gharbi, while the route yet remained open. The question has been asked why the native population, between 6,000 and 7,000 souls, was not turned out. To that the answer is that nobody then expected the investment to be prolonged, and everybody felt assured of a speedy relief.

The troops needed besides a brief interval of repose. Most had not had the boots off their feet for ten days; all were war-worn; many in rags. Discipline, nevertheless, had not been shaken, and the work, when it began, of preparing to stand a siege was pushed with energy.

Kut lies in a somewhat deep bend of the river. The measures of defence were in the first instance to establish an advanced and support line across the neck of the bend, which is about a mile in breadth, and next to secure the village—Woolpress village, as it was called—a sort of outlying suburb on the opposite side of the Tigris, together with the Liquorice Factory adjoining. The factory was loopholed, and the village surrounded by trenches. At this time the village was still connected with Kut by a bridge of boats.

North of Kut, across the neck of the bend, the lines, two miles distant from the town, extended from the old Turkish fort on the right to, on the left, a point on the river about a mile above the Liquorice Factory on the farther bank. The old fort was a square construction, having walls of baked mud about 450 feet in length on each face, and some ten feet in height, but of considerable thickness. They were loopholed. On the north face was a kind of projecting redan called the Bastion. To cover the garrison against shell fire the space inside the fort was converted into a maze of dugouts.

Between the fort and the last houses of the town on that side lay a space occupied for the most part by gardens and groves of date palm. Directly north of the town, facing inland towards the desert, the ground was open and mainly bare. Part of it, however, was a brick-field, marked by a group of kilns, now utilised as observation posts. This brick-field position, capable of a stiff defence if need were, formed a support for the

centre of the line. Westward, on the farther side of the town and along the river, the gardens and palm groves were again met with. To a certain extent the groves screened the defensive lines here from the enemy's observation posts on the opposite bank.

Taking the force under General Townshend's command, these dispositions were, as events proved, thoroughly sound. As much was made of the resources as could be done, but not too much. Accommodation had to be provided for about 3,000 horses and pack mules, besides heavy battery bullocks. Could the length of the siege have been foreseen it would, of course, have been a desirable measure to have reduced the numbers of these various animals from the first and thus have saved a very large consumption of barley, but that the force would be beleaguered in Kut for five long months was neither at this date nor for many weeks later considered even a probability.

Previously to the siege the base hospital had been just outside of and to the north-west of the town, on the edge of the western area of gardens. It had with all haste to be removed. Beds, apparatus, furniture and injured men had to be carried into the town itself, a huddled mass of more or less mean houses bordering narrow lanes. The wounded were disposed as well as it could be done in the buildings judged most suitable and in the bazaars. The devotion and efficiency of the Medical Service were, considering its straitened resources, admirable.

All along the line outside there was trench-digging, sand-bagging, the construction of dugouts and the excavation of dumps for munitions. The preparations for a siege are manifold, and in the interval before the enemy closed in they went on night and day. Happily for the time being there was no cause for anxiety as regarded food supplies.

Kut, needless to say, might have been abandoned, for, with the start he had gained, it was open to Townshend, had he thought fit, after a day or two days' interval, to have continued his march. Apart, however,

from the risks and hardships involved in covering the 180 more miles separating him from Amara, there were the assurances he had received of comparatively speedy relief, and the importance, military as well as political, of holding up the enemy at Kut. A Turkish advance upon Amara would have threatened to undo the whole results so far of the Mesopotamia Expedition. Townshend, too, was still in communication with the outside world through his wireless installation, and on December 8 he issued the announcement that reinforcements might be expected at Sheik Saad a week from that date. Sheik Saad is some 25 miles farther down the Tigris. Apparently an intimation to that effect had been wirelessed from Basra. The non-arrival of these reinforcements proved to be the first of a series of disappointments.

So far the enemy's activity had been confined to sniping, and to turning back by gunfire the last steamers which had tried to run the blockade with wounded on board. On December 9, however, the Turkish bombardment opened. In the midst of it the enemy made an effort to rush the bridge of boats which lay slightly up stream. The attempt was gallantly beaten off, but, seeing that it was certain to be renewed, and that the post at the farther end of the bridge had been driven in, it was decided to blow up the structure at the farther end so that, broken, it might be swung by the current on to the Kut side of the river. It was urgent to prevent the enemy from seizing the boats and other material. Two men, Lieut. A. B. Matthews, R.E., and Lieut. R. T. Sweet, of the Gurkha Rifles, volunteered for this perilous piece of service. It was necessary to wait until dead of night. Then in the darkness the two had to swim the river, no easy thing against a four-knot current, and over a distance of nearly 250 yards. After that, if undetected, they had to plant their charge of explosive and fire it. For those concerned in the duty there was, following the departure of the two heroes, for heroes they were, an interval of acute suspense. The odds seemed dead against them, and the attempt would have

been none the less devoted and daring had it failed. Presently, however, from near the farther side of the dark expanse of water the night was stabbed by a flash, followed by a roar, and a wild outburst of hostile rifle shots. The bridge began to heave and swing. The two men got back safely.

The news of this exploit ran through the lines with the cheering effect of a victory. There was at the same time the story of the Brigadier-General who at the wildest of personal risks had dashed out across the bridge after two of his officers had fallen wounded in defence of it, and tried to carry one of them in. And it was a good thing, perhaps, that this cheerful news came out, for the following morning (December 10) the enemy made his first attempt to take Kut by storm. His opening assault was beaten, so was a second and a third. But these repulses, severe as they were, proved not enough. In the afternoon a fourth attack came forward. It met with no better fortune. The British troops had set their teeth and were not to be shifted. Towards evening there was a last burst. The dirty little town was deafened with the roar of battle. The roar, however, died down without coming nearer. Once more the enemy had been flung back.

He was not satisfied with this trial of strength. Next morning, under cover of a heavy shell fire, he again came forward. It was only an additional and costly disappointment. The British defences looked slight, and to all appearances a mass attack ought to have romped over them. The appearances were deceptive. The value of a trench is the value of the men in it.

Thus foiled the foe fell back upon his batteries, and day by day, at irregular intervals, indulged in bursts of shooting, accompanied by sniping which was not irregular but persistent. Behind the lines the bombardment caused relatively few casualties. While the projectiles rained down there was an absence of all signs of life above ground; nothing to indicate that some thousands of men were ready to spring out at a moment's warning. The force had dug itself in to some pur-

pose. Most of the misery of the shelling was felt in the town.

For a fortnight after their last repulse the Turks made no further move. There was little save the monotony of morning and evening "hates." While waiting for the relief, of which as yet there was no sign, General Townshend kept his own eye on everything; toured along the lines; visited dugouts; went through the hospitals; inspected the commissariat; and saw that no man wanted what ought to be and could be supplied. Everywhere he had a cheery and appropriate word. Meanwhile, both in the town and in the lines, the chief topic of speculation was the date of the relief. Opinion generally looked for it at about Christmas.

Christmas approached and outside headquarters nothing more definite was to be gleaned than rumours. The enemy's bursts of fire had evidently in his opinion not had the desired effect of causing the besieged to waste their ammunition. Acting on the counsel of their General they husbanded it "like gold." Realising that the blockade was likely to be prolonged; anxious to push in force down the river before the British established their footing in the country; and fearing that if held Kut would probably in the finish be relieved, the enemy, having brought up further and considerable reinforcements—another division—once more essayed a storming enterprise. It was preceded on December 24 by a great bombardment. Every gun of the Turkish forces on both sides of the river was put into action. This general shelling, of course, was intended to mask the point of the attack, which it was known would be the sequel. The point of the attack proved to be the fort. By a concentration of guns upon it the Bastion had been breached, and though to a certain extent the breach had been offset by wiring in, the enemy threw forward what no doubt he judged to be an overwhelming column of some 6,000 infantry. They pressed onward, in the face of a withering fire and, although the losses were most severe, and hundreds perished upon the wire the others swarmed through the breach and into the

Bastion, carried forward by the impetus of numbers. The British batteries, however, were in turn focussed on the work, and its mud walls crumbled into ruins. And in the gap beyond it was found that the defenders had built up an inner breastwork. The Turks tried to rush it. They tried again and again. Time and again it came to a struggle at close quarters, only, however, yet again to prove that the Turk was no match for the veterans of the Indian Army with the bayonet. Meanwhile, efforts had been made to scale the walls of the main fort, men climbing on each other's shoulders, or using short ladders. Nowhere could a footing be established. In the midst of this deadly conflict the guns on both sides were busy, and squalls of shrapnel lashed assailants and defenders alike. The defence, which was magnificent, finally triumphed. So magnificent was it, indeed, and so severe this time had been the lesson, that this was the last endeavour to take Kut by assault. In and around the ruins of the Bastion, and the walls of the main fort, the enemy's dead lay everywhere. The total Turkish losses in this, for them, disastrous affair were some 2,000 men.

Christmas Day dawned in peace; after the pandemonium and carnage of the day and night before a silence reigned that seemed as strange as it was impressive. Not a shot was fired. In the still cold air—for the weather was now wintry—the snow-clad Pusht-i-Kuh mountains marking the boundary of the great plain and the uplands of Persia reared themselves clear and majestic on the eastern horizon. The smoke of fires from dugouts floated lazily upward, but over all brooded a Sabbath stillness, and in dugouts and billets the thoughts of men turned from that far away land to home. For two months and more they had been without letters or news, save that which the wireless told them of the world's doings.

Of course it was only a pause. Next day observers on the brick kilns saw that the enemy was busy moving his batteries. The intention soon appeared. He was transferring guns from north of Kut to the opposite

side of the river, where from above the Liquorice Factory he might enfilade the British lines. Evidently he was desirous of speeding up the siege and the reason was that the Relief Force had reached Ali-el-Gharbi, as the crow flies forty miles downstream.

On the face of it this looked hopeful. Unfortunately the preparations for the relief of Kut were marked by the same hustle and the same oversight of the essentials of the campaign as had pushed Townshend into an enterprise which had not even a fair chance of success. In the middle of December Sir John Nixon had resigned his command. The ground officially given out was ill-health and in poor health the General certainly was, for his worries and anxieties would have broken down any man. To put it plainly, he had had enough. Only too well was he aware that though, in fact, his proceedings, the affair of Kut apart, had been marvellously successful, the blame of the Kut affair would be laid at his door, while the credit of the Amara dash would be taken by those who had had nothing whatever to do with it save to add to its difficulties. Nixon, on resigning, was succeeded by Sir Percy Lake, Chief of the Staff of the Indian Army, an experienced and capable soldier, and he had arrived at Basra in company with General Sir F. Aylmer, Adjutant-General of the Indian Army, appointed at the same time to take command of what had now been designated the "Tigris Corps." The latter was to be reinforced by two divisions of the Indian Army sent back from France, as well as by Indian troops returned from Egypt after service in Gallipoli. At this time there were in Mesopotamia, besides Townshend's troops, nothing more than the remains of the 12th Division, under Gorringe, a mere handful, not only reduced by the fatigues of a hard campaign, but burdened with the duty of policing nearly 400 miles of river, as well as the occupation of a province nearly as large in area as Great Britain. A stand at Kut was, in the circumstances, imperative. No other course, indeed, could have saved the situation.

But numbers were not the chief concern. The old

problem of transport was still unsolved. The troops from France had been sent off to Basra in hot haste, and the orders were to push up to Kut without delay. How the troops were to be pushed up to Kut was left to the men on the spot. Owing to the haste of embarkation the reinforcing divisions arrived piecemeal—parts of one and parts of another. General Aylmer well knew it would take time to piece them together again. But he also knew that he could not afford the time and must make the best of it. A Staff of sorts had to be improvised, and the Staff went to work to lick the Expedition into some kind of shape. The force had very few heavy guns; in that respect, as already noted, the equipment of the Indian Army had been starved. Then there was the question—*the* question—of movement. The transport was no larger than it had been six months before. Insufficient as it had been then, it was doubly so now, since exactly twice the work had, somehow, to be done. A service which 500 tons of river shipping could barely have met was by some means or another to be conjured out of 150 tons. Of course that was the root of all the troubles. Political policies and plans were changed by those who treated this problem of transport as a detail. It was so essential a detail, however, that of the reinforcements which reached Basra, some 12,000 men were never able to get up the Tigris at all, and spent week after week at the base in inactivity. Had they been movable, these 12,000 men would have made all the difference.

Aylmer set out with a column at once hastily got together, badly equipped for attacks upon entrenched positions, and impeded in its mobility. Though he met with no opposition of any moment before reaching Ali-el-Gharbi, the greater part of a month had gone by before he could advance his force so far, and in face of the impediments to have advanced so far was, in truth, good going. As before, the effects of deficiencies in transport fell upon the troops. The column had been got up to Amara by instalments. Beyond Amara the route had to be covered on foot, and the pace had to

be regulated to the movement on the river of the supplies on which the Expedition was dependent.

One cause of the pressure put upon Headquarters at Basra was the fear that the enemy might mass reinforcements so formidable as to render the relief of Kut impracticable; another, that he was known to be fortifying on both banks of the river. There was good ground for each of these apprehensions, as events proved. By this time, the beginning of 1916, the Russians, under General Baratoff, had in Persia pushed on to Kermanshah; a sufficient reason for the Turks to put forth a special effort in Mesopotamia, and all the more reason because it was assumed that in the depth of the winter in the Caucasus, where the temperature is arctic, operations on either side were out of the question for the next three months. Under the influence of that belief, added to the Russian menace in Persia, the enemy had little hesitation in sending down the Tigris all the troops his communications would allow, and it was moderate to estimate those forces at 30,000 men. Of course, it is now known that the Grand Duke Nicholas, the new Russian Commander-in-Chief in the Caucasus, seized upon this opening to bring off the marvellous surprise march over the mountains north of Erzerum, which resulted in the fall of that fortress. It was the one positive good which the ill-wind of Kut yielded.

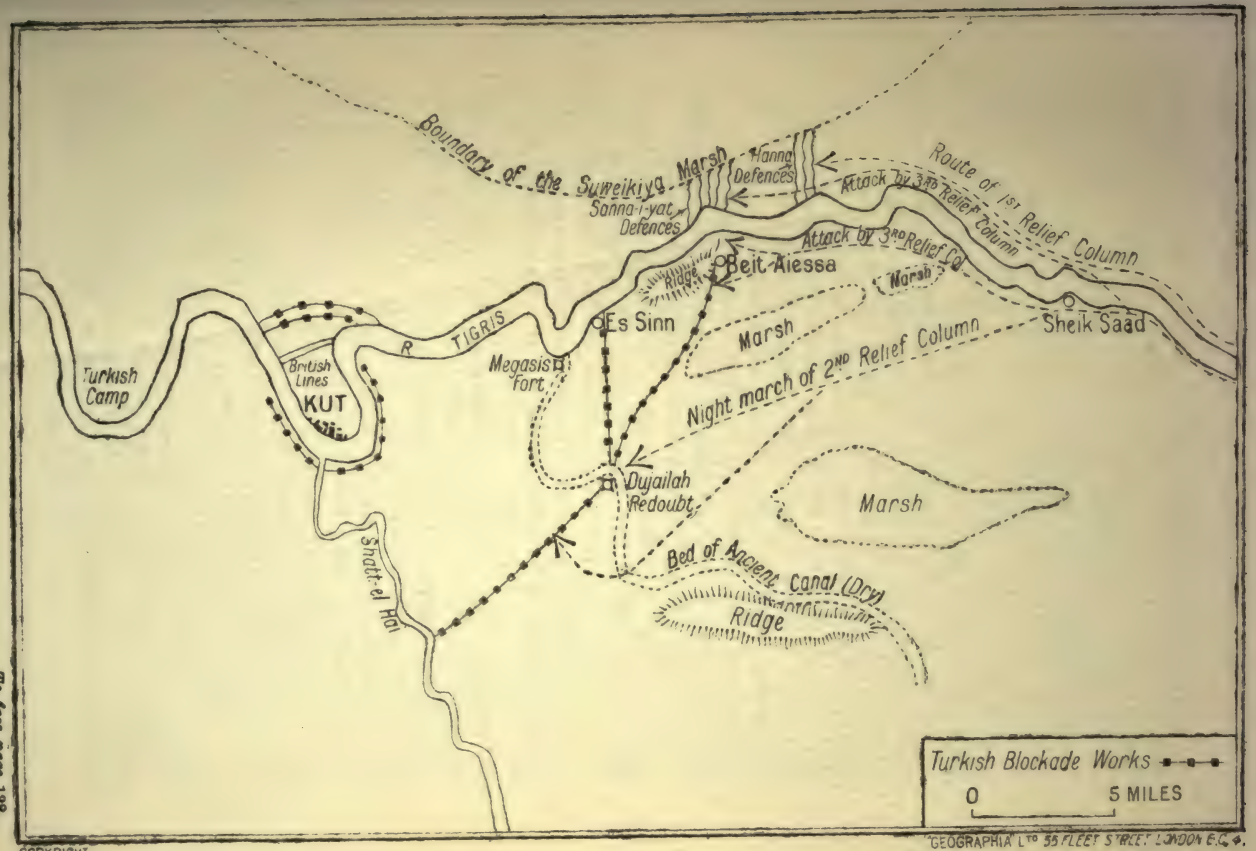
As to the second ground of apprehension, the enemy, when it became evident that Kut could not be taken by storm, and would have to be starved out, naturally turned his attention mainly to preventing the relief of the place. The position was peculiar in this respect. So long as he was between Kut and Amara, and could so maintain himself on both banks of the river, Kut was effectually isolated. It was only necessary to keep up round the town itself a blockade that might prevent the garrison from coming out into the open and co-operating with the relieving column. The real blockade works, therefore, were not the enemy's lines round Kut, but those at Hanna and Sanna-i-yat on the east side of the Tigris, and those at Es Sinn on the west side. The defences on the

east side consisted merely of lines of trenches cut parallel one behind the other ; those on the west side were more elaborate—a chain of redoubts extending from the Tigris to the Shatt-el-Hai, one of the ancient main canals connecting the Tigris with the Euphrates, and still in the rainy season navigable, despite ages of neglect, by the native mahelas, flat-bottomed craft of the felucca type, exactly like those used in the days of the Babylonians. The chain of redoubts cut off a considerable triangle of country of which it formed the base and the Tigris and the Shatt-el-Hai the sides, with the junction of the canal and the river, just opposite to Kut, as the apex. This hostile disposition was skilful, and the western bank defences were more carefully made because the enemy before the finish realised that here lay the key of the position.

His great risk was that of a force striking up the Shatt-el-Hai from Nazariyeh, where the canal joins the Euphrates, or striking across the country from Amara, and turning him. Plans of a turning movement had suggested themselves to General Aylmer. They were, however, not approved. It was unfortunate, because at this time and for some time afterwards the enemy's defences on the west side of the river were incomplete.

It was unfortunate also that though the relieving column reached Ali-el-Gharbi about Christmas Day, attack upon the enemy there had to be delayed owing to transport difficulties for more than a week. In these matters celerity is everything. To Khalil Pasha, the Turkish commander, the interval was beyond estimation. In the course of it more Turkish reinforcements arrived, and one of the Turkish proceedings was to form at Shumran, where the line of redoubts joined the Tigris, an entrenched camp from which troops might either be ferried over the river, or used to stiffen the defence of the Es Sinn line as the case might be.

The winter rains too had now set in, so that the vast swamps which diversify the arid spaces of the country became shallow lakes. This weather was all against the relieving operations. Nevertheless, the Turks,



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attacked and beaten at Ali-el-Gharbi, were obliged to fall back upon Sheik Saad, twenty miles farther up stream and as the crow flies the same distance below Kut. If they had to contend against a complication of impediments the troops of the Relieving Force made up for them to no small extent in military qualities. Indeed, had they not done so the whole enterprise would have been on the very face of it hopeless. The day after the fight at Ali-el-Gharbi the enemy was followed up, and again, on January 6, attacked at Sheik Saad, and again defeated with a loss of 4,500 men. He fell back this time upon the Wadi, a tributary of the Tigris, not very wide, but defensible because, like the main river, its banks are slightly raised above the level of the surrounding country, these low ridges, or bunds, forming traces of ancient embankments. The passage of the Wadi having been forced (January 9), the next retreat was to Hanna, rather less than 15 miles below Kut. Unhappily, partly owing to the wet ground, partly owing to the shortage of artillery equipment, which had had to be kept to the lowest point because of the limited transport, the losses of the Relieving Force in these successive actions had totalled nearly 6,000 men. It was thus that defects and oversights had to be paid for. Carefully, however, as they had been husbanded, the artillery munitions had run very low. General Aylmer had now, therefore, either to wait for a further supply and suspend his operations in the meantime, or to continue his offensive. He chose the latter course, not merely because his orders were urgent, but because it was evident that if he suspended his activities, the enemy, divining the reason, would counter-attack. Besides he had the Turks on the move, and it was clearly advisable to keep them moving. He took such measures as were possible to bring his force into a fit condition, got up all the supplies he could, and after an interval of eleven days, renewed the assault.

Situated between a flooded swamp and the great waterway, the Turkish position at Hanna consisted of five lines of trenches, each line some 200 yards behind

the other and connected by numerous saps. This formidable maze had to be attacked (January 21) after very inadequate artillery preparation. The attack failed, and it would have been a miracle if it had not. There are some things which not the bravest troops can accomplish. The valour and vigour of the attack, handicapped as it was, was shown by the desperate and bloody character of the conflict. On the left the attacking troops (the Black Watch, 6th Jats and 41st Dogras) broke in, but they could not break through. Absence of a sufficient weight of guns allowed the enemy to retreat from line to line, where an adequate power in guns would have destroyed his saps and barraged his retirement. In the circumstances, the farther the British pushed forward the worse their position became. In the end they had to be withdrawn. Their losses ran up to 2,741 men. It was a disaster.

The Turks also, however, had been heavily punished, as they had been in all the preceding battles, but to them immediately these losses were of less consequence. It was enough that they had brought the Relieving Force to a halt.

The Force had by this time been, in fact, crippled by its casualties. At every turn the transport trouble cropped up.

In the interval the enemy, more especially after his reverse at Sheik Saad, had pressed his bombardment of Kut. News of the success at Sheik Saad had greatly raised the hopes and confidence of the besieged, but at the Serail, where General Townshend had fixed his headquarters, the obstacles before the Relieving Force were better appreciated, and the General took the precaution to cut down the rations by one-third. In the circumstances this was cheerfully accepted. Informed before the action at Hanna of its doubtful chances, he again cut the rations to one-half.

Three days later came the news of the Hanna repulse. Save at Headquarters, it was not yet realised that the first attempt at relief had failed. Nevertheless, common confidence in the Relief Expedition fell. The defences

of the town were stiffened. The boom of distant guns had told that help was at hand, but the sound, after drawing nearer, first continued in the same place, and then by degrees died away. To add to the depression, the rain came steadily down, turning the trenches into ditches and the narrow lanes of Kut into quagmires. The river too had begun to rise, and in places to overflow the bunds and pour across the flat country. Dugouts and trenches, British and Turkish alike, were flooded. The weather also was cold, and fuel becoming scarce, though all timber had been requisitioned, and was doled out with strict economy, by half-pounds.

