

many overseas-theatres. As a result of this drain upon her resources, stocks of electrical and railway plant and other stores, only procurable from the United Kingdom, had been reduced to the lowest ebb, and, owing to shortage of shipping, deficiencies could not be replaced. Thus the signing of the Armistice in November, 1918, found India grappling with the problem of meeting urgent demands on her greatly reduced resources, and with the machinery for carrying on her internal administration weakened by the withdrawal from all her civil departments of large numbers of officers for military duty.

3. Following on the Armistice came the demand for demobilisation. Every effort was made to release such men as were urgently required either at home or in India, and this necessitated a considerable reduction in establishments and imposed a severe strain on all branches of the service, especially in those employing skilled artisans and mechanics.

4. Such was the military situation when the outbreak of internal disturbances supervened in April, 1919. To quell these disturbances and to protect communications, it was found necessary to divert large bodies of troops from their normal peace stations, to detain others which were awaiting demobilisation or embarkation to the United Kingdom, and to recall a large number of Indian troops who had proceeded to their homes on leave. We were particularly fortunate in having at hand so valuable a reinforcement as the British troops *ex Mesopotamia* awaiting demobilisation. It was only with great reluctance that I sanctioned their retention at a time when they had every reason and right to expect their early release from military service; but my confidence in the loyalty of the British soldier was not misplaced, and I take this opportunity of expressing my appreciation of the fine military spirit he displayed in shouldering this additional burden. It was a keen and natural disappointment also to the Indian soldier to be deprived of the furlough which he had earned so well; but he, too, accepted this burden in a spirit of cheerful resignation, for which we owe him a deep debt of gratitude; his conduct throughout this period has been worthy of the highest praise.

5. Before passing on to a narrative of the operations, I propose briefly to review the work of the various administrative services and departments, for the campaign was essentially one in which administrative organisation played the leading part. At one time the strength of the force employed trans-Indus amounted to 340,000 men and 158,000 animals, and it will readily be understood that the maintenance of these numbers, with depleted means of transportation, was a problem of considerable difficulty. Fortunately, much attention had been paid in recent years to the improvement of frontier communications; new mechanical transport roads at a cost of approximately one million sterling had been constructed in the North-West Frontier Province alone during the past four years. Considerable improvements had also been effected in existing roads, the most important being those between Jamrud and Landi-Kotal, Kohat and Parachinar, Bannu and Miranshah, Dera Ismail Khan and Tank, and the Bolan road from Sibi to Quetta, on each of which a large number of girder bridges had been provided,

spanning the main waterways. With the exception of the Bolan these roads have all been subjected to heavy and continuous motor traffic throughout the operations, and have stood the test well.

6. As regards railways, the situation was somewhat abnormal when concentration was ordered. Civil traffic had been considerably curtailed and serious damage caused at certain outlying stations during the internal disturbances in the Punjab. Nevertheless, thanks to the efforts of the North-Western and other railways, military requirements were fully met, and though the protection of Peshawar necessitated some divergence from the schedule, concentration was completed in advance of the prearranged time-table. During the month of May 637 military special trains were run over the North-Western Railway system. Early in the concentration period a number of specially fitted ambulance trains were located at convenient forward stations such as Peshawar and Rawalpindi, and special services were arranged for the conveyance of ice, fruit and vegetables in insulated railway vans, both to hospitals and the troops in the field.

7. Major-General H. F. E. Freeland, C.B., D.S.O., M.V.O., R.E., who was at this time a member of the Railway Board, earned the gratitude of the army by his zealous and unremitting efforts in developing the capacity of the railways in respect of military requirements. His wide and varied experience in dealing with military traffic problems proved of inestimable value. I had also the advantage of obtaining the valuable services of Brigadier-General C. L. Magniac, C.M.G., C.B.E., R.E., who had recently returned from France and was appointed Director of Movements.

8. The position of the Supply and Transport Services had been influenced considerably by the calls made upon them from overseas during the course of the great war. The resources of India in animal transport had been exploited to the utmost, and the reserve of animals left in the country was reduced to the lowest ebb; indeed, the supply of mules had been completely exhausted and recourse was had to ponies. These latter, though they proved themselves a fairly satisfactory substitute, were greatly inferior to the mule in general utility and endurance. The ravages of *surra*, combined with continued and heavy demands made by the operations in Persia, had seriously crippled the supply of camels; and the liability of the bullock transport to epidemic diseases limited the degree of reliability which could be placed upon it. In spite of these difficulties, the animal transport available on the outbreak of war was sufficient to equip and maintain the Field Army under the conditions referred to in paragraph 2 above.

9. The mechanical transport at my disposal was employed at the outset on convoy work through the Khaibar; but later, when reinforced by locally purchased vehicles and a number of Ford chassis received from America in March and equipped locally with van bodies, it was used to supplement the animal transport with units and field formations and for the transportation of such perishable commodities as ice, milk, fresh fruit and vegetables. The British ranks of the Heavy Mechanical Transport companies were considerably below establishment, and the proper complement of drivers could not be provided for