

and which had never been recovered, owing principally to lack of time. At Anzac it had been deemed inadvisable to set a light to the stores which had been found impossible to embark, so that here the bombardment was more severe and large fires were started by the bursting shell.

A curious spectacle now presented itself, certain areas absolutely clear of troops being subjected to a heavy shell fire from our own and the enemy's guns.

It seems incredible that all this work had taken place without the enemy becoming aware of our object, for although the utmost care was taken to preserve the beaches and offing as near as possible normal, yet it proved quite impracticable to get up boats and troop carriers in sufficient time to carry out the night's work, and yet for them not to have been visible from some parts of the Peninsula.

The morning bombardment lasted but a very short time, for I felt that the use of much ammunition would merely be a waste; moreover the risk of submarines appearing on the scene of action had never been absent from my mind at any time during the whole operation. Consequently at 7.25 a.m., I ordered the Squadron to return to Kephalo, leaving two specially protected cruisers to watch the area. These subsequently reported that they had caused a good deal of damage amongst the enemy when they eventually swarmed down to take possession of the loot, the realisation of which, I trust, was a great disappointment to them.

All the arrangements were most admirably carried out, and the time table previously laid down was adhered to exactly.

Before closing this despatch, I would like to emphasise the fact that what made this operation so successful, apart from the kindness of the weather and of the enemy, was the hearty co-operation of both services. The evacuation forms an excellent example of the cordial manner in which the Navy and Army have worked together during these last eight months.

For the Army the evacuation was an operation of great probable danger, shared by the naval beach personnel; it was also, specially for the former, one of considerable sadness. Throughout the whole proceedings nothing could have exceeded the courtesy of Generals Sir William Birdwood, Sir Julian Byng, and Sir Alexander Godley, and their respective Staffs, and this attitude was typical of the whole Army.

The traditions of the Navy were fully maintained, the seamanship and resource displayed reaching a very high standard. From the Commanding Officers of men-of-war, transports, and large supply ships, to the Midshipmen in charge of steamboats and pulling boats off the beaches, all did well.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
R. E. WEMYSS.

"Lord Nelson,"
26th January, 1916.

SIR,—

I have the honour to forward the following despatch dealing with the withdrawal of the Army from the Gallipoli Peninsula.

In considering the evacuation of the

Helles position it was laid down by Sir Charles Monro, for the guidance of the Army, that—

(a) The withdrawal should be conducted with the utmost rapidity, the final stage being limited to one night.

(b) Every effort should be made to improve embarkation facilities at as many points on the coast as could be used, other than W and V beaches.

(c) Every endeavour should be made to evacuate as many as possible of the following:—

British:

18-pdr. guns.
4.5-inch howitzers.
60-pdr. guns.
6-inch guns.

French:

75 mm. guns.
Heavy guns.

Also artillery ammunition and such small-arm ammunition as could safely be withdrawn before the final stage.

(d) The period of time which must elapse before the final stage could be undertaken would be determined by the time required to collect necessary shipping and to make essential preparations ashore (work on beaches, pathways, &c.) taken in conjunction with the necessity for evacuating the superfluous personnel and as much as possible of the material mentioned in (c).

(e) During the "intermediate stage," the duration of which would be determined by the foregoing considerations, such other animals, material, stores and supplies as could be embarked without prolonging this period would also be evacuated.

Forty-eight hours before the evacuation was completed the number of men remaining on the peninsula was to be cut down to 22,000.

Of these 7,000 were to embark on the last night but one, leaving 15,000 for the final night; at the request of the military the latter number was increased to 17,000.

As few guns as possible were to be left to the final night and arrangements were made to destroy any of these which it might be found impossible to remove or which, by reason of their condition, were considered not worth removing.

The original intention was to use Gully, "X," "W" and "V" beaches for the embarkation of troops on the final night; this was deemed advisable in consequence of the very accurate and heavy fire which the enemy could bring to bear on "W" and "V" beaches, on to both of which their guns were carefully registered.

The decision not to use "X" beach and to use Gully beach only to embark the last 700 men was arrived at on the 6th January.

This alteration of plan was recommended by General Sir Francis Davies, commanding the 8th Corps; he based his objections to the use of "X" and Gully beaches to:—

(a) The probability of bad weather. Embarkation from these beaches, even in a moderately strong northerly blow, was impossible.

(b) "X" and Gully beaches had not been used for a considerable time as landing places; and should the movements of ships and boats off the beaches be observed by the enemy, it might awaken their suspicions as to what was taking place.

The essence of the operation being secrecy, the