Evidently the question now was how long Kut could hold out. There was a conference at Headquarters on the state of supplies. As soon as the siege had begun the native population, and particularly the dealers, had made haste to hide all foodstuffs and live on the rations served out. It was manifest, however, both that covert dealing in foodstuffs went on and that there were many hoards, for very few of the native inhabitants showed traces of privation. A systematic search was accordingly set on foot, and resulted in unearthing various valuable finds of both grain and ghee, the clarified butter of the East. These seizures were mostly the stocks of traders who had done a thriving illicit business. General satisfaction and a certain surprise were felt when a *communiqué* was given out from Headquarters that there was still food enough to last for eighty-four days, not counting the battery bullocks, horses and mules.

A great help to the provisioning was the arrival by aeroplane of a set of millstones. In abandoning Kut the Turks had taken care to remove those in the only flour mill in the place. Millstones in Mesopotamia are now, as they have been for ages, as precious as they are scarce, for the country is devoid of stone. The dropping of these very welcome and friendly " bombs " enabled the mill to be restarted.

Possibly it was this incident which suggested to the enemy the employment of aeroplanes as machines for

attack as well as for observation. If an aeroplane could carry a millstone why not a bomb as heavy as a millstone? Already the Germans, who were really directing the siege and had their quarters at Bagdad under the direction of General von der Goltz, had done everything in their power to add to its "frightfulness." They had established on the farther bank of the Tigris batteries of trench mortars, which they had revived from the wars of the seventeenth century, and lobbed into the town from across the river heavy cylindrical bombs filled with high explosive. This and the shelling not being deemed enough, they resorted to air raids, one of the earliest, if not the earliest, employment of aeroplanes for such a purpose in the War. The first raid took place in the middle of February, and the enemy 'planes came over in three relays. The bombs were dropped, not along the defensive lines, but on the town, and the chief sufferers were the native population, a number of children among them. After that red crosses were painted conspicuously on the roofs of buildings used as hospitals, and empty shell cases were set up as alarm gongs. The Red Cross sign had no effect. The probabilities, indeed, were that the indication of hospital buildings did more harm than good, for in a later raid a bomb fell into the main hospital in the bazaar, killing and wounding more than thirty of the unhappy sick.

Coincidentally the ordinary bombardment was intensified, and more especially at night when shells were thrown into the town indiscriminately. It was evident that the enemy, informed that the operations for the relief of the place were to be renewed, was exasperated by the obstinacy of the garrison, and the prolongation of the blockade. But General Townshend had made up his mind for the present to sit tight, and was taking all the measures to hold out for weeks longer if necessary. He economised his corn partly by serving out dried potato meal, partly by mixing the bread ration with barley meal and atta, and partly by slaughtering the battery bullocks and horses, the latter a double

economy. Unfortunately, scurvy now made its appearance, and the Indian troops would not touch the ration of meat. For the feeding of the native population soup kitchens were opened.

In the midst of these embarrassments came the news by wireless that reinforcements for the Relief Force were on their way from Egypt, and (February 17) the welcome intelligence of the fall of Erzerum, together with a message from the King paying tribute to the steadfastness of the besieged and exhorting them to hold on.

A day or two later the boom of guns could once more be heard from down the river, and hope revived when (February 21) officers received secret orders to be ready for a break out on the morrow. The morrow came and passed. Nothing happened. The roar of the guns remained distant. Rations were now further cut. It was known there must be another period of waiting.

This suspense lasted until March 7, when for the second time there were secret orders. That night the guns again thundered, but louder and nearer. Next day (March 8) the Turkish Commander sent in an officer under the white flag demanding surrender. Townshend refused. He made another cut in the rations.

What had occurred was the Battle of Es Sinn. Those in authority had found out at last—in the school of experience—that the real point of attack was on the west side of the river. It was concluded that the attack ought to be made upon the line of redoubts, by this time extended to the Shatt-el-Hai. Now that was a serious undertaking, and the more serious because the Tigris was in full flood—higher than it had been for many a year—and movement over the country far from easy. The Relieving Force besides was, in the matter of munitions and supplies, living from hand to mouth.

But the decision was taken because it was believed that, despite these difficulties, a successful surprise might be brought off. The central point of support in the Turkish defences between the Tigris and the Shatt-el-Hai was a considerable work called the Dujailah

redoubt. At this point the line of the Turkish defences was crossed by the bed of an ancient tributary of the main river, dry in the summer season, but a sinuous swamp during the wet months, and the Dujailah redoubt was situated at the point of one of the bends, and on the farther side, so that it was partly surrounded by a sort of natural ditch. Both the apparent security of the position and the difficulty of obtaining on the spot a supply of drinkable water had led the enemy so far to hold the redoubt lightly. If he could be surprised and the bend or peninsula on which the redoubt was built seized, his line west of the Tigris would be effectually broken and the siege of Kut would have to be raised.

To effect the surprise a night attack was determined upon. The main assault was to be direct, but a force under the command of General Kemball was on the left to carry out a turning movement, the alarm of which, falling upon the Turks' right rear at or about the beginning of the direct assault should, it was thought, ensure success.

Of course, to bring off a surprise it was essential to mislead the enemy. The troops told off, about 20,000 of all arms, were on the Tigris close to the Wadi. From that point, far enough away apparently to cause doubt as to their intentions, they were to strike across country to the Es Sinn line, a distance of some 15 miles. An interval of about nine hours was allowed for this march. According to the plan they were to arrive just before daybreak. It happened, however, that the arrangements for the assembly at the rendezvous did not work as had been expected, and that more than the allowed for margin of time was lost at starting. Further on the road the column in the darkness missed its way. Another hour was lost on that account. It was a long march, and apart from it many of the troops had had to cover a good distance to the rendezvous before setting out. In that wet season the going was heavy. The men were fatigued. At the halts they fell dead asleep, and were only aroused with difficulty. They were in no condition on arrival to fight a hard battle.

Having to make a detour, General Kemball's force, with the Cavalry Brigade, had of necessity to cover a greater distance. It proved unable to reach the point marked out for attack until after full daylight (March 9) being already two and a half hours behind time when it diverged from the column under the command of Major-General Keary.

The Dujailah redoubt was found as anticipated to be held in no great strength. Time, however, was taken up in deploying the attacking troops and in waiting for the turning movement. The interval—some three hours—enabled the Turks to reinforce the menaced position. The turning movement too had not as a surprise succeeded. To the extreme fatigue of the troops was added, in the case of Keary's column, shortage of water. The assault on the Dujailah redoubt and adjacent positions was launched and persisted in during that day (March 9). There was a moment towards the end of this bloody conflict when the enemy, severely pressed, showed signs of wavering. Despite their fatigues the British troops (the Manchesters, and the 59th Rifles and part of the 37th) had fought with determination and had won a footing in the redoubt. But the airmen reported no evidences of a hostile retirement, and the risks of continuing the battle in face of the weariness of the troops and their sufferings from thirst were undoubtedly grave. They appeared to General Aylmer too grave. At nightfall therefore the attack was abandoned. It had been a costly reverse. The second attempt at relief had broken down.

Next day (March 10) General Townshend issued a *communiqué*. He had followed the policy of taking the garrison as far as possible into his confidence.

"We have now," he wrote, "stood a three months' siege in a manner which has called upon you the praise of our beloved King and our fellow countrymen in England, Scotland, Ireland and India, and all this after your brilliant battles of Kut-el-Amara and Ctesiphon, and your retirement to Kut, all of which feats of arms are famous. Since December 5, 1915, you have

spent three months of cruel uncertainty, and to all men uncertainty is intolerable. On the top of this comes the second failure to relieve us. I ask you to give a little sympathy to me, who has commanded in these battles, and having come to you as a stranger now love my command with a depth of feeling I have never in my life known before. When I mention myself I mention also the Generals under me, whose names are distinguished in the Army as leaders of men. I am speaking to you as I did before, straight from the heart, and I ask your sympathy for my feelings, having promised you relief on certain dates on the promise of those ordered to relieve us. Not their fault no doubt. Do not think I blame them ; they are giving their lives freely and deserve our gratitude and admiration. But I want you to help me as before. . . . In order to hold out I am killing a large number of horses so as to reduce the grain eaten every day, and I have had to reduce your ration. It is necessary to do this in order to keep our flag flying. I am determined to hold out and I know that you are with me heart and soul."

Rations still further reduced notwithstanding, the besieged "stuck it" without murmuring. After the battle of Es Sinn the enemy not only pressed his bombardment, but his air raids, and beyond these endurances were the inundations. The river continued to rise and went on rising until it reached and then passed the highest flood record. On March 13 the siege had lasted 100 days. Hopes of relief had not been given up. They were no longer, however, the subject of lively speculation, nor, indeed, of any speculation at all.

Thus the month of March wore slowly away. At the beginning of April the supplies of grain at length failed and as vegetables to garnish the ration of horse meat it became necessary to cut the grass and herbs in the suburban gardens. This stuff was served boiled. Meanwhile the Turks were observed to be shifting heavy guns, using teams of men for haulage. On April 4 an intense and sustained gunfire was heard from down the river.

It was the roar of the battle at Sanna-i-yat—the third effort of relief.

The effort had been renewed because of the arrival from Egypt of the 13th Division, under the command of Sir Stanley Maude, and the qualities of that brilliant General as a tactician were in the attack on April 5 disclosed in the capture by his Division of five lines of trenches. There is here on the one side the Tigris and on the other the great Suweikiya swamp with between them a neck of firm land some two miles in width. The Hanna position was at the end of the neck farthest from Kut; the Sanna-i-yat position at the end of the neck nearest to Kut. The British attack was delivered on both sides of the Tigris, and it was entirely successful. The enemy, turned out of the maze at Hanna, and outflanked by the loss of his defences on the farther side of the river at the same time, found himself obliged to fall back. He attempted a stand midway at Falahiyeh, but was again routed by Maude's Division in a night attack, and forced to retire upon the Sanna-i-yat maze. He was followed up and (April 6) attacked by the 7th Division. The troops got in, and they might possibly have held on were it not that the Tigris that day broke over the bunds and swamped the trenches. During the next two days the floods suspended operations, but on the 9th the water had so far fallen as apparently to justify a renewal, and, as every day was now of consequence, the assault was resumed by the 13th Division, though the ground was still sodden and sticky. All the same the 13th carried the first line of the enemy's trenches. But they could get no farther. Their supports, indeed, found it impossible to advance over spaces already churned into deep mud, and part of the ground gained had to be given up.

On the face of it as well as in fact the situation was grave. It was calculated by General Townshend that his supplies, other than horse flesh, of which he had still a considerable supply, would last on the reduced scale until April 15, and that appeared to be the limit,

because, though some pressed by hunger ate it, most of the Indian troops would not touch the horse meat. Learning that the Relief Force had been compelled to dig in and realising that that meant delay, he arranged to eke out his now fast vanishing stores until April 21—a week longer.

Meanwhile Sir Percy Lake had come up from Basra, and it was decided at a consultation of the general officers on the spot, General Sir G. F. Gorringe having succeeded Sir F. Aylmer in the Command of the Relief Troops, that the attempt at relief ought not to be abandoned, notwithstanding the flooded state of the country. The fighting was accordingly renewed, and on the west bank of the river the enemy was (April 17) pressed back upon Beit Aiessa, four miles farther up than Sanna-i-yat, and his first and part of his second line of defences were captured. But in the position at Sanna-i-yat the Turks, the flooded river on the one side of them, the great swamp on the other, and a quagmire in front, held on, because though enfiladed from across the waterway they were not as at Hanna liable to be caught in a trap.

And now began belated attempts to reprovision Kut by means of aeroplanes dropping sacks of flour. It is a mistake to suppose that this expedient was not as an expedient successful. Many trips were made and many sacks dropped, two from each machine. A few, it is true, missed and tumbled into the Turkish lines, but only a few. The mistake lay in not having resorted to the expedient weeks earlier and keeping it up. Had that been done Kut might have held out. The flour thus received did enable the defence to be prolonged for two days. It was, however, a mere trifle compared with what was needed.

On April 18 the Turks counter-attacked at Beit Aiessa and lost heavily. First the news was wirelessed that relief might be looked for in a few days. Then came (April 20) the further news that the Relief Force was "consolidating its positions." Depressing intelligence, which, as bad news usually does, leaked out, with the

result that next day (April 21) some natives attempted to desert the town but were caught crossing the Turkish lines and sent back. It was now clear that, failing relief, the end was not far off. The third attempt to raise the siege had met with no better fortune than the others.

Hope, nevertheless, was not yet entirely given up. A final effort to reprovision the besieged was to be made by *Julnar*, one of the steamers of the transport service. It was desperate work to run the blockade, for just below Kut on the farther side of the river, and commanding a sharp bend was Fort Megasis, armed with ordnance heavier than anything any river gunboat could carry. So desperate was the chance that it was certain *Julnar*, though one of the fastest steamers of the flotilla, could only get through, if at all, by the merest fluke. A Royal Navy crew, under Lieut. Firman, R.N., assisted by Lieut.-Commander Cowley, R.N.V.R., volunteered to take her. With none save these devoted men on board, and loaded with 270 tons of supplies, she set out (April 24) breasting in the darkness the current of the swollen and swirling river. It was a daring but a vain endeavour. As she attempted to dash past, her boilers at top pressure, the guns of the fort opened upon her, firing shot after shot. Firman fell, and Cowley at the wheel went down. Automatically and blindly the vessel, raked by shell, raced on, but it was a race to destruction. She raced on, foundering now at the same time, and, caught broadside on by the current, was swung on to a mudbank, her Captain stretched on deck in a pool of his own blood, her engineer dead at his post below.

On that same day in Kut the first half of the emergency ration was eaten, and men knew that it was at last the end. During the next two days the flour dropped by the aeroplanes, doled out in quarter rations, kept the besieged going. But on April 27 General Townshend went out to treat with the Turkish Commander, Khalil Pasha. He had received by wireless positive instructions to do so, under the impression that he might get more

favourable terms. The only terms offered were unconditional surrender. The last of the emergency ration had been consumed.

On April 28 began the preparation for surrender ; the blowing to pieces of guns, the smashing up of rifles, the dumping of ammunition into the river after darkness. Men put their swords under their feet and snapped them, dashed their field glasses to pieces, and threw their revolvers into cesspools. Everything likely to be of value to the enemy was made away with.

In the midst of this came through a message from General Lake. " The C.-in-C.," it ran, " desires me to convey to you and your brave and devoted troops his appreciation of the manner in which you together have undergone the sufferings and hardships of the siege, and of the high spirit of devotion to duty in which you have met the call of your Sovereign and Empire. The C.-in-C.'s sentiments are shared by myself, General Gorringe, and all the troops of the Tigris column. We can only express extreme disappointment and regret that our effort to relieve you should not have been crowned with success." The officers and men of the Royal Navy attached to the Tigris Corps sent also a message of regret.

All had done their utmost under the conditions, and, although it had not succeeded, that utmost had proved what might have been done had the conditions been reasonable. They were not.

So on April 29, after 147 days, five long months, the British flag at Kut came down and the white flag went up.

CHAPTER IX

GALLIPOLI: THE SUMMER CAMPAIGN, 1915

Anzacs assigned a secondary *rôle*—Why a strategical error—Turkish efforts to destroy the Anzacs—Their failure—Enemy scheme for containing the force—Episodes of the fighting—The great Turkish attack of May 18–19—Its crushing defeat—Operations before Achi Baba—Cox's enterprise at Gurkha bluffs—General Hamilton decides upon siege tactics—Their disadvantages—Resumption of British attacks—Battle of June 4—Frontal assault disastrous—General Hunter-Weston suggests new tactics—The battle of June28—British victory—Success not followed up—Final enemy attempt to crush the Anzacs—Battle of June 29, another heavy Turkish reverse—General Hamilton's demand for reinforcements—Battle of July 12.

It is now advisable to resume the narrative of the Gallipoli Expedition as from the first battle for Krithia (May 6, 1915). The broad plan of General Hamilton's operations, it will be recalled, was an attack upon the enemy's defences on Achi Baba—this attack launched from the southern toe of the peninsula; and a menace in flank against the enemy's defences on Sari Bair—a menace maintained by the Australian and New Zealand forces from Kaba Tepe.

From the outset the fact had been manifest that an attack from the southern toe would be materially assisted by a flanking movement. When General Hamilton was considering his future proceedings in March and the early part of April, one of the insistent problems was a dispersal of the enemy's strength. Upon that and upon rapidity in the development of the British attack everything, indeed, depended. Hardly less was it evident from a study of the natural features

of Gallipoli, and of the roads and railways then at the enemy's command, that an effective dispersal would have been a landing not only at Kaba Tepe but at Suvla. In March, at any rate, the enemy's communications between Suvla and Maidos were defective. Nor had he at that date any defensive works on Sari Bair. If General Hamilton then gave this matter of a landing at Suvla his serious attention, as presumably he did, he decided against such a movement because in his judgment the forces at his disposal were not numerous enough. Resolving upon the alternative plan of a main attack launched from the landing places round the southern toe, he had, as already recorded, been reduced to the necessity of undertaking a succession of very costly frontal assaults. The opportunity offered by the success of Koe's landing had been missed.

Had that, however, been the only defect in the dispositions, it would, though it cost many casualties, not have involved the Expedition in disaster. Unfortunately, there was another and a kindred oversight yet more grave.

In his despatch dated August 26, 1915, the General alludes to the *rôle* which during May and June had been assigned to the Anzacs. This *rôle*, he explained, was "first to keep an open door leading to the vitals of the Turkish position; secondly, to hold up as large a body as possible of the enemy so as to lessen the strain at Cape Helles. Anzac, in fact, was cast to play second fiddle to Cape Helles, a part out of harmony with the dare-devil spirit animating these warriors from the South, and so it has come about that the defensive of the Australians and New Zealanders has always tended to take on the character of an attack."

That statement is worth careful consideration. It discloses the reasons for the military failure which formed the sequel.

General Hamilton's plan, as events proved, was unfortunately wrong. The Anzac position was the point of effective attack from the outset. To assign a defensive *rôle* to a flanking movement was an error in

any event. By itself, the mere holding of a bit of the coast near Kaba Tepe meant nothing. If there was any purpose in landing there at all, it was precisely in order that this movement should " take on the character of an attack," and had the dare-devil spirit of the warriors from the South, a quality in war as precious as it is exceptional, been given free play from the beginning, no doubt can now be felt that these warriors from the South would have swept the Turks off Sari Bair and with moderate support might have pushed them back to Maidos. No doubt can now be felt on this point, because in the encounters between these dare-devil warriors and the Turks, the latter were slaughtered time and again in a proportion not far short of ten to one. But, in place of using these fine troops with the boldness which both their value and the situation demanded, the commander of the Expedition, unhappily alike for himself and for it, divided the Anzac Corps, transferring a part of it, for a time, as already noted, to Cape Helles, and leaving the remainder meanwhile to dig in and hold on.

The justice of such conclusions will in due course become evident, not alone from the effort afterwards made to retrieve these errors—made, however, after an interval of months during which, by persistent fortification, the enemy had taken advantage of the misjudgment —but by the enemy's efforts meanwhile to destroy the Anzacs garrisoning the Kaba Tepe lines. The enemy was content merely with holding the attack from Cape Helles, for he had nothing vitally to fear from it ; against the Anzacs, now reduced in strength, he, on the other hand, put forth all his energy. The proceeding ought to have opened the eyes of the British Headquarters. Unhappily, it does not appear to have had that effect until two months from this date. The awakening was too late.

Sari Bair is a hilly mass, at its highest point over 900 feet above sea-level, and on all sides its declivities have been scored into deep gullies and ravines. The peculiarity of the spurs which lie between the ravines is

both their length and their shape. Like the main mass itself, they have been scored by ages of weather with numerous gullies, and both the valleys between the spurs and these *culs-de-sac* on either hand are grown over with scrub and brushwood. Trees are rare. The general aspect of the country here at the present day is that of a rugged moorland. And as at Achi Baba, the formations having the same character, some of the larger spurs are broader at the end than at their juncture with the central knot. In several instances this juncture had been worn to a razor edge.

It was the broad end of one of the larger spurs, that extending to the south-west, on which the Anzacs had established themselves. The right of their position was bounded by a ravine. Their centre, which it will be recalled had been the scene of the earliest Turkish attacks, crossed the spur and crossed also a shorter ravine, that of the Salzi Beit. The left of the position was carried towards Fisherman's Hut along the foot of a spur running to the north-west.

The projections from the main mass of Sari Bair come down in successive levels and at some of these points look as if they had been abruptly broken off. One of these abrupt terminations was that named by the Anzacs Table Top Mountain, both from the flatness of the summit and the perpendicularity of the sides, and though the appearance was an illusion, it looked as if the top in places overhung and the cliffs in descending sloped inwards. Higher generally than the ground occupied by the Anzacs, these abrupt projections were for the Turks admirable observation posts.

After the costly failure of his initial infantry assaults the enemy laid himself out to smother the Australian and New Zealand force with his artillery. Enormous labour must have been involved in dragging his batteries into position up the steep slopes and over the rugged ledges, and it is unfortunate that he was allowed the opportunity of doing it, for with bolder tactics the opportunity might have been denied him. He put in this labour not now so much in the hope of driving the

Anzacs into the sea as to ensure and support the work of walling them up—the next best thing. On that work his troops were engaged night and day. And in that respect, unfortunately, the transfer of part of the Anzac force to Cape Helles had played into his hands. All the Anzacs could do in the circumstances was to push their line, as they did, close up to that of the enemy, and interrupt his activities as far as possible by bombing, sniping and sap-driving. This went on with scarcely a break both night and day and all along the front. Attack provoked counter-attack, and incursion counter-incursion. Deadly combats occurred at close quarters in half-completed diggings, where man fought with pick and shovel as well as with bomb and bayonet. The initiative of the " warriors from the South " was not to be denied, and the less to be denied since with few exceptions they had by far the best of it. They believed in fighting with the gloves off. The pushing up thus closely to the enemy line hampered, of course, the hostile bombardment.

Looking at the features of the country, the enemy's scheme of walling in was ably planned, and carried out with great perseverance and regardless of losses. On the extreme right, where it rested on the coast just north of Kaba Tepe, the Anzac line consisted of a post fortified and held by the Tasmanian contingent. The line then ran inland along what was called Holly Ridge, from the prickly scrub covering its slopes. On the farther side of the ravine here was another ridge marked by a few stunted pines. This ridge the Turks had promptly seized upon, since behind it was a stream of some value as a water supply. At a point rather less than a mile from the coast Holly Ridge and Pine Ridge joined, both being, as it were, fingers projecting from the southern end of the main spur. At the junction, where the opposing forces were in close contact and both on higher ground, the enemy, working day and night, and week after week, established the Lone Pine defence work, a maze of covered trenches and underground saps. He had a footing on the main spur here,

and at all costs strove to keep it. Still following the Anzac line north there was at the inland end of the Lone Pine work another steep and narrow *cul-de-sac* ravine. The defences named Johnson's Jolly, and the Anzac position, Courtney's Post, ran along one edge of the depression; opposite was a projecting sub-spur named Mortar Ridge from the trench mortar batteries the enemy located there for the purpose of lobbing bombs across the hollow. At the head of the ravine, and where it was at once narrowest and steepest, was Quinn's Post, called after the gallant Major Quinn who had established it, and remained in command until he met a hero's end. Quinn's Post was in the centre of the Anzac front and at the point where the front was farthest from the coast-line. It was distinctly a post both of danger and of honour, for from here the Anzac front crossed the main spur and was overlooked from a higher part, called, from its shape, Battleship Hill. The enemy fortified the south slope of Battleship Hill with another maze of trenches named by the Australians the Chessboard. Quinn's Post barred the way along the main spur towards the coast. Fortunately, immediately to the left and on the north there was a bold hummock, Russell's Top, from which the ground before Quinn's Post could be swept by artillery and with machine-guns. Beyond Russell's Top the Anzac front, formed of No. 1, No. 2 and No. 3 Posts, crossed the ravine of the Salzi Beit and touched the coast again at the outlet of the Chailak Dere. North of Battleship Hill, and divided from it by the Salzi Beit ravine, the enemy held Rhododendron Spur, Table Top Mountain adjoining, Old Number 3 Post (a lower projection from Table Top Mountain facing towards the coast) and, on the farther side of the Chailak ravine, Bauchops Hill.

To sum up, the enemy, though it cost him heavy losses to do it, threw up during May and June eight important besides smaller defensive works, constituting, taken together and as completed, an extensive system. They were the Lone Pine work, the Mortar Ridge fortifications, the Chessboard, the Battleship Hill

defences, and the works on Rhododendron Spur, Table Top Mountain, Old No. 3 Post (converted into a powerful redoubt) and Bauchops Hill.

Quinn's men had pushed themselves to within a few feet of the Turkish entrenchments, and the Anzac line there ran along the very edge of the precipice with a sheer drop of 200 feet into the ravine below.

Bomb-lobbing not having had the desired effect, it was decided on the night of May 9 to clear the enemy out with the bayonet. First, the hostile trench was swept by a sudden fire in enfilade. Then Quinn's men went over the top. They were eager, and the work was quickly done. The sweep was clean.

This for the enemy was a nasty episode, for he was more anxious to hold up the Anzacs here than at any other point. Accordingly, at dawn (May 10) he pushed forward a heavy counter-attack. A massive column advanced along the main spur supported by a movement up the ravine. Nearing the lost trench line, the descending column had to wheel to left. This manœuvre exposed it to a raking fire from the Anzacs' guns on Russell's top. Their lost position was recovered, for it was evident that the enemy was prepared to pay any price for its recovery, but the two Turkish regiments forming the column were cut to pieces. Their total loss, according to the diary of a Turkish officer who was in this action, and whose notes were found at a later date, was 2,600 killed and wounded.

The miscellaneous fighting and the enemy's preparations went on after this as before. In a certain sense it was a continuous battle. It demanded on the part of the Anzacs, officers and men alike, a sleepless vigilance. Thus it was while in the fighting line on May 15 that Major-General W. T. Bridges, in command of the Australian Division, received the wound which proved fatal. Like the others he had not spared himself. He was as able as he was devoted.

Such sacrifices, however regrettable, were not in vain. The enemy's wastage in this close quarters fighting was severe—too severe by far for his liking. Another effort

therefore to crush the Anzacs had been determined upon, and this time it was to be no half and half affair. Whether the British command realised it or not, the enemy was perfectly well aware that if he could crumple up the Anzac force, the British enterprise at Cape Helles would not have the ghost of a chance. It was worth while, therefore, to make a resolute attempt.

From the reports of prisoners, which there was no reason not to accept as reliable, the Turkish force surrounding the position had been increased by the arrival of a further five regiments to 30,000 men, and General Liman von Sandars had himself for this operation taken over the command.

The attack, thus designed to wreck the whole British undertaking, began on May 18 by a sustained bombardment from every Turkish gun and howitzer, directed more particularly against the Anzac support trenches and lines of approach. At midnight the Turkish trenches blazed out in a fierce rifle and machine-gun fusillade. This went on for three hours. Then for a time the firing slackened. At four in the morning, however, there was another outburst, and the enemy troops having presumably by these demonstrations been worked up to the required pitch, a powerful Turkish column was descried in the first faint light of dawn moving against the right-centre, north of Lone Pine. The attack, met at short range, wavered, fell into confusion, and then broke. Another succeeded it. The probabilities appeared to be that the two had been intended to be concurrent, and against adjacent points, and that the timing had gone wrong. But the second column of assault was not allowed to shirk the onset like the first. Though it was beaten back also under the lash of shrapnel, and the storm of well-directed rifle bullets, its German officers rallied it and again it came on. No better fortune. The mass once more scurried to cover. There was a third rally. Brave, no doubt, but not less futile. A fourth rally followed, evidently after the arrival of reserves. The fourth assault withered like the others.

A further strong attack now developed to the north-east against the fourth section of the Anzac front, near the head of the little valley of the Sazli Beit. This assault proved not more prosperous. In the meanwhile the enemy had become pressing against Quinn's Post, and Courtney's Post adjoining. His attempt was, if possible, to drive in between the two.

Such was the situation when it became full daylight about 5 a.m. With the observation daylight offered the hostile heavy batteries began to lob shells into the Anzac trenches ; 12-inch shells and 9·2-inch. Supported by this shelling, the wedge-driving attempt was renewed, and it was kept up during the next five hours. It was defeated finally by the punishing effects of a raking fire poured into its left flank. An hour later the battle was over. After the great effort it had died down.

The Anzac line at all points had held firm, and the enemy's losses in these mass attacks had been the heaviest he had yet sustained. In front of the Anzac trenches his dead lay everywhere. There were three thousand of them at least, and at least twice as many more wounded. By comparison the Anzac losses were surprisingly light—not more than 100 killed and 500 wounded. It seems at first sight an almost incredible disproportion, but it is no new experience to find the losses of a force in battle in inverse ratio to its energy.

Some curious incidents followed upon this crushing reverse. On May 20 the Turks, exhibiting red crescent and white flags, sent out a staff officer to arrange informally and verbally an armistice for the collection of the dead and wounded. Stretcher parties were already out on both sides. Nevertheless, the Turkish trenches were observed to be crowded with men, and the Intelligence Service reported the movement of reinforcements behind the hostile lines.

In these circumstances the Anzac trenches were also manned, and General Birdwood deemed it prudent to notify the Turks that no collection of dead and wounded must take place after nightfall. He added that negotia-

tions for an armistice must be opened in a regular manner and concluded before noon on the following day.

In the meantime, the Turks had continued to concentrate. Just before darkness fell they opened a general bombardment accompanied by rifle and machine-gun fire. Then on the right of the Anzac front appeared lines of unarmed men holding up their hands. But behind were columns of attack, and it was readily divined both that the pretended armistice proposal had been a device to allow of an uninterrupted massing, and that the pretended surrenders were a ruse to steal forward without losses. The latter device, at any rate, failed to work. The attack had no heart in it. Neither, though both as regards rifle fire and that of machine-guns the night was stormy, had a renewed attempt against Quinn's Post. For the time being evidently the enemy had had enough.

However, on merely sanitary grounds a clearance of the battlefield was desirable. Many of the Turkish dead had been lying about for a week. For that reason a suspension of hostilities was formally arranged for May 24. On this occasion there was no attempt to depart from the terms.

Quinn's Post continued to be the enemy's special aversion, and efforts to take it by assault having proved impracticable, it had been decided to blow it up. Four galleries were driven in from below the Turkish trenches. Three were detected, counter-mined, and destroyed with the men working in them. The fourth, however, was not found out, with the result that in the small hours of May 29 (3.30 a.m.) the centre of Quinn's Post was upheaved by the explosion. Simultaneously a large party of Turkish bombers came over the top of their own position and broke in. The subsections on the right and left had been isolated. But Quinn was not to be cleared out so easily. He led his battalion, the 15th Australians, in a counter-attack with the bayonet. The Post was re-seized and every Turk in it killed or captured. It was in this fight that the heroic Major at last fell.

Learning of the defeat of his enterprise, the enemy gathered in force, put down a stiff artillery barrage, and launched another assault, headed by a numerous bombing party. The 15th, however, were not to be shaken. They had got their blood up, and, in the vernacular, they gave the enemy "hell." And as before more than once the enfilading fire of the Anzac batteries helped to rip the attacking force to pieces. The shooting was what the Americans call "dead sure." For nearly two hours one hostile attempt followed another. Not one of them could get a footing. And there was again an apparently surprising disproportion in the casualties. On the side of the Anzacs in the whole affair they amounted to no more than 31 killed and 188 wounded. Those on the part of the Turks were increased by their own men. Bombers had been employed to bowl missiles over the heads of the Turkish first line as it came on. But, from nervousness or excitement, the bombers lobbed most into the Turkish first line itself, and did the greater part of the business of blowing it to rags.

Unquestionably the brilliant Anzac victory of May 18–19 had for the time saved the Gallipoli force as a whole, and pointed the way to yet another opportunity; not, indeed, so good an opportunity as that already missed, but one not to be despised. The severity of the Turkish reverse may be judged from one fact, but a fact which is conclusive. No further attempt to oust the Anzacs by an assault in force was made until the end of June.

In face of an event of this kind, the bolder course was to take the ball at the bound. The psychological moment had arrived for a counter-attack. The Anzacs were confident of their prowess, and they had good cause to be.

But to begin with, General Hamilton did not consider his line before Achi Baba too strongly held. His losses there had been heavy, and the risks attending a reverse in so confined a space were the gravest. Again, independently of that, the re-transfer of troops to the Anzac position would take time. There was the question too

of artillery. Compared with the enemy's the equipment of the Anzacs in guns was light. True, there was the fleet, and the guns of the fleet were, or ought to have been, considered as to all intents part of the artillery equipment of the land force. It is doubtful if that view was taken. Nor is it certain, when the enemy's resources in guns were under review, if the difficulties of moving heavy pieces across a rugged country were fully taken into account. Further, General Hamilton, while in need of reinforcements, was not, though he had demanded them, certain when he would receive them. Finally, he was still, at this time, intent on his original dispositions, and had assigned to the Anzacs a definitely defensive *rôle*.

Opportunities, however, cannot thus be missed in war with impunity, and it was inevitable that the Expedition should become involved in yet deeper embarrassments.

Nevertheless, fortune seemed bent on proving kind if allowed. On the left of the line before Achi Baba the 29th Division had been strengthened by the 29th Brigade of Indian Infantry. The able officer in command of the Brigade, Major-General H. V. Cox, was quick to see the importance of the position along the bluffs above Y Beach. The position had been in the meantime converted by the enemy into a powerful bastion, and that circumstance ought to have demonstrated its tactical and strategical value. Efforts to capture the bastion by frontal attacks had been disastrous. All the same, Cox believed he saw a way by importing an element of brains into the business, of getting the bastion comparatively cheaply. He submitted his proposals, and was given leave to try.

For this service he selected the 6th Gurkhas. On the night of May 10 scouts belonging to that corps stole silently down to the level of the shore, and picking their way with the stealthiness of cats along the rocks at the bottom of the cliffs, crawled on all fours up the fissures and gullies. The enemy, on the appearance of these silent forms, took alarm, and indulged in a heavy

outburst of firing. The scouts retired. But they had proved that it was feasible to get in.

Nothing more happened during the next two days. The Turks were left in undisturbed possession, and in the undisturbed confidence of having thoroughly beaten the reconnaissance. But the plans for the attack were being carried out. There was to be a bombardment from seaward by the cruisers *Dublin* and *Talbot*, a bombardment from the land side by the artillery of the 29th Division, and under cover of this latter a feint frontal assault by the Manchesters. But, of course, the real attack was that of the Gurkhas. While the Turks were busy on the land side, and kept off the tops of the bluffs by the naval cannonade, the Gurkhas again stole down to sea level in the darkness, and silently mustered under the bluffs on Y Beach. Then a double company once more crawled up the gullies. Amid the roar of the guns they were not heard. Suddenly they rushed out of their lurking places and charged into the startled enemy with their kukris, the deadly axe-knife they wield with uncanny dexterity. This leading company worked towards the left. Three more double companies, the whole force under the command of Lieut.-Colonel C. G. Bruce, were pushed up, each taking its place on the right of that preceding it. The bastion was cleared, and connected by newly thrown up trenches with the former position of the 29th Brigade. It was a very neat and cleanly cut piece of work.

General Hamilton in his despatch spoke of it as a brilliant little affair. Justly estimated, it was much more.

The General, however, was concerned for the time for the maintenance of his line. Referring to the situation on May 11, he wrote :—

"The moment lent itself to reflection, and during this breathing space I was able to realise we had now nearly reached the limit of what could be attained by mingling initiative with surprise. The enemy was as much in possession of my numbers and dispositions as I was in possession of their first line of defence ; the opposing fortified fronts stretched from sea to Straits ;

there was little scope left now, either at Achi Baba or at Kaba Tepe for tactics which would fling flesh and blood battalions against lines of unbroken barbed wire. Advances must more and more tend to take the shape of concerted attacks on small sections of the enemy's line after full artillery preparation. Siege warfare was soon bound to supersede manœuvre battles in the open. Consolidation and fortification of our front, selection of machine-gun emplacements, and scientific grouping of our artillery under a centralised control, must ere long form the tactical basis of our plans."

There is hardly a statement in these reflections which is not unhappily disputable. The limit had not been reached for manœuvre battles in the open. As the affair of Gurkha bluffs—they were from this date so called—had shown, there was no need for flinging flesh and blood battalions against unbroken lines of barbed wire. That kind of thing was merely rash, and it was not war. There was, with a naval force which, energetically employed, might have wrecked every defence work the enemy put up, no reason why lines of barbed wire should have remained unbroken, much less have been attacked while in that state.

Not apparently taking that view, General Hamilton set about the disposition of his force for the contemplated siege operations. In order to organise in depth he formed the line into four sections : on the left the 29th Division, with the 29th Indian Brigade ; on the left-centre the 42nd (East Lancashire) Division ; on the right-centre the Naval Division ; on the right the French, now commanded by General Gouraud. A second division of the French Expeditionary Corps, under the command of General Bailloud, had just been landed.

Thus matters drifted on through the month of May and to the beginning of June, the limited space in which the Allied troops before Achi Baba were confined, the steadily growing heat of the summer, the water problem, the supplies and transport problems, and not least, the vermin, all combining to prove how little practicable siege warfare was in such a situation. There were

sundry advances against " small sections of the enemy's line," but in truth they effected nothing and meant nothing. The sufferings and endurance of the troops, borne with the most patient spirit, were without fruit.

Observing no enterprise in the Kaba Tepe quarter, and freed from anxiety on that account—there can be little question that this was his main anxiety—the enemy harassed the troops before Achi Baba by counter-attacks. They were not successful in taking positions, but it is quite clear that that did not signify. The object was to wear the Allies out.

Since a merely passive attitude was manifestly futile, General Hamilton determined upon a general attack for June 4.

He had under his command, independently of the French, a total of 24,000 bayonets. Of these he proposed to employ 17,000 in the assault, and hold 7,000 as a reserve.

The dispositions of the troops from left to right were those already stated.

The object was to capture the enemy's defences from the Kereves Dere to the Ægean.

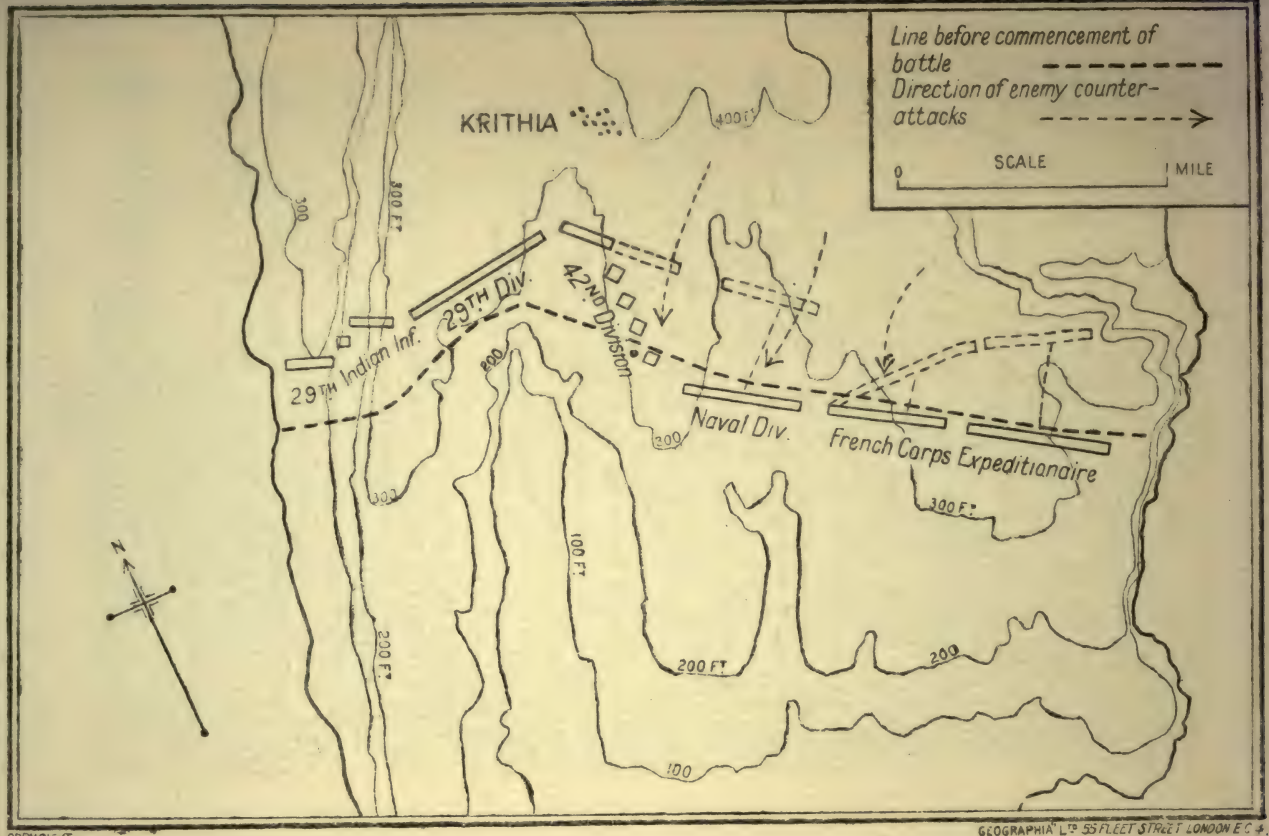
Opening at 8 a.m., the Allied bombardment was kept up for two hours and a half. Then there was an interlude of half an hour, and a renewed cannonade lasting twenty minutes. At the end of that time a feint attack took place to draw the enemy's fire and disclose his machine-gun positions. That done, the Allied batteries re-opened, and pounded these positions and the hostile trenches for another half-hour.

The range was then lengthened, and at noon the Allied infantry from extreme right to extreme left went forward en masse.

The assault had varying fortunes.

On the right the French 2nd Division carried the " Haricot " redoubt, and the 1st Division a line of trenches. The French left was held.

The *Anson* battalion of the Naval Division got a footing in another redoubt, and the Division as a whole seized the Turkish first line of defence works.



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On their left the Manchester Brigade of the 42nd Division having cleared the Turks out of the first line of defences within a few minutes, pushed on and attacked the second line 600 yards farther forward.

The stiffest resistance was offered to the 29th Division on the left. This was plainly in the enemy's estimation, and in fact, the point that mattered.

Nevertheless the 88th Brigade also took the first line of the hostile works.

Of the 29th Indian Brigade, the 14th Sikhs pushed forward despite very heavy losses, but the corps on their left flank was held up by a barbed-wire barricade, which the guns had, it turned out, left intact. Beyond this barricade and nearer the coast, some of the 6th Gurkhas went forward along the tops of the bluffs and seized a redoubt, but like the 14th Sikhs, they found themselves in the air. The Gurkhas had to retire.

Reinforcements were now pushed up towards the left with the intention of renewing the attack in that quarter. This disclosed a fault in the tactics of the battle. Instead of a dead level frontal attack the main pressure should from the first have been applied on the Allied left, and the enemy's defences in that quarter more especially hammered by the fleet. Of course the enemy had sited his trenches as far as possible so that his wire barricade should escape being cut. So much was to be expected.

Observing the movement of reinforcements towards the Allied left the enemy threw the weight of his counter-attack against the Allied right.

The "Haricot" redoubt was lost, and the French, overborne by numbers, compelled to fall back.

In doing so they uncovered the right of the Naval Division. Attacked at once in front and flank that Division had in turn to give way. The enemy there also recovered his lost line, and forced the Division back upon its original position.

The right flank of the 42nd Division was now exposed. It held on tenaciously, but the losses under the cross fire by which it was raked were heavy.

To meet this situation the right of the Division was "refused," but the situation became more and more difficult.

In the hope of restoring the fortunes of the day a fresh attack by the Naval Division and the French was called for. General Gouraud found, however, that he could not undertake it. His troops, who had fought stubbornly against odds, were too spent.

For six hours the 42nd Division held on, still keeping the footing they had won in the Turkish second line, their right "refused" to the first line. But at half-past six in the afternoon, when it finally was evident the French Corps could not forthwith co-operate further, the order for the 42nd to withdraw was issued. The men received it with rage, notwithstanding that the majority of the officers, including the Brigadier of the Manchesters, had fallen.

So closed this disastrous day. The battle had been a reverse and a costly reverse. It might have been an important victory. In the qualities of the troops there was all the making of success. The belated reinforcement of the 29th Division had achieved nothing.

After this, for a space of three weeks, pending the arrival of a further supply of shell, the operations once more settled down to siege warfare.

On June 21, since the enemy had been strengthening his defences along the Kereves Dere, the French Corps undertook an assault which resulted in the capture of about half a mile of these works, and they were held despite repeated counter-attacks. In this action the Turkish losses were extremely severe. Men were sacrificed in the counter-attacks with extraordinary ruthlessness. At a reasonable estimate the total of these losses could not have been less than 7,000 men. The French losses were 2,500.

During the interval since the battle of June 4, the plan of operations had been under discussion at headquarters. It had become evident that to act upon the like lines again would give no better results. General Hunter-Weston now, therefore, suggested an attack with

the object of pressing the enemy back on the Allied left and turning his flank resting on the coast. Seeing that the operations were theoretically at all events of an amphibious character, partly naval and partly military, that was both tactically and strategically the hostile weak spot. And it was evident that the enemy was well aware of it, because he had here in the meantime thrown up five lines of trenches, whereas at the other extremity of his front on the Straits, he was content to rely upon two.

Still, though he had as it were been allowed to get in first, the proposal of General Hunter-Weston was agreed to. The attack was fixed for June 28.

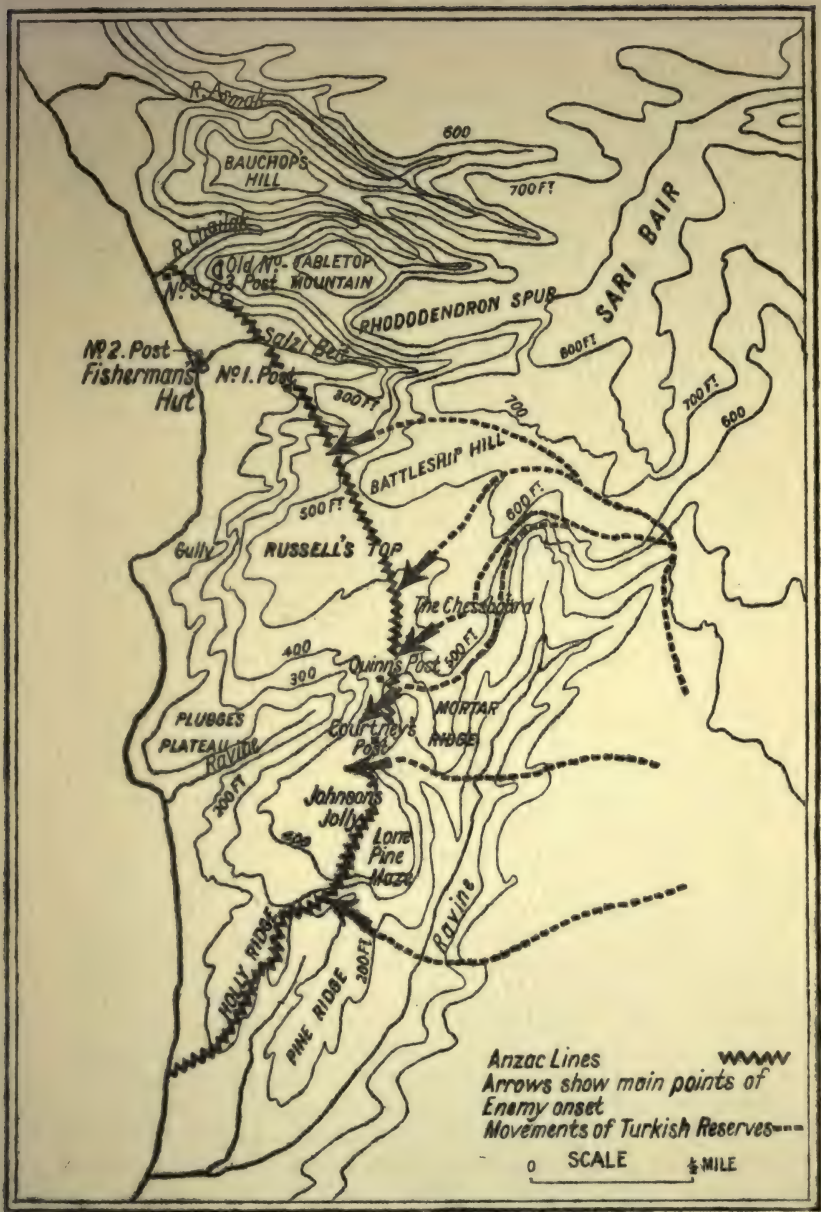
It proved successful. The five lines of trenches abutting upon the coast were carried, as well as a spur running out from the coast ridge beyond them. The British casualties in this action were not more than 1,750 killed and wounded.

Then began on the part of the enemy a series of counter-attacks at this point, renewed day by day and often night by night. The Turkish losses were heavy.

These operations contiguous to the coast were the cause of the renewed enemy attempt against the Anzacs. The Overseas Corps had in the interim been left fulfilling its second-fiddle *rôle*, more troubled with lice than with Turks. Evidently, nevertheless, the enemy, after the action of June 28 before Achi Baba and its outcome, seems to have concluded, and not unnaturally, that dangerous intentions were afoot. His anxieties regarding the Anzacs were revived, and he made another attempt to get rid of them.

This time Enver Pasha came down from Constantinople to see to it that the attempt was not abortive.

The attack was designed as a surprise, and in view of the deadly shooting of the Southern warriors was planned as a night affair. The enemy kept quiet until midnight (June 29). Then all along the line his trenches suddenly burst out into rifle fire, amid which his machine-guns kept up an angry rattle. An hour and a half of that sort of thing, sufficient it was no doubt supposed



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to affect the Anzacs' nerves, and render their shooting less steady, and a strong column came on through the darkness against the part of the front (right-centre) held by the 7th and 8th Australian Light Horse, commanded by Major-General Sir A. J. Godley. Quinn's Post and Courtney's Post were left severely alone. Nothing, however, was gained by the change. The Light Horse, who had been spoiling for the encounter, shot the attacking column to ribbons. Good as he has often proved himself to be behind defences, the Turk was not equal to work of this kind. A second attack against the Anzac left, down the Sulzi Beit ravine, met with no better fate. It may be inferred that Enver Pasha went back to Constantinople disillusioned.

Early in May General Hamilton had come to the conclusion that if the enterprise in Gallipoli was not on its military side to degenerate into a deadlock he would need two more army corps. By the end of June he had received as reinforcements another French division, that of General Bailloud, the 29th Brigade of Indian Infantry, and after an interval of several weeks, the 52nd (Lowland) Division. All were employed on the line before Achi Baba.

His strength was still three brigades below his estimate, and there was the wastage in the meantime to be taken into account, but the arrival of the 52nd Division led him on July 12 to follow up the attack of June 28 by a further effort to oust the enemy from the positions between Krithia and the Kereves valley.

On the Allied left the Turkish front had been pushed back until it was close upon Krithia, but on the Allied right and in the centre, where, in truth, the opportunities were more favourable to the defence, comparatively little progress had been made. The front had tended to slew round and now extended across the peninsula from sea to Straits laterally.

Strategically there was every advantage in turning the enemy's right provided that meanwhile a hostile counter-attack against the Allied right could be held. The danger of such a counter-attack, were it to break

the Allied front, would be the uncovering of the landing places. Experience, however, had greatly discounted that probability. The enemy's repeated counter-attacks with the object of recovering the positions seized from him along the coast bluffs showed, too, that his concern lay in that direction. And that concern was well justified. There is just beyond Krithia, and between that village and the sea a broad rounded hill, 472 feet in height, the main hummock of the coast bluffs. The Indian troops were already established on its southern spur, and its capture would have outflanked the Achi Baba defences, for between this hill and Achi Baba (709 feet high) lies only a shallow depression. It would have been to the last degree perilous, not to say impossible, for the enemy to have thrown his weight into a counter-attack against the opposite extreme of the Allied line while he was thus exposed to a probably fatal manœuvre. The main hummock of the coast ridge was the key position.

But General Hamilton apparently still thought the defences of Achi Baba might be carried by a frontal assault.

The object of this action, begun on July 12, was to seize the foremost system of the enemy's defences between the Kereves valley and the Krithia road, a distance of 2,000 yards. Manifestly, however, even if successful, nothing decisive could come of it.

The real attack was to be delivered by the French and by the recently arrived 52nd (Lowland) Division. Operations on the Allied left by the 29th Division were intended simply to be a diversion. This was a tactical mistake.

The assault by the French and Scottish troops, delivered after a heavy bombardment, broke through the first two lines of the hostile trenches. The Scottish (155th Brigade), indeed, went right through the enemy defences, and finding no further obstacles in front of them charged forward up the long southern slope of the mountain, the Turks broken and in full retreat. The Scotsmen were arrested not by the enemy, but by

the barrage of the French guns. The 4th King's Own Borderers, who were leading, dashed right into this hurricane of shrapnel. They were cut to pieces, and had to fall back upon the Turkish second line. The plan of operations had been worked out in detail and to time-table. It had been too much worked out; it was mechanical, and like the similarly elaborated plan of the landings, allowed nothing for favourable accidents and opportunities.

Naturally, behind and beyond the barrage which had thus proved fatal to brave men, the enemy rallied. The propitious moment had come and gone. Inevitably, too, exposed telephone wires to forward positions had been cut by the Turkish fire. Counter-attacking, the enemy recovered parts of his second line. Allied reserves had to be rushed up. From a brilliant beginning the fighting relapsed into confusion and uncertainty. In the afternoon—the battle had opened early in the forenoon—the 157th Brigade (Lowland Division) were thrown forward according to the original scheme of the assault. They carried the trenches which had been allocated to them to seize, but under heavy machine-gun and rifle fire. There had been an advance of between 200 and 400 yards along the front, taking it as a whole as far as the Krithia road. The aims of the Gallipoli Expedition, however, had not been advanced one inch.

During the night the enemy, having recovered from his initial demoralisation, delivered repeated counter-attacks, and finally at daybreak pushed back part of the 157th Brigade, which had then been fighting without intermission for nearly twenty hours. To restore the situation and clear the Turk out of his recaptured footholds in the second line the Allied assault was on the afternoon of July 13 renewed. It was now supported by the Naval Division. These fresh troops also broke through the hostile front, and the Portsmouth Battalion, charging home, ran into the barrage of the French guns. They were cut up like the Borderers. That a sanguinary blunder of this kind could have taken place two days

running is surely a condemnation of unintelligent exactitude. Even though asked to take Achi Baba by the method of putting the cart before the horse the infantry were not allowed to do it if the " plans " had to be departed from.

The Allied casualties in this battle were 3,000 men killed and wounded. True the Turkish losses were much heavier, but the battle had no effect upon the fortunes of the Expedition, save to exhaust its resources. There could not have been a more completely Pyrrhic victory.

CHAPTER X

GALLIPOLI: THE CHANGE OF PLANS AND THE BATTLE FOR SARI BAIR

Final effort in Gallipoli decided upon—British reinforcements—Change of plan belated—Enemy's increased strength and confidence—Problems of supplies and water—New British dispositions—The weak point of the scheme—Battle before Achi Baba, August 7–9—Birdwood's scheme for the capture of Sari Bair—Its merits—The Anzac "break out"—Capture of the Lone Pine defences—Operations of the Right and Left assaulting columns and advance guards—Brilliant night attacks—Advance up the Sari Bair ravines—The line advanced to below Chanak Bair—Delay in pushing up supports—The landing of the 10th and 11th Divisions at Suvla—Success of the disbarkation—Crisis of the Sari Bair action—A question of reserves—Fatal hesitation—The enemy's bold counter-stroke—Renewed British assault repulsed—Further advance ordered, and the summit gained—and lost—Third attack supported by Baldwin's column—Its late arrival—Advance checked—Enemy's supreme effort of August 10—Baldwin's right turned—His force cut up—Failure of the British plan.

So far the operations in Gallipoli, both naval and military, had been futile, but the British Government had decided upon one more effort before writing off the enterprise, and in June had resolved to send out three additional divisions of Regular troops, and the infantry of two divisions of Territorials. The whole of these reinforcements were to be in the Levant by August 10; the advance guard to reach Mudros a month earlier.

In view of this important accession to his forces, General Hamilton had to make up his mind what to do with it. He records that he considered various alternatives. Among them was a project for throwing all the reinforcements ashore on the southern toe of the peninsula, and fighting a way forward to the Narrows

by hammering at the Achi Baba defences. This was given up because the space available did not allow of the employment of such a mass. The project, indeed, was impracticable on the face of it. Another idea was to land the reinforcements on the Asiatic side of the Straits. The idea was unsound, and on examination proved to be unsound. Yet another notion was to land at Enos, or Ebrijie, at the head of the Gulf of Saros, and seize the neck of the Gallipoli peninsula at Bulair. It was abandoned because of Naval objections based on the difficulties of landing. The fourth project was to reinforce the Anzacs, and to initiate an offensive from that position, combined with a push on the front before Achi Baba and a landing at Suvla Bay. This fourth project was that determined upon.

Thus finally, and after much groping, the right plan was at the beginning of July perceived. In the interval, however, circumstances had changed. The enemy had taken the measure of the British attack. He knew his own weak and strong points perfectly, and he had been able to fortify himself. More than that, he had been able to an important extent to add to his numbers. The German offensive of 1915 against Russia, at this time in full swing, had freed the Turks not only from the fear of dangerous pressure in the Caucasus and Armenia, but from the apprehension of a Russian descent near Constantinople on the shores of the Black Sea, and the Turkish troops held at Constantinople to guard against that contingency had been set free for operations in Gallipoli. Furthermore, the news of the German advance into Russia had heightened the *moral* and re-established the confidence of the Turkish forces. In Mesopotamia the British had lost Kut ; Syria appeared to be absolutely safe ; there was as yet no stir among the Arabs. At no moment of the War, since its extension to Turkey, was there wider freedom to concentrate the strength of the Empire upon this threatened point at the Dardanelles.

Circumstances had decidedly changed. Opportunities had been lost which it was hardly reasonable to expect

would again present themselves. The plan at length hit upon was right, but its execution had become vastly more difficult, and its success far more problematical.

The proof of the added difficulty is afforded by the Turkish dispositions. The new enemy troops drafted into Gallipoli were massed not against the Allies at Achi Baba, but against the Anzacs. At the beginning of August the estimated strength of the enemy was 110,000 rifles besides artillery, and the total of all arms and services could hardly have been less than 175,000 men. Of this force two-thirds, comprising 75,000 rifles, were opposed to the Australians. The enemy's defences before Achi Baba enabled him to carry on there with economy of his resources. Nor was he inclined to waste his resources where there was no demand for them. Whether or not he was informed of this fresh British effort, and judging from his measures he apparently was, he at any rate was fully prepared for it, and it is clear had accurately inferred where the blow was to fall.

General Hamilton states that during the month in which the British reinforcements were arriving he had various schemes for hoodwinking the Turks—a landing by 300 men on the northern shore of the Gulf of Saros; a concentration of warships at Mitylene; a demonstration by the French naval squadron along the mainland coast opposite that island; inspections at Mitylene by the Admiral and himself, and other proceedings which he thinks for the most part bore fruit. It is doubtful. The real matters of concern were the dispersal of the enemy's strength from before the Anzac position and the hampering of the enemy's dispositions, not by wasting shell against his defences, but by a sustained naval bombardment of the nodal points of his communications. There were several of these points, and all were well within range of the naval guns—Karnabili, Kum Keui, Boghali, the road junction at the head of Kilia Leman Bay in the Narrows, Maidos, Eski Keui, and the road junction at the head of the Asmak valley. To have

made these points impassable and kept them impassable would have tied the Turkish defence into knots. Yet the movement of the enemy's troops, guns, munitions and other supplies does not seem to have been seriously impeded.

There was all the more necessity for leaving nothing to chance if that could be avoided, because the British strength, even with the full reinforcements, did not exceed 95,000 rifles, and, fortified as the Turks now were, this force, inferior in numbers, was in truth being asked to undertake an exceptional feat of arms. The backbone of the whole enterprise was undoubtedly the Allied fleet, as it had been from the beginning, and it was not that the sailors did not do the work assigned to them with thoroughness and skill. They did. But the real support needed was more than that given in the actual land fighting.

The British Headquarters were more concerned meanwhile with working out the plans of the proposed attack. Many of the problems of detail were far from easy. There was no base commodious enough to accommodate five more divisions, even less the artillery of two. The reinforcements had to be distributed between the islands of Mudros, Imbros, and Mitylene. They had to be put ashore at Anzac and at Suvla Bay with their material, munitions and stores. They had adequately to be supplied with water, for it was now the hottest period of the summer, and in the ravines and gullies of Gallipoli the temperature was tropical. An additional 1,750 water carts and 3,700 mules had to be provided and landed. To grapple with the water problem the measures taken were first the construction within the Anzac lines of a reservoir to hold 30,000 gallons, fitted with pumps, and connected with a system of distribution pipes and tanks; and next the collection from Egypt, India and elsewhere of camel tanks, pakhals (water skins), petrol tins, and milk cans, to hold 100,000 gallons more. A cargo of these was lost owing to the steamer on which they had been shipped coming into collision with another vessel, but enough were got together to

hold 80,000 gallons. However looked at, the undertaking as a whole was a gigantic business. It would have been a big affair had the landing places been adequate. The landing places were of necessity inadequate, improvised and under hostile fire, and the disbarkation of every separate unit of the force had to be schemed out as an operation by itself. There is no doubt this detailed part of the work was well done.

By the transfer to and landing at Anzac of the 10th Division, part of the 13th and the 29th Indian Infantry Brigade, the force under the command of General Birdwood had been increased to 37,000 infantry and 72 guns. The supporting naval force consisted of two cruisers, four monitors, and two destroyers. It was inadequate. The landing of the reinforcements at Anzac took place on the nights of August 4, 5 and 6, and in the quietest hours.

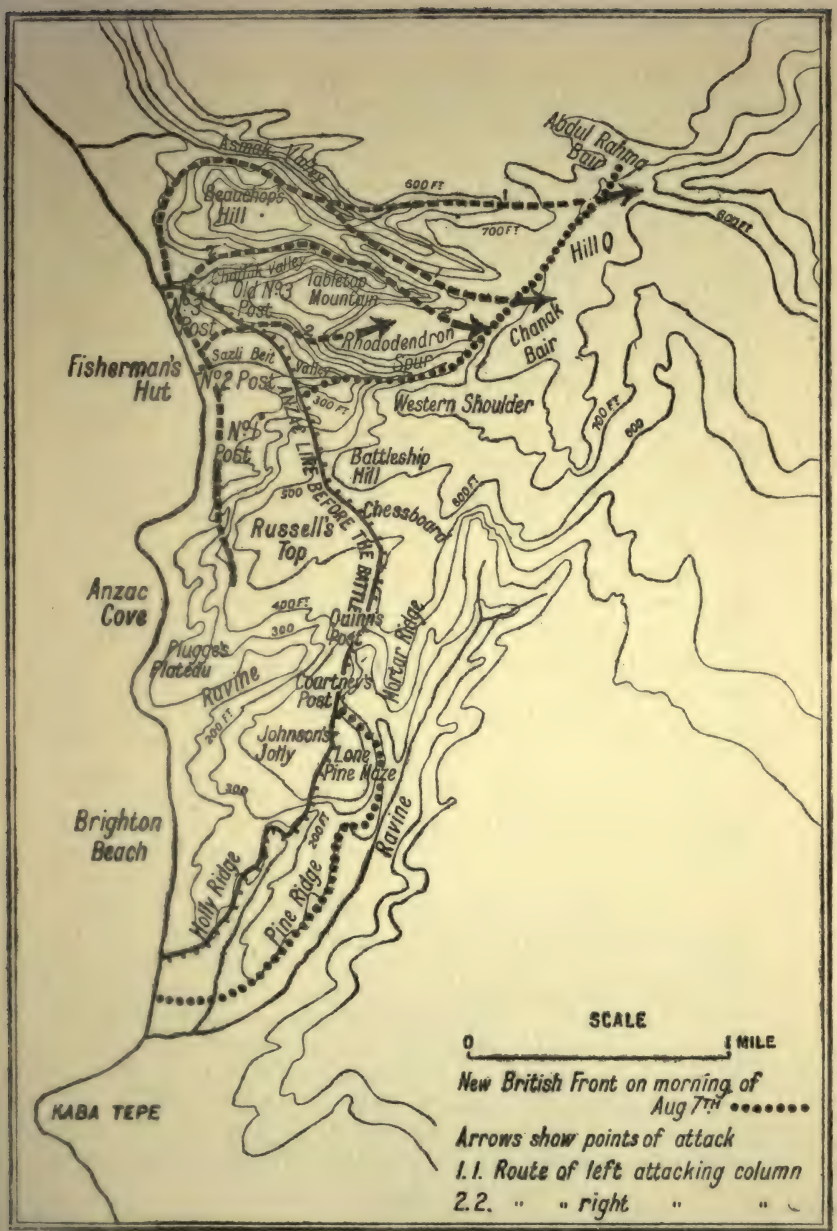
The attack before Achi Baba (a diversion), the attack from Anzac, and the landing of the 9th Army Corps at Suvla, were all timed in the programme to take place on August 6. They were to be, to all intents, simultaneous. As regards the landing at Suvla, this was a mistake. To have embarrassed the enemy's dispositions and to have thinned him out before Sari Bair, the landing at Suvla should have taken place at least a day earlier.

For these operations the British dispositions marked out were: Before Achi Baba 23,000 British and 17,000 French infantry; at Anzac 37,000 infantry; at Suvla 30,000 infantry. Of course means of transport and difficulties of landing largely controlled this distribution, but since the force at Anzac was intended to deliver what General Hamilton described as "the knock-out blow," it was evidently not very strong for the purpose. Taking the Anzac and Suvla forces together as 67,000 rifles, there was a chance, but if anything went wrong with the Suvla operations, then General Birdwood would be left to face a hostile superiority of something like two to one. Since, too, the plans had been changed and the line before Achi Baba had become the Allied flanking

movement, the activity of the very considerable force there, 40,000 rifles in all, should have been more than a diversion. Now was the time to press the Achi Baba attack on sound strategical lines with all the vigour possible. A merely spasmodic assault at Achi Baba was a weak spot in the British scheme. It was clear that the enemy's primary object was to crush the Anzac offensive, and that the success or failure of that offensive must to no small extent depend upon preventing him by pressure elsewhere from giving effect to his design. The Allied force before Achi Baba was the main means of prevention, the force landed at Suvla only secondary. And this bad spot in the British scheme was the main cause of its failure. The enemy wisely had his greatest weight at the point of attack; the British commander his greatest effective weight elsewhere, and during part of the time passive. It was an attempt to snatch victory with one hand.

The operations on the front before Achi Baba need only be briefly dealt with. The assault of August 6 was directed against some 1,200 yards of hostile trenches on the British right and right-centre—the wrong point again. It was delivered at daybreak (3.50 a.m.) and by part of the 29th Division and the 42nd Division. The enemy was encountered in superior force. Despite its signal bravery the assault failed.

On the following morning (August 7) the Turks counter-attacked, but on their side also achieved no success. The same afternoon the British offensive was resumed, this time in the centre of the line against Turkish defences between the Mallepe Dere and the Kanli Dere. The hottest of the fighting was in and around a vineyard just west of the Krithia road. The East Lancashires had captured this position in the first rush, and held on to it notwithstanding counter-attacks which followed one another at brief intervals. Up and down the enclosure over a length of not more than 600 feet the struggle swayed. One Turkish column after another came on, pressed back the East Lancashire men by weight of numbers, melted away, and



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were chased out. The ranks of the Fusiliers, too, were thinned, and the enemy, determined to oust them, threw forward a column double the depth of those so far thrown forward. But that also was wrecked. Through the night the vineyard remained in the hands of these dauntless British troops. On the morning of August 8 the enemy came on once more. Once more he was beaten. He tried again at night, and he failed again. It was a desperate encounter, bayonet against bayonet, and the Turk went down. On August 9, after forty-eight hours' fighting, the East Lancashires were relieved. The position remained part of the British line.

These comparatively limited attacks upon the front before Achi Baba had kept the enemy there occupied, but it would be going far to say that they materially affected his dispositions. It is clear that they did not.

In the offensive from the Anzac position the troops under the command of General Birdwood were to carry the Turks' confining defences, and to storm the ridges and summit of Sari Bair. That was a large order in the face of a numerically much stronger opposing force, even had the pressures on the Achi Baba front on the one hand and from Suvla Bay on the other been fully applied.

The details of this offensive were left to General Birdwood, and considering the force at his disposal, and the nature of the country to be covered, his tactics were sound and able.

Part of the force—the Australian Division with the 1st and 3rd Light Horse Brigades, and two battalions of the 40th Brigade—were to hold the Anzac position and occupy the enemy with attacks launched from it, more especially on the Anzac right.

The New Zealand and Australian Division, less the two Light Horse Brigades just mentioned; part of the 13th Division; and the 29th Brigade of Indian Infantry were to move out upon Sari Bair, with the highest ridge of the massif, that of the Chanuk Bair, as their objective.

The 29th British Brigade (less one battalion) and the 38th Brigade were held in reserve.

The general plan by which the operations of the first two parts of the force were to dovetail together was this. The attacks from the Anzac position were to be made on the right and centre drawing the strength of the enemy as far as possible in that direction, that is, to the south of the main Sari Bair massif. The missile troops coincidentally were to move out from the position to the north, and turning inland strike up the ravines leading to the summit from the west and north-west. This gave them the prospect of getting on the enemy's right flank. The attack up the ravines was to be made by night.

Obviously the offensive opened with an assault on the Lone Pine defences. That work had been heavily wired in, and the Turkish trenches were roofed with strong beams of pine, proof against any save the heaviest shells. They formed a maze at once intricate and dark, and they were connected up by blind saps with other defences north, east and south.

This attack, schemed out in detail by Major-General Walker, commandant of the 1st Australian Division, and carried out by the 1st Australian Brigade (Brigadier-General N. M. Smyth) was in the circumstances a remarkable success. To reach the enemy works at all it was necessary for the Australians to race across the open exposed to fire not only in front but on both flanks. The barbed-wire entanglement had to be negotiated, and then it became a question of getting in and there was no way in save by demolishing the head cover. Very few troops have ever had to face such an attempt. Not merely, however, did these Australians refuse to waver under the converging fire poured in upon them, and not only did they steeplechase over the entanglement, but, though the hostile loopholes were spitting fire right and left, the spectacle was witnessed of bodies of men as with one impulse seizing and lifting the heavy beams and crashing them into the trenches beneath. A shower of bombs hurled through the openings thus

made, and the assailants were in with the bayonet. It was all a matter of minutes at the outside. In a quarter of an hour after they had gone over their own top, the 3rd and 4th Battalions of the Brigade were down amid the labyrinth Turk hunting. The 2nd Battalion caught the Turks as they bolted from the burrows. The work upon which the enemy had put in weeks of labour fell at the first blow.

Of course, such a defeat was not to be accepted passively, for, in fact, it broke the Turks' left front. The Australians had not been at the work of organising the captured maze more than half an hour when there began the first of a series of reactions which were kept up during the next six days, with interludes of bombing and sniping in between. In resisting these assaults, some of them delivered with an almost frenzied determination, the Australians showed a valour not less unbeatable than that of their first onset. They were pitted against an apparently overwhelming weight of numbers, a mere Brigade, mustering 2,000 rifles to start with, against some 25,000 of the enemy, and an enemy utterly reckless as to his losses. But nothing could shift them, though every Turkish-German battery within range was focussed upon the position. Day and night these Australians stuck it. Their losses were heavy—inevitably; the fatigue they endured seemed beyond human powers; but their fire was as rapid, straight and deadly at the end of the week as at its beginning, and they were not less terrible at close quarters. The Turk was never able to retake Lone Pine.

There can be no doubt that this Australian attack at Lone Pine, the outcome of which must have been a startling surprise, had all the effect in diverting the enemy's weight it was intended to have, and there can be no doubt it contributed most materially to ease the first stages of the operations against Chanuk Bair. Other holding attacks delivered against German works opposite to Russell's Top served the like purpose. It was mainly owing to these and the enemy's doubt as to whether there was to be a break out on the Australian

left or on the right, that the missile force got through with comparatively little opposition.

That force had been disposed in two columns, of assault, each preceded by a covering column or advance guard. The command was entrusted to Major-General Sir A. J. Godley.

The Right Assaulting Column was to move up towards Chanuk Bair by the Salzi Beit and Chailak ravines; the Left Assaulting Column to move up by the Aghyl ravine. The Salzi Beit runs south-west from the summit; the Chailak west; the Aghyl north-west. The whole movement was a converging one.

But to render it feasible the Turkish defences of Old No. 3 Post, and on Table Top Mountain, lying between the Salzi Beit and Chailak ravines, had first to be seized. That was the work assigned to the Right Covering Column. In carrying out this duty the Right Covering Column would, while opening up the two ravines, protect the flank of the Left Covering Column as it moved further north along the coast, in order to seize on the farther side of the Aghyl ravine the Damajelik Bair and by doing so bar the enemy's access to the Aghyl Dere from the direction of Suvla.

The Right Covering Column, which first got to work, consisted of the New Zealand Mounted Rifles Brigade; the Otago Mounted Rifles; the Maori Contingent; and the New Zealand Field Troop; Brigadier-General A. H. Russell, sponsor of Russell's Top, in command.

Old No. 3 Post might, clumsily handled, have proved a very ticklish bit, but Brigadier Russell did not intend to handle it clumsily. On the contrary he finished it off within ten minutes. The story of the ruse is well known, but will stand re-telling.

Until May 30 this seaward facing spur had been in the hands of the Anzacs. It was an important point tactically, because it commanded the entrances to the ravines on either side, and to a certain extent the beach in front, a quarter mile distant. Having captured it the enemy set out in his usual fashion to render it "impregnable." He converted it into a redoubt,

protected overhead by a covering of heavy beams, and in front on the south slope by two lines of fire trenches, strong entanglements, and various outworks, the whole as pretty a bit of German military engineering as could be wished for.

On successive nights, by arrangement, the cruiser *Colne*, focussing her searchlight on the redoubt, had pumped shell on to it for ten minutes; then for ten minutes had shut off. Next, for ten minutes more there had been a second turn of searchlight and bombardment. Care was taken that this performance should begin every evening at nine precisely, and end precisely at half-past. It was surmised that during that half-hour the Turks in the redoubt would have the good sense to clear out.

On the night of the attack by the Right Covering Column (August 6) the performance by *Colne* broke out as customary, and on time. While it was in progress the New Zealanders had moved forward and, unheard amid the boom of the cruiser's guns, had scrambled through the scrub on to the spur behind the work. The shelling over they rushed in. It was as expected. The redoubt was empty.

The garrison had betaken themselves through the saps to the outworks, and it is not hard to imagine their astonishment to find the New Zealanders coming after them the same way. Thus attacked from its keypoint the position was indefensible.

Old No. 3 Post taken, the Covering Column divided. Part struck across the Chailak ravine to Bauchops Hill half a mile to the north, and brought off another surprise. They cleared out an extensive maze of trenches, held by a much more numerous force. But terror and darkness multiplied the portent. The other detachment pushing along the spur from the redoubt scaled the declivities of Table Top Mountain. The feat was considered an impossibility, and the Turks holding the small circular plateau forming the top must have been hardly less astonished than their fellows in Old No. 3 Post. They put up a stiff fight but it was brief. Some 150, finding

themselves surrounded, laid down their arms. Table Top was an enemy depot, a kind of upper shelf reckoned exceptionally safe. The haul of rifles, ammunition, equipment and stores was encouraging.

Russell had handled his troops with skill and daring, relying upon their initiative and resourcefulness. And those qualities were not least conspicuously displayed in an ugly bit of work presented by an entanglement obstructing the bed of the Chailak. The Otago Mounted Rifles were held up by this heavy and broad fencing, which the enemy posted to guard it were evidently ready to defend to the last. But the Maoris, helped by a party of New Zealand Engineers, were not long in finding a way round. The work of the Right Covering Column had now been done, well done, and with light losses.

The Left Covering Column, under the command of Brigadier Travers, was not less successful. It consisted of two battalions—the 4th South Wales Borderers and the 5th Wiltshires, with half the 72nd Field Company. To reach its objective, the Damajelik Bair, it had to execute a march of rather more than three miles over rugged country, and of course in the darkness. The prompt capture by Russell's force of Old No. 3 Post, however, cleared the way across the Chailak valley. On the farther side, passing between westward slope of Bauchop's Hill and the coast, the column came under the enemy's fire from the higher ground, but this occupation with the Left Covering Column had contributed to the successful surprise assault by Russell's men. Across the Aghyl the Left Column was deployed and launched against the Turkish trenches on Damajelik Bair with the bayonet. One line of defences was cleared after another in dashing style. This fighting went on coincidentally with that on Bauchop's Hill on the other side of the ravine, and the two positions were finally cleared very nearly at the same time—a little after one in the morning.

An hour earlier the Right Assaulting Column had entered the Salzi Beit and Chailak ravines, its immediate

objective the capture of Rhododendron Spur. That protrusion linked Table Top Mountain with the part of the central summit known as Chanuk Bair, and its seizure meant access to the main ridge.

The Column—Brigadier-General F. E. Johnson in command—was formed of the New Zealand Infantry Brigade, a Company of the New Zealand Engineers, and an Indian Mountain Battery.

The main attack upon Rhododendron Spur was to be delivered from the Chailak slope—the Spur rose between the two ravines—supported by a diversion along the Salzi Beit by the Canterbury Infantry Battalion. That corps, passing under Table Top Mountain, reached the lower slopes of the Spur, on the Salzi Beit side, by half-past one, but by this time the enemy, alarmed, and rightly alarmed, by the rapid loss of four of his fortified positions, had pretty plainly satisfied himself that the real danger lay in this quarter. He was already, therefore, reinforcing in all haste at the head of both valleys.

The resistance encountered by the Canterbury Battalion was stiff, and they were not strong enough alone to carry the Turkish entrenchments. Nor was it, in fact, intended that they should operate alone. In the Chailak ravine, meanwhile, the main body, pioneered by the Otago Battalion, found the going difficult. The ravine was thickly overgrown with scrub; the bed of the river obstructed by pitfalls; the Turks in force. But the Turks were less an obstacle than the brushwood. It was a quarter to six in the morning before the force, pushing as far as the Rhododendron Spur, was able to move up it in touch with the Canterbury men.

The Left Assaulting Column, however, represented the real weight of the attack. The command, entrusted to Major-General H. V. Cox, who had proved his merits in the affair of the Gurkha bluffs, was formed of two brigades—the 29th Indian Infantry and the 4th Australian—and like the Right Column, was accompanied by an Indian Mountain Battery and a Company of New Zealand Engineers.

The orders of this force were to move up to and seize the main ridge by way of the Aghyl ravine.

It entered the ravine immediately after its advance guard, the Left Covering Column, and moving up took the enemy completely by surprise. The Turks ran, throwing away their arms in their flight.

Half-way up the Aghyl valley forks. One branch, that to the right, led up to the part of the central ridge known as Hill Q; the other, to the left, to the part of the ridge known as Hill 305, from its height in metres. This last is the loftiest point. Hill Q and Hill 305 are connected by a col.

The Indian Brigade struck along the ravine to the right; the Australian along the ravine to the left. In these higher ravines the resistance stiffened. At daybreak, however, the Australians had reached the head of the left-hand ravine, and the slope leading immediately to the summit (Hill 305); the Indian troops the head of the right-hand ravine and the slope just below Chanuk Bair, where there was a small upland farm. In that they had established themselves. On their right the 10th Gurkhas were in touch with Johnson's Force, who had entrenched on Rhododendron Spur, where it joined on to the central mass; on their left the 14th Sikhs were in touch with the Australians. The line was thus continuous.

In truth, considering the strength of the two columns, three brigades in all, these operations had been attended with remarkable success, and the more so seeing that the advance had been carried out by night through unknown country. It seems, however, to have been expected that they would have reached and seized the summits of the central ridge before daylight. In view of the fact that there had been no previous reconnaissance of the ground, this expectation was high, if not too high. The troops had done extremely well. What was necessary now was at all speed to push up reinforcements. Beyond doubt more than three brigades could not usefully be employed on the tops of the main ridge, not more than a mile and a quarter in length.

But the *gaining* of the ridge and the holding of it against a counter-attack was a question of supporting strength at once available.

These were not the only events of this night (August 6). On the extreme left the 9th Army Corps had landed at Suvla. The landing had been timed to coincide with the attack on Sari Bair, not only as part of that operation, but in the belief that the coincidence would take the enemy by surprise, and that there would in consequence be at Suvla but little opposition. There was little opposition.

It is advisable here to follow events in the order of time rather than in that of place, because the fighting in fact extended from the Lone Pine work on the south to the positions round Suvla Bay on the north.

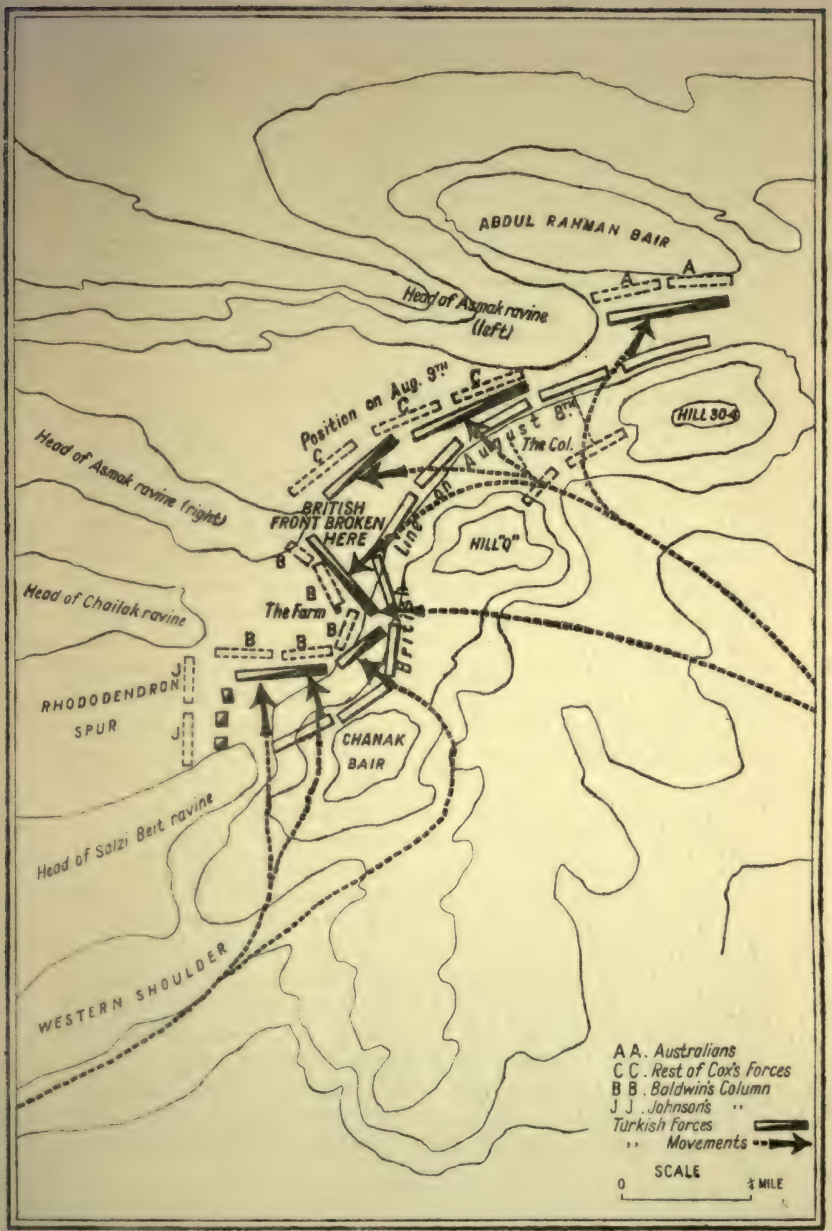
At this time the Turks were reported to have north of Sari Bair no more than a comparatively feeble force, estimated by the Intelligence Service at 4,000 men. Nor were their defences there very complete. On the seaward side of the Salt Lake, and between that sheet of water—at this date as usual a mere marsh—and the Ægean there is an isolated hill, Lala Baba, 49 metres high. The hill had been enringed with trenches. North of the lake is a stretch of sandhills. Some trenches had also been cut there. On the inland side of the lake is the rise named by the Australians Chocolate Hill (53 metres), and adjacent to it, running inland, Green Hill (50 metres), Scimitar Hill (70 metres), and Ismail Oglu Hill (100 metres). The enemy had established some batteries on Chocolate Hill and on Ismail Oglu Hill. Seemingly these various defences taken together were judged sufficient both to prevent a landing in the bay and to resist an attempt on the part of the Anzacs to break out on the north.

The 9th Army Corps had been formed of the 10th (Irish) Division and the 11th (Northern) Division. The Corps was under the command of Lieut.-General Sir F. Stopford. He was a soldier of experience and had served under Wolseley in Egypt and with Buller in South Africa.

For the purposes of this disbarkation the troops had been assembled at Imbros, the nearest island base, and, put on board destroyers and motor-lighters, were at nightfall (August 6) to leave Kephalos Bay, the anchorage at Imbros, and reach Nibrunesi Point by ten p.m. It will be recalled that the attack upon the Lone Pine maze had begun at six that evening, and that at ten the two covering columns of the assault upon Sari Bair were to break out.

The passage from Imbros and the landing were favoured by calm weather, and the operation of throwing the troops ashore greatly aided by the motor-lighters, now used for the first time. Each carried 500 men besides munitions and stores. As they were of light draft they could stand close in, and moving under their own steam at a speed of five knots, could rapidly transfer men from the destroyers, which owing to their deeper draft had to lie farther off the land.

The operation of the landing, carefully worked out by the Staff, went well save for one mischance. Originally it had been intended to land all the troops on the sandy beach outside of and just south of the bay. This beach, about a mile in length, is backed by sandhills. It proved to be undefended, and the actual operation of landing at night was not visible from the enemy's posts. Possibly enough had the whole of the force been landed here the entire proceeding would have turned out a complete surprise. But, considering that, on the probabilities, there would be opposition, General Stopford urged the advisability of throwing one brigade, the 34th, ashore inside the bay on its north side in order to secure command of the inlet. To that proposal General Hamilton, assented. It turned out, however, not merely that the water inside the bay was shallow, making it difficult to stand inshore, but that the enemy here proved to be on the alert, with the result that he was given the alarm from the outset. The motor-lighters grounded some distance off the beach, and men had to wade ashore through water up to their necks and armpits. They were not only encumbered with their



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accoutrement, but under fire both from the Turkish trenches among the sandhills in front and from the Lala Baba post behind.

Happily the 32nd and 33rd Brigades had got ashore outside the bay beyond Nibrunesi Point without mishap. The first proceeding was an assault on Lala Baba. While the Turks there were occupied with the landing going on across the bay they found themselves attacked from the rear by two battalions of the 32nd Brigade—the 9th West Yorkshires and the 6th Yorks. As a Turkish post Lala Baba was once for all snuffed out.

By the seizure of the Turkish defences on each side of its entrance, command of Suvla Bay had now been secured. The only point adjacent to the bay which the enemy still held was a low rise named Hill 10, just north of the Salt Lake. Against that point the first operations were directed. In opposition to the opening attack upon him by the troops of the 34th Brigade the Turk showed some disposition to rally. The scrub and gorse, dry as tinder after the heats of the summer months, was set on fire. Despite these fires the 9th Lancashire Fusiliers, and the 11th Manchesters drove the Turks off Hill 10 with the bayonet. Another part of the Brigade was pushed forward to seize the coast ridge, the Karakol Dagh, with the intention of preventing the enemy from shelling the bay from those heights.

Owing to these clearances, which had been effected by daybreak, six battalions of the 10th Division, arriving at daybreak (August 7) from Mitylene under the command of Major-General Hill, sailed in the bay.

It has been supposed that the actual operation of the landing at Suvla was confused and costly. On the contrary, it was the most successful operation of its kind up to this time carried out. In casualties its cost had been comparatively trifling. No body of troops as numerous had been thrown ashore in so brief an interval.

Thus affairs stood on the morning of August 7. We will return to the story of the assault upon Sari Bair.

In the words of General Birdwood and in fact the two

assaulting columns and the two covering columns engaged in that operation had "performed a feat of arms without parallel." They had swept away the strong and elaborated defences of the enemy on the northern face of the Anzac line; they had in the night covered miles of wild and rugged country; they had climbed to a height of nearly 1,000 feet above sea level; they had encountered and had overcome dogged opposition. After seven hours of that exertion, and weighted with their equipment, they were inevitably tired. But the exertion, severe as it was, proved less trying than the lack of water. The force had to be limited to a pint per man per day—a pint in twenty-four hours in face of work like that, in a barren land, and amid the heats of August in the Levant. Is it surprising that on the appearance of the pack mules bearing the priceless fluid, men, reduced to that state in which thirst becomes a physical agony, rushed out to lick with their parching tongues the moisture exuding through the waterskins?

So far as they had gone the operations had evidently astonished the enemy, and it is easy to imagine that between the loss of his walling-in defences and the landing of more British forces at Suvla he realised that the crisis of the battle had now been reached. The issue at this moment—the dawn of August 7—trembled in the balance. The quality of the British troops and excellent tactics had prevailed, and victory might still have been snatched. In the circumstances, the Commander-in-Chief on each side had to take a decision. "At times," General Hamilton records in his despatch, "I had thought of throwing my reserves into this stubborn central battle, where probably they would have turned the scale. But each time the water troubles made me give up the idea." Water troubles or not it is clear that the General should have risked it. In place of throwing forward his reserves he relied upon the diverting pressure from Suvla. He hesitated. He hesitated for nearly two days—and he lost.

On the other side the enemy Commander-in-Chief had to decide whether or not he would occupy himself

with the Suvla diversion, or, chancing that for the time, swing his weight against the British centre. Skilfully and with the boldness which in war is often the truest prudence, he risked the Suvla attack, and doubtless also shrewdly inferring the condition of the assaulting columns on Sari Bair, made up his mind there and then that there and then fortune lay. He decided soundly—and won.

So far General Birdwood's tactics had yielded brilliant results. But because faulty strategy may offset the most admirable tactics—it had so proved already in the fighting before Achi Baba—matters from this time began to go wrong.

The first mistake was an order to the troops on Sari Bair to renew the attempt to seize the actual summit of the main ridge. Tired as they were, racked by thirst, and worst of all unsupported, it was inevitable that this attempt could not, in face of the enemy's increasing strength, prevail. The Turks' chief access to the summit of the main ridge was up its western shoulder from Battleship Hill. The guns of the cruisers and monitors were turned on to this access, but though they must have hampered, they did not arrest the hostile movement. There were not enough of them. The fresh assault was initiated on the left by the 4th Australian Brigade, less half a battalion left to hold their position at the foot of the slope, but reinforced by the 14th Sikhs. The attack made no headway, and while thinning the strength of the force, added to its fatigue; more haste was the less speed.

Two hours and a half later (at 9.30 a.m.) a general assault was ordered. It also met with a repulse. To enable the assaulting columns to hold on three battalions were at 11 a.m. sent up from reserve. They were part of the 39th Infantry Brigade. But as it was palpable that this comparatively slender support might not prove enough it was decided, if need arose, to draw upon Russell's force. The Right Covering Column had remained holding the captured positions—Old Number 3 Post, Table Top Mountain, and Bauchop's Hill.

Russell was ordered to hold these with two regiments of Mounted Rifles, so that the remainder of his force, two battalions, plus the Maoris, might be ready to move.

Meanwhile the troops under the crests of Sari Bair held on. But the same afternoon, on the arrival of the supports, they were re-grouped into two columns for a further advance. To Johnson's force were added the Auckland Mounted Rifles, two battalions of the 13th Division, and the Maoris. To Cox's force the 39th Infantry Brigade (less one battalion) but with the 6th South Lancashires attached.

The renewed attack was timed for 4.15 a.m., August 8. When the time came the men of the several battalions on the right, now rested, raced each other up the slope. The corps were the Wellington (N.Z.) Battalion; the 7th Gloucesters; the Auckland Mounted Rifles; the 8th Welsh Pioneers, and the Maoris. The rush was led by Lieut.-Colonel W. G. Malone, and no fire on the part of the enemy could stop it. The crest of Chanuk Bair was gained. From observation posts in the rear figures were seen through the glasses and in the first light of the breaking day made out on the skyline. They were British.

To the left of Johnson's force the 39th Infantry Brigade and the 29th Indian Brigade moved up at the same time, part against Hill Q, part against the col. Some footing was gained on the spurs, but the enemy's fire here checked a further advance.

The 4th Australian Brigade unfortunately also met with a check. It had been judged advisable to reach the apex of Hill 305 by and from a spur on its northern side called the Abdul Rahman Bair. The Turks at this point, however, were in strong force and well supplied with machine-guns. Since the southern slopes of Sari Bair are precipitous—the axis or backbone of the mass runs east to west—the enemy knew that if hemmed in at both ends he was entrapped. The eastern end, Hill 305, was his avenue of escape, just as the western end was his main avenue of reinforcement. On hill 305, therefore, he was carefully entrenched, and he had

a superior strength ready for a counter-attack. In the assault the Australians lost heavily. More than 1,000 of these dauntless warriors were killed and wounded. It was a struggle that appeared to reach the very limits of desperation. Finally, numbers told, and the Brigade had to retire to its former line at the head of the Asma ravine. Encouraged by this success, for though it had been extravagantly bought it was something to force these terrible fellows to retire at all, the enemy launched a succession of massed counter-attacks. He plainly meant to finish with these Australians while the apparent chance offered. But it was now the Australians' turn. Massed column after massed column of Turks was smashed. The men of the Brigade shot until their rifles grew too hot to touch; the bottom and sides of the ravine became choked with Turkish wounded and dead. The defenders of the position could not be shifted one inch.

At the other end of the main ridge in the meantime Johnson's force had been struggling to maintain its footing. Chanuk Bair was subjected to a deadly hostile concentrated fire. The surface was covered with but the thinnest sprinkling of soil, and to dig trenches affording any real cover was difficult. The Gloucesters, who were supporting the Wellington Battalion, were never able to dig deeper than six inches. They found themselves exposed to a gruelling hail of shells and bullets. Yet they held on, though every officer of the corps, including the sergeants, had been either killed or wounded. Seemingly without leadership and broken into groups, the command was spontaneously taken over by corporals or lance-corporals, or, by common consent, by privates, and in face of counter-attacks they still carried on. The gallant Malone had fallen while in the act of mapping out the line to be held. Others had gone, yet all through that afternoon no efforts of the enemy, and he made many, could drive the line back. The orders were to stop there, and stop there the line did.

During the afternoon and towards sunset the battle slackened. The enemy, heavily trounced, was showing

signs of wear. Hence the decision again to renew the British assault at midnight. For this assault the ground gained on Chanuk Bair was to be used as a pivot, for swinging the rest of the line forward on to the ridge. And to assist that operation the forces already so far engaged were to be further supported by a third column consisting of five battalions—two from the 38th Brigade; two from the 29th Brigade; and one from the 40th Brigade. The command of this column was given to Brigadier-General A. H. Baldwin, of the 38th Brigade.

Baldwin's column had been assembled in the Chailak ravine, and was to move up that defile and deliver the main attack in the form of an assault on Hill Q. The forces of Johnson and Cox were to co-operate on its right and left respectively.

It was a good scheme, but unhappily, through accident, it went wrong. The same difficulties which had beset Johnson's column beset Baldwin's—the rugged character of the Chailak valley, and finding the way over such country in the dark. It was not until 5.15 a.m. (August 9) that Baldwin's force reached the head of the ravine and the farm below the last slope towards Chanuk Bair. This was hours behind time, and the men were parched and tired.

The hitch was fatal. In the interim, relying upon the arrival of Baldwin's force, the 29th Indian Infantry Brigade had been thrown forward. Their immediate objective was the col between Hill Q and Hill 305. Part of the 6th Gurkhas gained the crest, and some of the 6th South Lancashires. The enemy broke, and the attacking troops pressed him down the reverse slope. In front of the attacking troops appeared a bird's-eye view of the waters of the Dardanelles, the Narrows, and the Asiatic shore. This dashing onset was led by Major C. G. L. Allanson of the Gurkhas. But the triumph was short-lived. The appearance of these British troops on the southern slope was the signal for an opening by batteries of heavy guns ready trained on this spot. The enemy saw, too, that the attacking force was not numerous. It was just daybreak, and Baldwin's men

were still toiling up the head on the Chailak ravine. Recovering from their momentary panic the Turks rallied. They were in far greater strength, and they came back in a counter-attack. The thin line of Gurkhas and Lancashires was pressed up to the col, over it, and down the reverse (northern) side. They were forced back upon their original positions.

But though outnumbered this small force of two weak battalions had fought well, and their resistance had given Baldwin the opportunity of deploying his column on Rhododendron Spur. He at once threw forward the 10th Hampshires together with two companies of the 6th East Lancashire Regiment. Those troops advanced up the slope towards Chanuk Bair with the bayonet. This was the moment when the enemy, coming down the northern slope of the adjacent col, was pressing his advantage. The assault of the Hampshires and the East Lancashires reached the top of the main ridge, but there it encountered a powerful Turkish force moving to counter-attack. It could not hold. Baldwin's men were swept down the declivity and obliged to dig in on the farm. Between them and the Gurkhas and South Lancashires there was driven in a hostile wedge.

Baldwin's attack checked, the enemy turned his attention once more to Johnson's force, which still kept its footing at the western end of the main rise. Effort after effort was made to shift it, and effort after effort failed.

Save for the limited footing at the western extremity of the main ridge the British line on the morning of August 9 was at the foot of the northern slope, that is to say exactly where it was at daybreak on August 7. The subsequent attacks had been made and had been worsted in detail. And they had been very costly. The total casualties up to and including August 9 had reached 8,500 men. These of course included the fighting at Lone Pine, where all the while the struggle had gone on with sustained fury. Most, however, had been incurred in the attacks since August 6 on the main ridge. In the early hours of August 10 Johnson's men had to be

relieved. They had been fighting straight ahead for three days and three nights—seventy-two hours—with hardly a pause, and that on the top of a long march and a long climb. Such stamina borders on the phenomenal. They were replaced by the 6th Loyal North Lancashires and the 5th Wiltshires.

In the interval the enemy had been massing for a supreme effort to clear the British off this foothold on the summit. At daybreak on August 10, accordingly, he attacked with the infantry of an entire division, stiffened by three extra battalions. The North Lancashires, with nothing save shallow trenches for protection—if they could be called trenches—were overwhelmed; the Wiltshires, who were behind time on coming up, were caught exposed, and swept away by the avalanche.

The right of Baldwin's position on the farm, held by the Hampshires, had now been exposed. It was driven in and with heavy losses. The situation of Baldwin's force had in fact become precarious. Disaster was averted for the time being by the naval guns and the field artillery. Both the ships and the land batteries focussed on Battleship Hill and this western end of the crest, for a strong force of the enemy was moving up that way. As the Turks topped the higher ground they were met by this blast of fire. And its effect was the more deadly owing to the machine-guns of the New Zealanders of Johnson's column now in reserve. They got in at close range upon men advancing in close order. The carnage was appalling, and the attack smashed.

But while Baldwin was occupied with this struggle on his right, the enemy, topping the crest to the north-east, descended in mass on his left. His line there was broken and some of his troops driven down the ravine. Baldwin himself with his staff and the centre of his line on the farm held their ground. It was a fight to the death. Repulsed, the Turks came on again and again, "Allah" their battle-cry. The troops on the left, rallied at the foot of the hill by Staff-Captain Street, who was supervising the transport of food and water,

followed him back to the farm, and under his leadership plunged once more into the conflict. It had now become a roaring *mêlée* in which men gripped each other by the throat and closed with butt and bayonet. No quarter was given. Though their ranks were ripped by shell; though they were fired into without cessation and without mercy by Johnson's Force from the British right, its men maddened by the spectacle; though under the sweep of machine-guns and the hail of rifle shot they fell by hundreds and in heaps, the Turks fought like men frenzied by the lust of blood. English lads, tired, and half dead with thirst but fighting to the last, were slaughtered in whole companies like cattle. It was a scene of unrestrained devilry. The ground of the farm became soaked in human blood, amid which lay the dead and dying, frequently locked together as they had perished in the last grip; mixed up inextricably. In the memories of the men who witnessed and survived it, the episode and its roar of agony and tornado of explosions were branded for ever as with a stamp of fire. Baldwin and his staff fell where they stood. General Cooper fell, and General Cayley, and other commanding officers. Baldwin's column was shattered, but the enemy's attack had in the effort been at the same time so utterly broken that the ragged remnant of it had in all haste to be withdrawn across the summit, still chased by flying lead.

Coincidentally with this conflict, the climax, though not the crisis of the battle, there was another onset against the 4th Australian Brigade, an onset beaten off, as others had been, with heavy enemy losses, and there was an attack against the 4th South Wales Borderers holding the Damajelik Bair. This last had equally bad fortune. Its defeat was due to the unshakable intrepidity of Lieut.-Colonel Gillespie, worthy of the fine corps he commanded. He paid for the victory with his life. In this fighting of August 10 another 3,500 were added to the British casualties. Those of the enemy were heavier, as indeed they had been at every stage of these operations, but he had frustrated the British plan.

CHAPTER XI

THE TRAGEDY OF SUVLA

Causes of the delay in the advance at Suvla—A question of guns—The water muddle—Sufferings of the troops—and inaction—Incomplete co-operation—General Hamilton intervenes—Opportunities lost—British attack of August 9 on Tekke Tepe forestalled and repulsed—Suvla enterprise already a failure—British attack on Anafarta ridge defeated (August 10)—Rapid increase of enemy's strength—Attack of August 12 on Keretch Tepe Sirt—General Stopford retires—Heavy British losses—General Hamilton asks for 50,000 further reinforcements—They are refused—Transfer of the 2nd Mounted Division from Egypt—Battle for Ismail Oglu Hill, August 21—A British reverse—Reasons for the failure—Cox's flanking operations north of the Anzac front—The last fight of the campaign.

WHILE it is true that on August 10 not a Turk had been left on the British side of Sari Bair who was not, to quote the words of General Hamilton, either dead, wounded or a prisoner, it was none the less true that in its main purpose, the seizure of the summit, the action had failed. It had been a costly battle. Some 12,000 British and, including the losses in the Lone Pine fighting, more than 20,000 of the enemy had fallen. But for the time, at all events, the enemy could afford his loss, severe as it had been. He had defeated the British design, and he felt himself to be secure.

In these circumstances the landing at Suvla had missed its real objective. The aim of that operation had been to prevent the enemy from swinging his weight against the British centre, but to prevent that it was imperative at once to bring the strength of the Suvla corps to bear as an integral part of the battle; its left wing, in fact. At the moment of their landing the 9th Army Corps were, as compared with the Turks

confronting them, in overwhelming force; and the landing had undoubtedly taken the enemy by surprise. At the same time, it was evident that this opportunity would almost certainly be brief, and if missed, would not recur. It may be that since his troops were men of the New Army who had never been in action before, General Stopford judged it best in the first instance to make good his footing. Whatever the causes time was lost when time, already too short, was priceless.

One cause, at any rate, is not in doubt. In the opinion of General Stopford operations by his troops as part of the main battle could not effectively be embarked upon unless his infantry were sufficiently supported by field guns. By daybreak on August 7 there had been got ashore two Highland mountain batteries, and one battery of the R.F.A. This of itself was a remarkable achievement in the time, and every credit for it is due to the Naval men who carried it out. While waiting for the disbarkation of his artillery, General Stopford's concern appears to have been to make sure of the positions he considered it advisable to seize and hold.

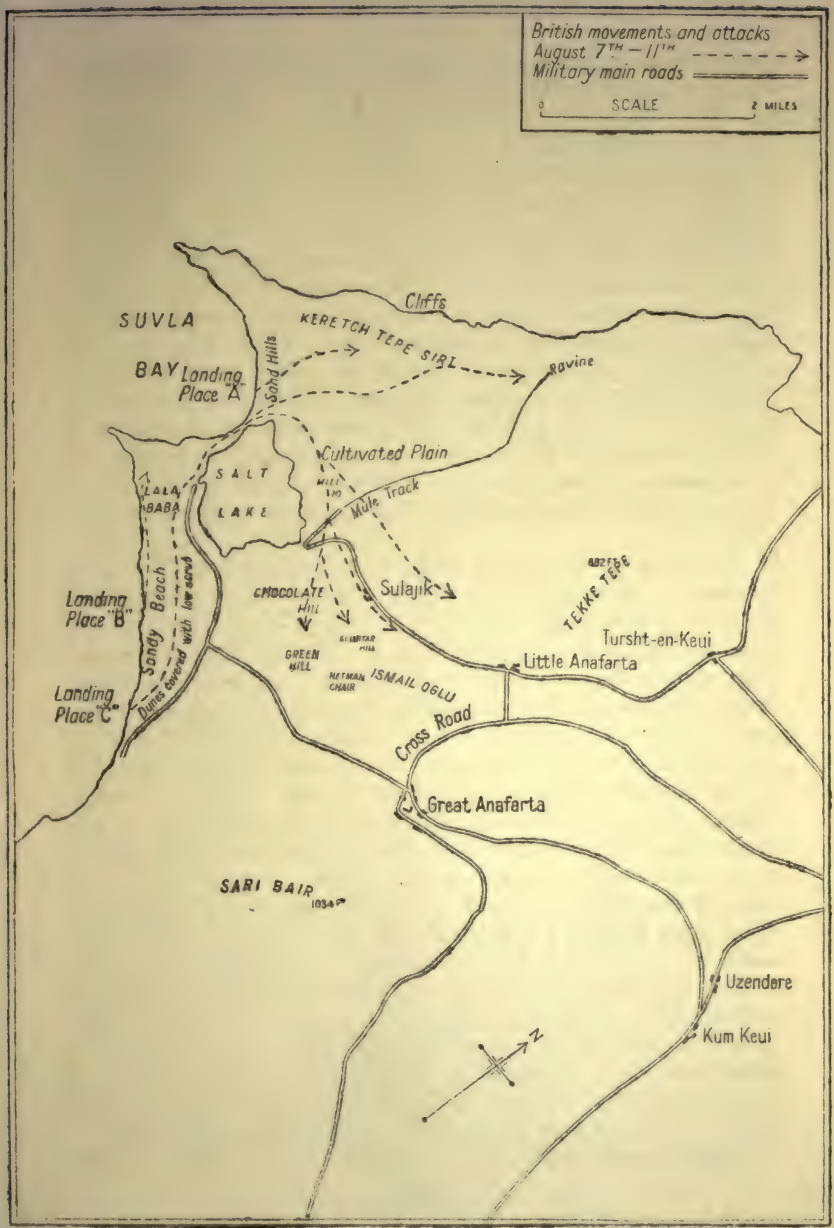
Those positions included the Keretch Tepe Sirt. To stiffen the attack of the 34th Brigade in that direction, north of Suvla Bay, General Stopford wished the six battalions of the 10th Division who had arrived under the command of Brigadier-General Hill to land at A Beach. To that proposal, however, the Naval authorities were opposed, probably because of the shoal water. The six battalions were therefore put ashore at C Beach. But from C Beach they were marched to Lala Baba, and then across the narrow spit of land dividing the Salt Lake from the sea to Hill 10. The distance from C Beach to Hill 10 is about six miles. Crossing the spit, they came under the fire of the enemy's guns on Chocolate Hill. There is no doubt, as General Hamilton records, that this move caused "loss, delay, and fatigue." And there can be no doubt that as far as the main battle was concerned it was a mistaken move. Three more battalions of the 10th Division, arriving early on August 7 from Mudros, were put ashore at A Beach,

and there was landed there another battalion of the 31st Brigade which it had been intended to put shore at C Beach.

There were now to the north of the Salt Lake the 31st Brigade (of the 10th Division) and the 32nd and 34th Brigades (of the 11th Division). These three brigades comprised the chief strength of the Army Corps under General Stopford's command.

It has already been mentioned that inland from the Salt Lake there runs a line of low hills, the axis or chine of this rise being east and west, parallel that is to say with the main axis of Sari Bair. And between these low hills on the one side and the much loftier mass of Sari Bair on the other is a valley along which runs, from the Salt Lake, a road leading to the village of Biyuk (Great) Anafarta, and then on to Boghali and Maidos. On the other (northern) side of the low hills lies a second valley, the Topalin Mazar Dere, along which is also a road leading to Anafarta Sagir (or Little Anafarta) and from that village strikes along the peninsula towards Bulair. The two villages of Great and Little Anafarta are connected by a cross road over the ridge. To the north of this second valley rises Tekke Tepe, a mass similar to Sari Bair, and of nearly the same elevation. Hence the aspect of the country, looking at it from the west, is that of the two higher masses, one to the north and one to the south, with the lower (Anafarta) ridge between them, and in the foregound the Salt Lake, to the north-east of it a patch of flat land about a mile square.

General Stopford had thrown the larger part of his force towards the entrance of the second valley. It was essential, of course, to secure the intervening ridge, and that operation had been entrusted to General Hammersley with the 11th Division. The Anafarta ridge as it runs inland rises, and its culminating point is at the eastern end—the hill named by the Turks the Ismail Oglu. This was the important position on the rise, for it commanded both Great and Little Anafarta, the cross road and the roads in the valleys.



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Hammersley gained a footing on the ridge at its western end (Chocolate Hill), but found the enemy already strongly posted and could make no further headway. Chocolate Hill had been carried in a rush by the 6th Lincolns and the 6th Border Regiment, who alike, though " raw " troops, displayed great steadiness and gallantry.

In the meantime the 10th Division, under the command of General Sir B. Mahon, had been pushing the attack upon Keretch Tepe Sirt. The weight of the fighting here fell upon the 31st Brigade, formed of the 6th Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, the 6th Royal Irish (Munster) Fusiliers, and the 6th Royal Dublin Fusiliers. But here too, the enemy, in part a force of gendarmes, put up a stiff opposition. The ground over which an advance had to be made was rugged and difficult, but the Irishmen, though this was their first experience of battle, fought like veterans. A footing on the ridge was secured.

Concerning these operations of August 7 it has to be observed, to begin with, that the two attacks were in opposite directions, one to the south and one to the north of Hill 10, a procedure on the face of it somewhat singular. Next they had no direct or immediate relationship with the attack then going on against Sari Bair. They appear to have been conceived, for the time being at any rate, on a semi-independent footing.

The great difficulty that arose was that of water. These troops, now campaigning for the first time, had come from Mitylene and Mudros ; they had been landed either the night before or at dawn on that day ; they had most of them faced a longish march ; finally, they had been through hours of fighting. It was hard work, and it was all the harder because of the August heats.

On the night of August 7 the sun sank, as it does in the Levant in the height of summer, in a riot of gorgeous colour, and the hills faded from a fiery red to a glorious blue, contrasting with the rainbow hues of the firmament. But to men at once jaded and tortured by thirst this grandiose spectacle made no appeal.

Arrangements for the distribution of water to the

troops had not worked well. As a stand-by a supply of water had been brought on the ships in tanks, but that plainly would not go far, and reliance was placed on making use of the wells in the Suvla Bay area. That does not appear to have been done, though of course it should have been among the first measures taken. The troops remained dependent upon water brought to the landing places in the lighters, and from them distributed by hose pipes into petrol tins, pakhals, milk cans and other vessels. North of Suvla Bay this had to be carried out under the enemy's fire. The distribution of the water was both hazardous and irregular. Some of the lighters grounded too far off shore for the water to be served, and men had to swim out to them. Water was the common craving. It has been said that in certain instances the hose was cut by men unable to wait. If so demoralisation had already set in, but injuries of that kind may also have been due to shot, or to dragging the pipes over stones. In any event much of the precious fluid ran to waste. So urgent was the situation that, to supply the troops in the fighting line—though, his opinion regarding artillery support being what it was, General Stopford was especially anxious to land the artillery horses—this part of the disbarkation was put off in order to send ashore the pack mules to carry water up from the beach. Rightly the pack mules should have gone immediately after the infantry in any case. Their detention with the object of landing artillery had made the water difficulty doubly acute.

And in part certainly this water difficulty was the cause of delay. Until their sufferings from thirst had been relieved the troops could not go on. General Stopford, knowing the importance of time, issued orders for a continuance of the advance. Both the Divisional Commanders sent back word to say that, in the condition in which their men were, they could not move. Unable to get his guns ashore, as he believed was necessary, General Stopford apparently accepted these objections as sufficient.

"It was," General Hamilton has stated, "lack of artillery support which finally decided him (General Stopford) to acquiesce in a policy of going slow, which, by the time it reached the troops, became translated into a period of inaction. The Divisional Generals were in fact informed that 'in view of the inadequate artillery support,' General Stopford did not wish them to make frontal attacks on entrenched positions, but desired them, as far as possible, to try to turn any trenches that were met with. Within the terms of this instruction lies the root of our failure to make use of the precious daylight hours of the 8th of August."

"Normally," General Hamilton goes on to observe, "it may be correct to say that in modern warfare infantry cannot be expected to advance without artillery preparation. But in a landing on a hostile shore the order has to be inverted. The infantry must advance and seize a suitable position to cover the landing, and provide the artillery positions for the main thrust. The very existence of the force; its facilities for munitions and supplies; its power to reinforce, must absolutely depend on the infantry being able instantly to make good sufficient ground without the aid of artillery other than can be supplied for the purpose by *floating* batteries."

"This is not a condition which should take the commander of a covering force by surprise. It is one already foreseen. Driving power was required, and even a certain ruthlessness to brush aside pleas for a respite for tired troops. The one fatal error was inertia. And inertia prevailed."

Undoubtedly General Stopford's judgment regarding artillery support was in the circumstances inapplicable, and it illustrates one of the weaknesses which all along had marked the Gallipoli operations—the tendency to overlook their amphibious character. Interdependence of the land forces and the fleet was the secret of whatever effectiveness the Expedition might have. But interdependence meant departure from recognised rules of both naval and military procedure, and there was

reluctance to enter upon such departures where there ought to have been keenness in studying all the possibilities. There was reluctance to pit ships against land defences, because the theory in favour was against it. That increased the weight thrown upon the land forces and aggravated their losses. There was reluctance on the part of the military commanders to rely upon the Fleet as it ought to have been relied upon.

Having, partly owing to his views concerning field artillery and partly to his reluctance to rely upon the naval guns as a substitute—they ought to have been the *backbone* of his activities from first to last, field artillery or none—got the water problem into the tangle it had become, General Stopford had in truth no choice for the moment save to go slow. It is easy to blame his Divisional Commanders, but the protests of the Divisional Commanders on this point were justified. And it is a very open question indeed whether "a certain ruthlessness to brush away the pleas for a respite for tired troops" would not have made matters worse. To have forced men parched with thirst—it may be said half-maddened by thirst—to yet further exertions while in that state, and reduce them, as they would rapidly have been reduced, to the very extreme of exhaustion, must have exposed them in the event of any strong enemy counter-attack to be slaughtered helplessly.

This going slow was not, however, the cause or root of the failure; it was no more than a consequence. The *cause* was the incompleteness of the naval and military co-operation. It was trifling to assign only cruisers and monitors to support such operations as those against Sari Bair and the Suvla landing. In this instance against the numerical strength of the enemy the full support of the Fleet, underwater attack or no underwater attack, was the course that, joined to sound military dispositions, might reasonably have assured success. In the absence of that full support General Birdwood, hero as he was, had imposed upon him

a task humanly impossible, and 12,000 brave men fell in trying to do the impossible. In the absence of that full support many more brave men fell at Suvla. Some ships were saved but the Expedition to Gallipoli was wrecked, and the whole trend of events in Western Asia and Eastern Europe changed.

Not receiving from the Suvla force the aid he had reckoned upon, and knowing that the struggle for Sari Bair had reached its decisive hour, General Hamilton in the early morning of August 8 sent an officer of his Staff to Suvla to report on the situation. Arriving from the Commandant's post at Anzac this officer informed the General by telegraph that the Turks were withdrawing their guns. There was no hostile gunfire, and but little hostile rifle fire. To all appearances the enemy was weak, and there was good ground for accepting the appearances as reflecting the reality. The water tangle had by this time been taken in hand and was being straightened out. But General Stopford's opinion concerning the need for landing his guns before venturing upon further operations of importance seems to have remained unmodified.

In the circumstances, leaving General W. P. Braithwaite, the Chief of his Staff,to carry on at Headquarters in the interim, General Hamilton went himself to Suvla. He had begun to feel, as he afterwards declared, that all was not well. He reached General Stopford's headquarters on board the British warship, *Jonquil*, lying off the bay, at five in the afternoon of August 8.

What there took place may be related in General Hamilton's own words. " General Stopford," he wrote, " informed me that the General Officer commanding 11th Division was confident of success in an attack he was to make at dawn next morning (the 9th). I felt no such confidence. Beyond a small advance by a part of the 11th Division between the Chocolate Hills and Ismail Oglu Tepe, and some further progress along the Keretch Tepe Sirt ridge by the 10th Division, *the day of the 8th had been lost.* The commander of the 11th Division had, it seems, ordered strong patrols to be

pushed forward so as to make good all the strong positions in advance which could be occupied without serious fighting; but, as he afterwards reported, 'little was done in this respect.' Thus a priceless twelve hours had already gone to help the chances of the Turkish reinforcements which were, I knew, both from naval and aerial sources, actually on the march for Suvla. But when I urged that even now, at the eleventh hour, the 11th Division should make a concerted attack upon the hills, I was met by a *non possumus*. The objections of the morning were no longer valid; the men were now well rested, watered, and fed. But the divisional commanders disliked the idea of an advance by night, and General Stopford did not care, it seemed, to force their hands.

"So it came about that I was driven to see whether I could not, myself, put concentration of effort and purpose into the direction of the large number of men ashore. The Corps Commander made no objection. He declared himself to be as eager as I could be to advance. The representations made by the Divisional Commanders had seemed to him insuperable. If I could see my way to get over them no one would be more pleased than himself.

"Accompanied by Commodore Roger Keyes and Lieut.-Colonel Aspinall, of the Headquarters General Staff, I landed on the beach, where all seemed quiet and peaceful, and saw the Commander of the 11th Division, Major-General Hammersley. I warned him the sands were running out fast, and that by dawn the high ground to his front might very likely be occupied in force by the enemy. He saw the danger, but declared that it *was a physical impossibility, at so late an hour* (6 p.m.), *to get out orders for a night attack*, the troops being very much scattered. There was no other difficulty now, but this was insuperable; he could not recast his orders or get them round to his troops in time. But one brigade, the 32nd, was, so General Hammersley admitted, more or less concentrated and ready to move. The General Staff Officer of the Division, Colonel Neil

Malcolm, a soldier of experience on whose opinion I set much value, was consulted. He agreed that the 32nd Brigade was now in a position to act. I therefore issued a direct order that, even if it were only the 32nd Brigade, the advance should begin at the earliest possible moment, so that a portion at least of the 11th Division should anticipate the Turkish reinforcements on the heights and dig themselves in there on some good tactical point.

"In taking upon myself the serious responsibility of thus dealing with a detail of divisional tactics, I was careful to limit the scope of the interference. Beyond directing that the one brigade which was ready to move at once should try and make good the heights before the enemy got on to them, I did nothing and said nothing calculated to modify or in any way to affect the attack already planned for the morning. Out of the thirteen battalions which were to have advanced against the heights at dawn, four were now to anticipate that movement by trying to make good the key of the enemy's position at once and under cover of darkness.

"I have not been able to get a clear and coherent account of the doings of the 32nd Brigade; but I have established the fact that it did not actually commence its advance until 4 a.m. on the 9th of August. The reason given is that the units of the Brigade were scattered. In General Stopford's despatch he says that 'One company of the East Yorks Pioneer Battalion succeeded in getting to the top of the hill north of Anafarta, but the rest of the battalion and of the Brigade were attacked from both flanks during their advance and fell back on a line north and south of Sulajik. Very few of the leading company or of the Royal Engineers who accompanied it got back, and that evening the strength of the battalion was nine officers and 380 men.'"

The hill Tekke Tepe, north of Little Anafarta, is 700 feet high, and from this position, could it have been taken and held, the whole of the lower intervening ridge, including Ismail Oglu and the cross road, and

the road from Little Anafarta towards Bulair would have been commanded by the British batteries, assuming that field artillery was more effective for that purpose than naval gunnery, though of course the two combined would have been the most effective. But the enemy had been able to move up his reinforcements. He had inflicted on the 32nd Brigade a costly reverse. An hour and a half later the British assault was renewed, and with a larger body of troops. The Turkish forces, however, had also and to a greater extent been stiffened in the meantime and the renewed attack had no better success. "It seems reasonable," General Hamilton has stated, "to suppose that had the complete Division started at 4 a.m. on the 9th, or better still at 10 p.m. on the 8th, they would have made good the whole of the heights in front of them." Most probably they would.

Watching the renewed attack at dawn on the 9th General Hamilton realised from the volume of the Turkish gun and rifle fire that the movement had been forestalled.

"This," he recorded, "was a bad moment. Our attack failed; our losses were very serious. The enemy's enfilading shrapnel fire seemed to be especially destructive and demoralising, the shell bursting low and all along our line. Time after time it threw back our attack just as it seemed upon the point of making good. The 33rd Brigade at first made most hopeful progress in its attempt to seize Ismail Oglu Tepe. Some of the leading troops gained the summit, and were able to look over on to the other side. Many Turks were killed here. Then the centre seemed to give way. Whether this was the result of the shrapnel fire or whether, as some say, an order to retire came up from the rear, the result was equally fatal to success. As the centre fell back the steady, gallant behaviour of the 6th Battalion Border Regiment, and the 6th Battalion Lincoln Regiment, on either flank was especially noteworthy. Scrub fires on Hill 70 did much to harass and hamper our troops. When the 32nd Brigade fell back before attacks from the slopes of the hill north of Anafarta

Sagir and from the direction of Abrijka they took up the line north and south through Sulajik. Here their left was protected by two battalions of the 34th Brigade, which came up to their support. The line was later on prolonged by the remainder of the 34th Brigade and two battalions of the 159th Brigade of the 53rd Division. Their right was connected with the Chocolate Hills by the 33rd Brigade on the position to which they had returned after their repulse from the upper slopes of Ismail Oglu Tepe.

"Some of the units which took part in this engagement acquitted themselves very bravely. I regret I have not had sufficient detail given me to enable me to mention them by name. The Divisional Commander speaks with appreciation of one freshly-landed battalion of the 53rd Division, a Hereford battalion, presumably the 1/1st Herefordshire, which attacked with impetuosity and courage between Hetman Chair and Kaslar Chair, about Azmak Dere, on the extreme right of his line."

A tragic story, for in fact it marked the failure of the Suvla enterprise. But General Hamilton determined to make another effort. During the night of August 8 the 53rd (Territorial) Division had arrived and disbarked. He ordered it up to Suvla. The Division was without artillery.

Accordingly, on August 10 a third attack was delivered on the Anafarta ridge. It was to be made by the 53rd Division, General Lindley in command, with the 11th Division in support. Notable as was alike the gallantry of the men and the devotion of their officers, the attack failed. It meant hard climbing as well as hard fighting, and the enemy had yet further strengthened himself. In the interval since August 7 he had trebled his numbers.

The whole British force at Suvla, from near the Asmak Dere to the Keretch Tepe Sirt, now found itself obliged to entrench. Here, too, the campaign looked like degenerating into immobility.

The succeeding operations may be briefly told. On August 11 the 54th (Territorial) Division landed. On August 12 Sir Ian Hamilton proposed to General

Stopford that the newly arrived Division should carry out a night march in order at dawn on August 13 to attack the massif north of Little Anafarta-Kavak Tepe, and Tekke Tepe. The flat tract north-east of the Salt Lake, known as Kuchuk Anafarta Ova, is enclosed and cultivated. There was reason to believe that the enemy held this bit of country, and to open the way for the 54th Division it was necessary to clear him out. The 163rd Brigade, sent forward for that purpose, effected the clearance. It was in the course of this fighting that Colonel Sir H. Beauchamp, in command of the 1/5 Norfolks, finding the Turks in front of him falling back, followed them up. From the flat fields the pursuit reached the broken and wooded ground on the lower slopes of the massif. Men of the battalion who were wounded or fell out owing to thirst straggled back during the night to camp. They had left the Colonel and the rest of the battalion still pushing on. News of this little force, 17 officers, including the Colonel, and some 250 men, was awaited, but none was received. They had entered the forest of scrub covering the slopes of the hills and had totally disappeared.

The projected night march by the 54th Division was given up. In place of it an attack was made on the enemy's position on the summit of Keretch Tepe Sirt.

The plan of this assault provided for a bombardment by the warships *Grampus* and *Foxhound* from the sea, and by three batteries of guns from the land side, one of them a battery of heavies. The 10th Division were to attack along the ridge, part of the 54th Division (the 162nd Brigade) supporting on their right. The charge, led with great gallantry by the 6th Royal Dublins, cleared the entire height. But at the farther end of this ridge, and divided from it only by a small and not very deep ravine, is another and yet higher ridge also in line with the coast. On and from this higher ground the enemy swept the forward point of the Keretch Tepe Sirt with his fire. The 5th Irish Fusiliers, and the 5th Inniskillings holding the trenches, here met with heavy

losses. Reinforcements were sent forward. Before they could arrive the forward trenches had had to be evacuated.

On August 15 General Stopford gave up the command of the 9th Army Corps. The infantry strength of the four divisions composing it had been reduced by losses and hardship to less than 30,000 rifles. Losses in battle and through wastage totalled over 18,000 men. Major-General H. B. de Lisle, appointed to the temporary command, received orders as soon as possible to get the Corps once more into fighting trim with a view to a renewed attack upon Ismail Oglu Tepe and the Anafarta Spur.

General Hamilton estimated that he needed a further 50,000 men as reinforcements with munitions to correspond. He was told that he could have neither. With these additional forces his judgment was that " it seemed, humanly speaking, a certainty that if this help could be sent *at once* we could still clear a passage for our Fleet to Constantinople." The opinion implies that the military operations were the primary feature. It was the other way about.

The reason given for the refusal, he states, " was one which prevented further insistence." There was nothing for it, therefore, save to go on with the means he had at hand. The reinforcements received were the 2nd Mounted Division from Egypt, for this service in Gallipoli organised as dismounted troops. They were landed in the Suvla area, and there too was transferred the 29th Division from the lines before Achi Baba. These various preparations occupied the interval until August 21. The plan was an attack upon Ismail Oglu Tepe.

This was the last of the greater battles fought in the Gallipoli campaign. The scheme of tactics was entrusted to General de Lisle.

The assault upon Ismail Oglu Hill was to be made by the 29th Division and the 11th Division. On the left of the line there was to be a holding attack by the 53rd and 54th Divisions extending from Sulajik to the

Keretch Tepe Sirt. It was a simple scheme and a sound one. Better, of course, it would have been had there also been an attack thrown forward on the British right, but General Hamilton considered that many of the battalions of the 9th Corps had been too highly tried. It was too soon, he thought, to call upon them for a fresh effort.

In a very remarkable sense of the term Ismail Oglu Hill constitutes a natural fortress. The rise from the level of the more westerly part of the ridge of which it forms a part is abrupt, and while the difference in level above the lower section of the chine is not more than 130 feet, the difference presents itself as almost a cliff, broken, like the rest of such formations in Gallipoli, by steep ravines. These are choked for the most part with thick hollyoak scrub, leaving only very narrow tracks. In every spot where it could get a hold this hardy dwarf tree had rooted itself, so that the mass of the Ismail Oglu Hill appeared to be covered by it. To the west, however, along the lower part of the chine called Green Hill, the ground is open and bare, and the attack had to be made along the chine from Chocolate Hill over this exposed expanse. On the higher ground of Ismail Oglu which is comparatively flat-topped, and concealed among the scrub, the enemy had over the open lower level an unrivalled field of fire.

It will be seen how unfortunate had been loss of the opportunity to seize such a formidable position by surprise. Not only was the enemy now in much stronger force; he had had time firmly to entrench himself, and his defences were skilful.

Viewed from Chocolate Hill, the higher part of the ridge presented itself as two abrupt spurs, one, the Hetman Chair, extending towards the south-west; the other, Scimitar Hill, projecting westward. Between the two lay a ravine or depression rapidly narrowing towards its head, and shaped therefore like a funnel. On the higher ground along both sides of this ravine and round its head the Turks had laid out entrenchments in the form roughly of a horse-shoe. The ravine, in

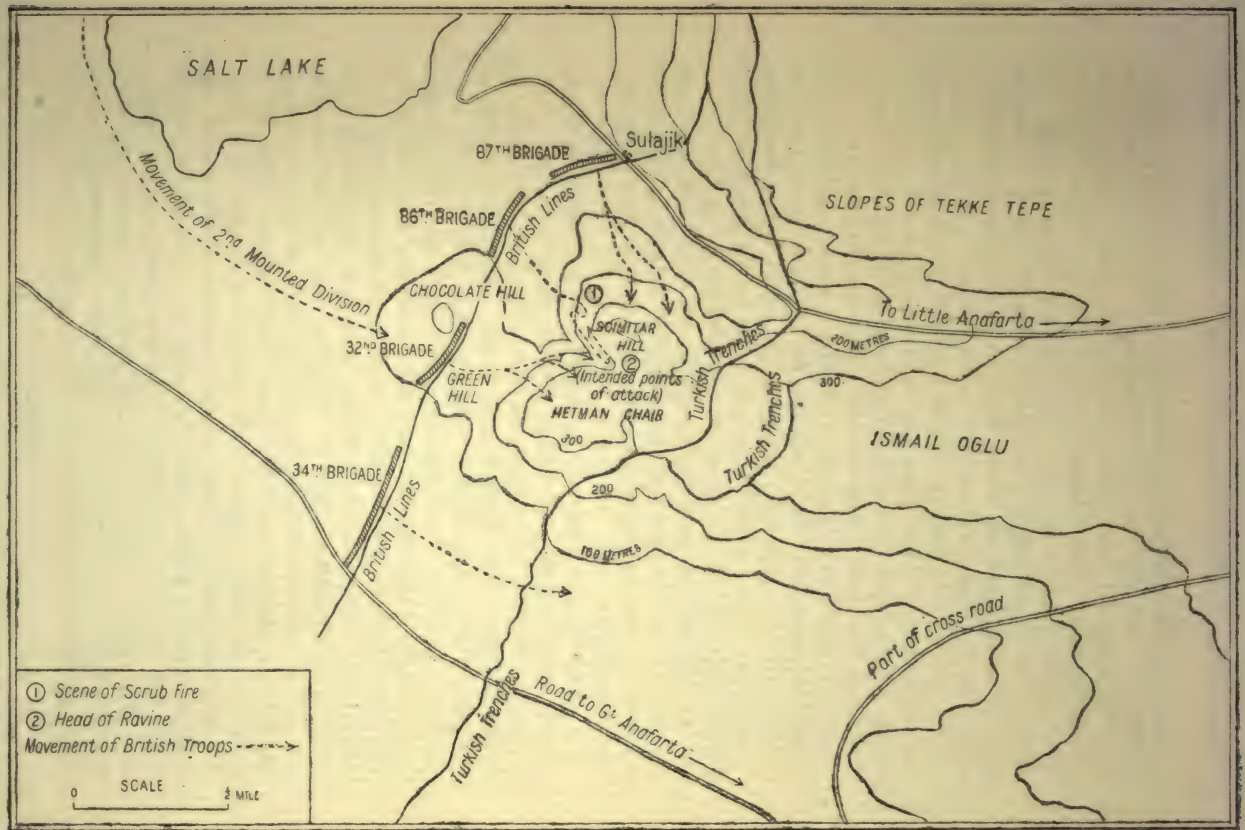
short, had been converted as far as that could be done into a trap. In case, however, of these defences being captured the enemy had laid out a second line farther up the ridge and on ground which commanded the access from the head of the ravine. This second line of trenches formed a semi-circle, so that a deadly converging fire could be poured into any troops gaining the plateau by way of the depression.

A frontal assault upon such defences, strongly held and by a confident enemy, was about as impossible an operation as could well be imagined, and one which, while there were a thousand chances to one against its success, must in any event be extravagantly costly. The only feasible proceeding was to turn these dispositions by an attack in flank. How far that was provided for, and its results, will appear from what took place.

The British assault was fixed for the afternoon of August 21, and fixed for the afternoon upon the calculation that the light of the westering sun would dazzle the enemy's observers and marksmen. The sunlight on an August afternoon in Gallipoli is glaring, and here it shot right up the valley. In those conditions towards the end of the day the westward slopes of Ismail Oglu showed up with a glow like dull fire, and the defences were then best revealed.

No doubt the attack had to be regulated upon a cut and dried programme as to date and time on account of the warships which were to take part in it, but there is always a risk in counting upon weather. It happened on this particular afternoon that the landscape was veiled in a luminous heat haze. The mist was dense enough to obscure the view of Ismail Oglu in any detail from the British lines ; it was not dense enough to hide objects silhouetted against the western sky. Indeed, by taking the dazzle off the view westward, it vastly improved visibility from the Turkish viewpoint.

The enemy's front stretching across the higher part of the spur, relatively narrow, was to be subjected to begin with to a concentrated and intensive fire. Under



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the conditions the fire both of the ships and of the land batteries was somewhat haphazard. General Hamilton had wished to postpone the attack, but "for various reasons this," he relates, "was not possible." What the reasons were he does not say, but manifestly, by parity of reasoning if conditions of light were so important to success, they were, being adverse, just as weighty a factor against success.

At 3 in the afternoon the assault was launched by an advance of the 11th Division on the right.

It was intended more immediately to gain a footing both on Hetman Chair and on Scimitar Hill.

From the southern face of the former spur lines of Turkish trenches extended on the lower level across the valley of the Azmak, barring the way towards Great Anafarta. The 34th Brigade of the 11th Division took these trenches in the first rush and with little loss.

On the left the 87th Brigade of the 29th Division swarmed up the northern slopes of Scimitar Hill from the valley leading to Little Anafarta, and won a footing on the ridge.

At the two extremes, therefore, of the line of attack the battle had begun well. So far so good.

But in the centre, where the main weight of the assault was thrown, the operations went wrong. Suspecting probably that the ravine was a trap, General de Lisle had intended the assault here to avoid it. The troops were to gain the higher level of the ridge, if possible, by making their way on the left up the westward slopes of Scimitar Hill; on the right, up the north-westward slopes of Hetman Chair. These points of attack were on either side just outside the declivities of the ravine, and to a certain extent were "dead ground," that is, ground not fully exposed to the enemy's fire.

The attack up the westward slopes of Scimitar Hill was entrusted to the 86th Brigade of the 29th Division, co-operating with the 87th. But whether by the accident of shell fire, or by hostile design—and more probably by design—no sooner had the 87th Brigade gained a footing on the plateau than the dwarf oak scrub on all

the upper part of the westward slopes burst into a blaze. It was as dry as a bone, and burned furiously, sending up an enormous volume of smoke. To the advance of the 86th Brigade this wall of fire presented an impenetrable bar. In trying to work round it to the right, which was to the windward, they found themselves in the ravine. There, of course, they were shot at from both sides; ambushed, in fact. Nevertheless, the leading troops reached the head of the ravine. Unable, however, to keep their footing in face of the fire poured into them, they had to retire, and retreat down the ravine being even more deadly than the ascent, were compelled to work along the nearer slope, that is, the slope of Scimitar Hill facing south-west. There, finally, they established themselves on a ledge which afforded some cover.

Coincidentally the 32nd Brigade of the 11th Division, missing direction owing to the poor visibility in the dash across Green Hill, had moved too far towards the left, and instead of striking the north-western slope of Hetman Chair, also entered the ravine. Their attempted advance up it was repulsed with serious loss. When this mistake in direction became known, the 33rd Brigade, held in reserve, was sent forward to carry out the original plan of assault. They, too, it is said, lost direction in the like manner. At all events this part of the plan broke down in execution.

The result was that neither the success of the 34th Brigade on the right nor that of the 87th Brigade on the left led to anything. With the defeat of the frontal assault in the centre the bodies of troops on the wings had each been left in a dangerous situation.

Looking at the way the battle was going, and the fact that the 11th Division had not gained its objective, it was decided to bring up the 2nd Mounted Division, hitherto held in reserve at Lala Baba. They had to advance round the south of the Salt Lake and for a mile and a half under heavy bursts of shrapnel. The manœuvre was executed in open order, and with a magnificent steadiness. " The advance of these English

yeomen," General Hamilton records, "was a sight calculated to send a thrill of pride through anyone. Such superb martial spectacles are rare in modern war. Here and there a shell would take toll of a cluster; there they lay; the others moved steadily on; not a man hung back or hurried."

They reached the positions held by the foremost battalions at nightfall; pushed up the ravine favoured by the failing light, and, gaining the top, carried the Turkish trenches on a small rise forming the centre of the enemy's first defences. It was supposed that the plateau had at length been won, but farther on and on yet higher ground there was the semi-circle of Turkish entrenchments. The captured knoll commanded by this semi-circle would in daylight have been untenable. It was judged that, fatigued and thirsty as the men were, a retirement was the best course. The yeomanry fell back upon the line from which the attack had been launched. The British losses in this disastrous action were nearly 5,000 men. They fell most heavily on the 29th Division.

Subsidiary to the operations just recorded, and coincidentally with them, an assault was made under the command of Major-General Cox with a mixed column of Anzac, Irish, Welsh, and Indian troops upon the Turkish positions along the south side of the Great Anafarta valley. The column consisted of—

Two battalions of the New Zealand Mounted Rifles;
Two battalions of the 29th (Irish) Brigade;
The 4th South Wales Borderers;
The 29th Indian Infantry Brigade.

The attack had three objectives: on the left to stiffen the junction of the 11th Division with the Anzac line; in the centre to seize the well at Kabak Kuyu, the source of the Azmak, and a valuable acquisition, while its loss would be a bad one for the enemy; on the right to clear out the Turkish entrenchments to the north-east of Hill 60.

Cox, to achieve these aims, formed his force into three sections, the Irish and Welsh on the left, the Indians in

the centre, and the Anzacs on the right. The Anzacs were under the command of Russell.

The troops on the left drove the Turks out of a line of outposts, and effected the linking up as intended; the Indian Brigade seized the Kabak Kuyu well; on the right the enemy resisted stubbornly, and there was a stiff and swaying fight, in which the summit of Hill 60, the Kaiajik Aghala, was finally won and held against superior forces. This hill lies just beyond Hill 40, where Russell's men established themselves on the night of August 6. Since it commanded the Great Anafarta valley, the position was of tactical importance, indeed of the first importance. Having lost it the Turks essayed repeatedly to retake it, and tried both with bomb and bayonet. In part, and at a reckless sacrifice of life, they succeeded. They regained the summit, but could not regain the southern face. There the Anzacs once more proved that they were terrors to shift. Reinforced by the 18th Australians, just landed, they grimly defied every effort to oust them.

So affairs remained for about a week, the usual bombing and sniping on either side. Then at last the enemy was ejected. The renewed attack was planned by Cox in conjunction with Russell, both past-masters in ruse and resource. It was known that the Turks, or Turko-Germans, meant here to fight to the death. For the operation there were assigned three Anzac brigades, the 4th and 5th Australians, and the New Zealand Mounted Rifles, plus the 5th Connaught Rangers of the Irish Brigade. It proved as bitter a struggle as any in the Gallipoli campaign. In the advance the Irishmen were on the left, the Australians on the right, the Mounted Rifles in the centre. The Australians were held by machine-gun fire; but the New Zealanders reached and cleared the nearer area of the summit. The enemy disputed the ground inch by inch. While, however, he was so engaged, the Connaught Rangers had swept him out of his trenches on the left and turned his defences. It was an extraordinary feat, for it was all done within five minutes. The dash of the Irishmen had

been simply irresistible. No sooner was the loss realised than the hostile reserves were massed for a counter-attack. There were only 250 of the Rangers, and they were assailed by six times their number. Odds or no odds, they refused to give way. The unequal fight went on for hours, and it was not until midnight—the attack had begun at five in the afternoon—that the heroic remnant of the Rangers was at length outbombed.

The interval had given time for reinforcements to be brought up. The fight on the left had also helped the New Zealanders to keep their grip on the summit. For twenty-four hours longer they were incessantly counter-attacked, and remained immovable. When this resistance had told on the enemy's confidence, and tried his wind, the 10th Australian Light Horse pounced upon him again on the left, and again ousted him. This time the ejection was final. Hill 60 had been won.

The character of this combat may be judged from the fact that the Turkish losses were as heavy as those sustained by the British in the much more extensive battle of August 21; if not heavier. The summit and slopes of Hill 60 were thickly strewn and in places heaped with Turkish dead. On the side of the attack the casualties numbered 1,000, the killed about a fifth of the total. If the main weight had been thrown into these flanking operations instead of into the frontal assault the action of August 21 would in all probability have been a victory.

To all intents this combat for Hill 60 was the last fight. From the end of August the campaign simply petered out. General Hamilton still believed in success; but the British Government had ceased to believe. They had decided to write the Expedition off.

On the spot the decision was forecasted by the non-arrival of drafts and munitions. The stream of each dried up. With the coming of the autumn sickness had begun to take a heavy toll. On October 11 General Hamilton received from Lord Kitchener, Secretary of

State for War, a cablegram asking for his estimate of the losses likely to be involved in an evacuation of the peninsula. "On the 12th October," he writes, "I replied in terms showing that such a step was to me unthinkable." In plain terms, he declined to comply with the requisition. Four days later (October 16) he was recalled.

CHAPTER XII

GALLIPOLI: THE EVACUATION

General Munro's report on the Gallipoli situation—Glaring military disadvantages—Evacuation resolved upon—Winter hardships of the troops—Birdwood's plan for abandonment in three stages—Suvla first evacuated—Success of the scheme—The withdrawal from the Anzac lines—Turkish suspicions at Achi Baba—French Corps Expeditionaire withdrawn—Final abandonment on night of January 8, 1916—The enemy outwitted—Episodes of the embarkation—No losses—The Gallipoli enterprise and its results.

AFTER an interval of twelve days the command of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force was transferred to General Sir C. C. Munro.

That distinguished officer was instructed to report upon the military situation in the Gallipoli Peninsula; to form an opinion as to whether on military grounds the peninsula ought to be evacuated, or yet another attempt made to carry it; and finally to estimate the military forces needed to capture the peninsula, to keep the Dardanelles open in that event, and eventually to take Constantinople.

He proceeded to Imbros, where the Headquarters of the Expeditionary Force had been established, and from that place sailed to Gallipoli to pursue his inquiries.

He found the positions occupied by the British forces in his opinion unique in military history. "The mere fringe of the coastline had," he reported, "been secured. The piers and beaches upon which they depended for all requirements of *personnel* and material were exposed to registered and observed artillery fire. Our entrenchments were dominated almost throughout by the Turks. The possible artillery positions were insufficient and

defective. The Force, in short, held a line possessing every possible military defect. The position was without depth; the communications insecure and dependent on the weather. No means existed for the concealment and deployment of fresh troops destined for the offensive. The Turks, on the other hand, enjoyed full powers of observation, and abundant artillery positions, and they had been given the time to supplement natural advantages by all the devices at the disposal of the field engineer."

These were grave considerations. But there were others. To begin with, since every corner on the peninsula was exposed to the hostile fire, it was not possible to withdraw any of the troops on the peninsula from the shell-swept area. The troops were enervated by the diseases endemic in the Levant in summer; there was, in consequence of the losses sustained in earlier battles, a dearth of officers competent to take command of the men; the augmentation of the Force by attaching to it yeomanry and mounted brigades acting as infantry had not tended to create efficiency; the proceeding was a makeshift.

Weighing this situation and the state of the Force, General Munro concluded that the Turks—it was clear enough in view of the natural advantages of their position strengthened by field works—could hold the British Expeditionary Force with comparatively few troops, an economy of their resources which, combined with this diversion of the British resources, must favour the prosecution of enemy designs against Bagdad, or against Egypt, or both.

He did not think an advance from the positions held by the Expeditionary troops could reasonably be expected. Nor even were it made did he consider that the position would be materially bettered. The idea of an advance upon Constantinople he dismissed as impracticable. In brief, his judgment was that the troops locked up on the peninsula should be diverted to a more useful theatre of war, and that the diversion was urgent.

In these circumstances evacuation was decided upon. It had been determined at the same time to send part of the British forces in the Levant to Salonica. Accordingly, General Munro having been invested with the command of those forces, exclusive of the British troops in Egypt, they were divided into the Salonica Army under the immediate command of General Sir Bryan Mahon, and the Dardanelles Army under the immediate command of General Sir W. Birdwood. The latter had his headquarters at Mudros.

Winter set in on the peninsula of Gallipoli with heavy storms. A gale which began on November 21, and blew for twenty-four hours, reaching at its height the velocity of a hurricane, was accompanied by torrential rain. The downpour turned all the watercourses and brooks into raging torrents, which coming down from the hills in spate swept everything before them. Trenches, particularly in the Suvla area, were flooded out; the floods spread over the flat expanses and cut off communications. In the trenches, dugouts, and billets, very rough and temporary shelters for the most part, the troops were drenched to the skin by the rain, and their stores soaked by muddy flood water. To the storm of rain succeeded a heavy downfall of snow, still accompanied by a high wind, bitterly cold. The cold speedily changed the aspect of the country to one of frozen wintriness. Wet followed by cold sent up the rate of sickness with a bound. In the early days of December 10,000 men had to be shipped off, invalided.

Meanwhile, with the aid of General Birdwood, a plan for evacuation was being worked out. It was happily on the lines of plain common sense. The proposal of General Munro was to carry out the abandonment in three stages.

The first stage was to withdraw troops, animals, and supplies not needed for a long campaign; the second to withdraw men, guns, animals and stores except those required for a defensive during a given period, due allowance being made for contingencies; the third to

complete the withdrawal as rapidly as possible, leaving behind, if necessary, guns, animals and stores not for the time wanted.

Very wisely, General Munro resolved not to cover the evacuation with any feint of attack. He considered that if that manœuvre failed of its purpose it would do harm, and the probabilities were that it would fail. His decision was to depart from the normal as little as possible. Beyond question that course was by far the more effective ruse.

The actual work of evacuation was entrusted to General Birdwood in association with Rear-Admiral Wemyss. "On receipt of his orders," General Munro records, "Lieut.-General Birdwood proceeded with the skill and promptitude characteristic of all he undertakes." This tribute was well deserved. For months, in the most literal sense of the words, Birdwood had been the life and soul of Anzac. He was no stickler for ceremony. Many a time he had been seen in foremost positions wearing, like his men, nothing more than shirt, trousers, and a hat, and outwardly not to be distinguished from them. Where snipers abounded this was sensible. But though he detested parade, Birdwood was above everything thorough. If he kept in the closest daily touch with his "lads," who were devoted to him, he was a born leader, and neither the discipline nor the *moral* of the Anzacs for a moment wavered. In every instance he scrapped the frills and got at the business. And he did it now. Fortunately, Wemyss was at the same time a "live" man on the Naval side.

The evacuation of the Suvla positions was the initial step. This proceeding by itself could afford the enemy no clue to its intentions. It did not of necessity indicate abandonment of the Gallipoli enterprise. And it afforded the less clue because it was carried out on the lines already noted. From December 10 to December 18 the surplus of the force at Suvla ebbed away, as it were, to seaward.

Then came the final move; a test of the method. Corps behind the lines were to be withdrawn to the

embarkation beaches first. The lines meanwhile were to be lightly held, but since the distance of some of these points from the beaches was considerable, it was evidently desirable in case of attack to break a hostile rush. With that object intermediate positions had been prepared; one a line to the south of the Salt Lake, extending from the lake to the sea and covering B and C beaches; the other a line to the north of the Salt Lake extending from Hill 10 to the Karakol Dagh on the coast, and covering A Beach.

The final withdrawal was to take place on the night of December 19–20. The night proved calm, and the full moon was happily veiled by a haze. Just light enough to see close at hand and obviate the possible confusion of total darkness; dark enough to cover movement even at a moderate distance.

The covering ships had taken up their positions, ready to open if the enemy indicated activity.

At half-past one in the morning began the withdrawal and embarkation of corps in the rear. The embarkation proceeded with perfect smoothness. When it had gone far enough the men in the front trenches left them. They were not molested. Every gun, vehicle and animal was embarked. Only a small stock of supplies had to be left behind. Those who were last to leave set fire to them.

The final evacuation of the Anzac position had gone on concurrently with that at Suvla. It was equally without a hitch. Owing, however, to the roughness of the ground, and the gradient of the ravines leading down to the shore, 4 field guns, 2 howitzers (5-inch), a 4·7 naval gun, 2 Hotchkiss "pom-poms," and an "archie" had to be left behind, but destroyed, of course. Some supply carts had also to be left—stripped of their wheels, and 56 mules. The supplies left were fired.

The first effect of the evacuation of Suvla and Anzac was to arouse enemy suspicions either that the force before Achi Baba might be increased, or that position also evacuated. And the enemy, having been presumably outwitted by the evacuations already carried

out, took measures to prevent either of these possible movements. He increased the number of his heavy guns not only on the Gallipoli side on the Achi Baba front, but on the Asiatic shore of the Dardanelles. The object was to keep the landing places round the southern toe of the peninsula under heavy shell fire. This concentration he could afford, since both his troops and his guns ranged against the British at Suvla and Anzac had now been released. It had become important therefore not to delay this part of the evacuation, for the enemy was in superior strength both as regards men and artillery, and if he could render it impossible for the Allied force before Achi Baba either to receive supplies or to withdraw he might compel its surrender with the whole of its equipment and material.

Yet at the last moment apparently there was in the Cabinet at Home some hesitancy as to giving up this foothold. The influences which had originally suggested this Expedition were not yet dead. Evidently with that temerity which jumps to conclusions upon half-truths, the changed conditions on the spot were not properly realised, and even the clearly expressed opinion of Sir Charles Munro did not in some minds carry conviction. Between the final evacuation of Suvla and Anzac and the receipt of orders to withdraw from the position at Cape Helles, which seems in London, curiously enough, to have been esteemed the more valuable, though its intrinsic value by itself was nil, there ensued a delay of eight days. The orders at the same time were "without unduly exposing the *personnel*" to save all the equipment and animals.

Already the French troops employed in this area had been evacuated with the exception of 4,000 men, and most of the French section of the line taken over by the Royal Naval Division and the 86th Brigade.

Here again the same procedure was adopted. There was no attempt to cover the withdrawal by a feint attack; and surplusage was got rid of in night-time embarkations whenever the weather had permitted, the longer nights favouring. In the day-time nothing

out of the ordinary was to be observed. To keep down the enemy's heavy gun fire the ships of the Fleet opened a counter-bombardment against these hostile batteries, which were now, it was noted, liberally supplied with German shells. Subject to such preliminaries, the final withdrawal was to take place once more in a single night; corps behind the lines got off first; the lines meanwhile to be held much as usual; and the troops to move from them down to the beaches assigned without occupying any intermediate position unless attacked. The distances were mostly short.

In the meanwhile and in anticipation of orders, General Birdwood had worked out all his arrangements in detail.

The first step was the evacuation of the remainder of the French troops. They were in readiness withdrawn from the line on the night of January 1–2, and were to be embarked by the French warships and transports. The wind on the following night when the men and animals were to put off proved strong, and embarkation in boats not being easy some British destroyers were requisitioned to assist. The proceedings too having to be conducted in darkness and a choppy sea, a French battleship ran down and sank one of the horse transports. However, this part of the embarkation was got through without further loss.

It was then decided to fix the final withdrawal for the night of January 8. A complete shipment of the heavy guns, though ordered from London, and this weighty stuff had to go first if at all, would by inability to reply to the hostile fire have given away the intended evacuation altogether. Seven of such guns, one British and six French, were therefore retained, and at the finish destroyed.

The further preparations included, as a precaution, lines of trenches covering the several beaches. Between the front lines and the departure places there were already existing three lines of trenches, all strongly wired. These could be held if need were. To leave nothing to chance, however, a line of posts was laid out

from de Trott's battery on the Straits to Gully Beach on the Ægean. To reach the beaches the enemy, if he essayed it, would have to penetrate four lines of defences, and the trenches covering the beaches as well.

At each embarkation place there was a staff of naval officers. The Naval arrangements were put into the hands of Captain C. M. Staveley, R.N.

There were not wanting evidences of a deepening of enemy suspicions. On January 7 an exceptionally heavy gun fire was directed against the right of the Allied line, both from in front and in flank from across the Dardanelles. It resulted in but few casualties, but the defences were severely knocked about. The main reply was from the ships of the supporting squadron. Two Turkish mines were sprung in the centre, where the Turkish trenches were observed to be crowded. An attack was delivered, but it had no "go" in it, and was rapidly repulsed.

These signs of activity, whatever their object, were not shown on the following day—the last which any British troops were to pass on the peninsula. The day dawned sunny and calm. A light breeze was wafted over the sea from the south. The calm spell, so the meteorological expert with the Force predicted, would last for the next twenty-four hours.

Everything for the last move was ready. The embarkations were to begin soon after darkness fell, and the men in the front line to withdraw a quarter of an hour before midnight. It was calculated that they would, if unattacked, reach the landing places about three in the morning.

The embarkation had been arranged to take place in three trips; the first comprising men withdrawn from the support line immediately after nightfall; the second most of the men left to hold the front line; the third the rearguards of the trenches covering the beaches, the Naval and Military beach working parties, and those of the Royal Engineers left ashore to execute repairs to piers if damaged. The body of men included in the first trip was larger than that included in the

second, and these again more numerous than those included in the third.

Just after nightfall, about seven o'clock, the wind veered from south to south-west and began to freshen, and it continued to rise until close upon midnight. By that time the sea had become choppy.

Notwithstanding these conditions, the first trip was carried out without mishap. The second trip, entered upon at half-past eleven, and including the embarkation of guns as well as men, was kept well up to schedule time. At half-past three in the morning the last of the men in the third trip left shore. The history of the Gallipoli Expedition had been closed.

There were but two incidents worthy of note. One was the reported presence of an enemy submarine; the report was correct enough, for *Prince George*, having 2,000 troops on board, was struck on the way to Mudros by a torpedo. The torpedo failed to explode. The other incident was the grounding of a lighter at Gully Beach stranded owing to the heavy seas, which had already washed away the pier at W Beach. As the vessel could not be refloated the men on her, 160 in number, had to be re-landed, marched to W Beach and embarked there.

All this had taken place apparently without the enemy having been given the alarm. But as the last parties left the shore stores and supplies left behind broke out at one point after another into flame. They had been fired by time fuses. The night became illuminated by these flares. In the midst of them two magazines of munitions and explosives, which it had been impracticable to remove, went up one after another in quick succession with a roar. They had been fired in the same way.

Then it became evident that the enemy had been roused. Red lights soared up above the Turkish lines. At the same time the enemy's heavy guns boomed out. His shells were seen to be falling upon the landing places. They continued to fall as the warships and transports stood off. This bombardment of nothing in particular went on for three hours.

The evacuation had been completely successful. Not a man had been lost. The withdrawal had been successful because General Munro had made up his mind "that no risks should be taken in prolonging the withdrawal of *personnel* at the final stage with a view to reducing the quantity of stores left"—and burned. It was a sagacious course, and there can be no doubt that it contributed to the justified confidence of all ranks, which in turn affirmed the perfect discipline displayed.

So closed this enterprise, ill-advised and ill-timed in its inception, unfortunate in its course. It had failed less from natural difficulties than from misjudgment. But against its gloomy background stand out some of the noblest examples of human courage. The British dead who fell in Gallipoli and sleep there, around them its desolate ravines and barren hills, had nobly upheld the valour of their race. The pity of it is that these deeds were turned to naught. Error bears at all times a bitter fruit, but none more bitter than in war. The error here was that which put equipment before men, not seeing that the greater perfection of destructive equipment heightens the qualities of the men who handle it; renders the element of ability and supreme ability in direction more than ever imperative. The British Empire was built up by reliance upon men. No more shining examples of duty and devotion could illumine a dark page than those of the soldiers and sailors over whose resting places might well be inscribed the epitaph, "Go tell the Lacedæmonians we lie here in obedience to their laws."

Was the campaign wholly without political results? By no means. The Turkish losses in Gallipoli were greater than those in the Balkan War. More than 100,000 of the best troops of the Empire had fallen. Added to the disastrous campaigns in the Caucasus it was a fatal blow. If the Balkan War had shaken the Turkish Empire to its foundations these combined losses, doubly severe, dried up the springs of its vitality.

END OF VOL. I.

NOTES

Page 2, line 16*

The pretext was a pastoral of the Bishop of Nancy, whose diocese included districts on both sides of the frontier as delimited in 1871. A sentence of two years' imprisonment plus a crushing fine imposed by the Prussian Government on the Archbishop of Posen, Cardinal Ledochovsky, a Pole, had just been denounced in an encyclical of Pope Pius IX. On the authority of the encyclical the Bishop of Nancy, and other Churchmen, supported the protest. The German Government alleged that the French Ministry was stirring up anti-German feeling in Lorraine.

Page 3, line 19*

Le Duc de Broglie: *La Mission de M. de Gontaut-Biron à Berlin*, pp. 206–7.

Page 4, line 19

See *Through Bosnia and Herzegovina during the insurrection* 1875, by Arthur J. Evans, F.S.A.

Page 9, line 12

A branch of the railway was later on, and equally for military purposes, carried south from Damascus to Medina.

Page 10, line 17

The spirit of the Mahommedan faith favours soberness, simplicity and charity, but political ambition wearing the mask of religious motive, and playing upon ignorance, prostituted zeal to serve its own purposes.

Page 18, line 10*

This and the following documents quoted were found in the archives of the Greek Foreign Office after the abdication of Constantine in 1916.

Page 19, line 9

The German Emperor had a residence on the Island of Corfu and used occasionally to visit it. Constantine and the Queen of Greece were at different times his guests.

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* From bottom.

Page 20, line 9*

The compact of Neutrality was of course in flat contradiction to the statement that a formal German-Turkish alliance had been entered into. Formal alliance at this time there was not, but the German Government held Turkey in vassalage, and the last chance of escape was closed by the appearance of *Goeben* and *Breslau* off Constantinople.

Page 42, line 14

This statement refers to the situation in Egypt in 1915. In 1919 there were in Egypt grave popular disturbances. They were ascertained to have arisen from irregular exactions levied upon the peasantry by subordinate native officials whose numbers had had to be increased owing to the withdrawal of British administrators for service in Syria and elsewhere. The exactions were associated with the raising of men for the Labour Battalions of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force in Syria. Many more men than were needed were called up, and payments exacted for exemptions. These abuses led to popular fears of a re-imposition of that great dread of the Egyptian peasant—the Corvée.

Page 43, line 7*

A railway was afterwards laid by the British across Sinai to Rafa in Palestine, but command of the sea made this feasible.

Page 48, line 15

Report of Dardanelles Commission, p. 14 *et seq.*

Page 50, line 16

On January 2nd, 1915, a telegram was received from the British Ambassador at Petrograd asking on behalf of the Russian Government for a British demonstration against the Turks as an aid to Russian operations in the Caucasus. The Turkish offensive there was then in full blast (see dates on p. 32). But the Russian Government did not ask for, nor suggest, the Dardanelles project.

Page 51, line 5

Report of Dardanelles Commission, p. 11 *et seq.* The Board of Admiralty as a Board were not consulted.

Page 51, line 10

It has been ascertained that on the German-Turkish side at this time the weak point was the lack of communications enabling forces readily to be moved and massed as wanted. An attack upon nodal points was the first stage of any attack likely to be successful.

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* From bottom.

NOTES

Page 52, line 20

The naval guns used in the bombardment of Alexandria cannot now be classed as modern.

Page 53, line 12

They particularly exerted themselves to lay out roads, and to establish means, until then non-existent, of concentrating a central reserve.

Page 53, line 17

Report of Dardanelles Commission, pp. 16, 17.

Page 63, line 11*

The Vice-Admiral received his orders from the Admiralty; the orders to Gen. Sir Ian Hamilton came from the War Office. This dualism in direction was a grave weakness.

Page 64, line 12

Enver Pasha is reported to have said: "Delay enabled us thoroughly to fortify the peninsula, and in six weeks' time we had taken down there over 200 Austrian Skoda guns."—*Report of Dardanelles Commission, p.* 40.

Page 206, line 10*

Sir Ian Hamilton: *Dispatch of December* 11th, 1915.

Page 207, line 2*

There is here no implied reflection on the naval command on the spot. The command on the spot was guided by the orders from the Admiralty regarding risks.

Page 210, line 5*

Sir Ian Hamilton: *Dispatch of December* 11*th*, 1915.

Page 212

Sir Ian Hamilton: *Dispatch of December* 11*th*, 1915.

Page 225, line 10

Sir C. Munro: *Dispatch on Operations in the Eastern Mediterranean, March 6th*, 1916.

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* From bottom.

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