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FRIDAY, 7 JANUARY 1921.

War Office,  
7th January, 1921.

The following Despatch has been received by the Secretary of State for War from General Sir G. F. Milne, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., D.S.O., Commanding in Chief, the Army of the Black Sea:—

General Headquarters,  
Army of the Black Sea.  
Constantinople.  
11th August, 1920.

SIR,

I have the honour to forward for your information the following account of the action taken by me and by the troops under my command from the date of the signature of the Armistice with Turkey to the date of the signature of the Turkish Peace Treaty (10th August, 1920).

## I.—EVENTS IN TURKEY.

### (1) Introduction.

On the conclusion of the Armistice with Turkey Lieut.-General Sir H. F. M. Wilson, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., was appointed to command the Allied forces in Turkey-in-Europe, the 28th

British Division and the 122nd French Division being placed tactically under his orders for the purpose of holding the passages of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus and of occupying the railway termini at Constantinople. He was instructed to supervise the execution of the military conditions of the Armistice.

At that date the 122nd French Division and the 22nd and 26th British Divisions were still on the line of the Maritza River, where they had occupied bridgeheads for an advance against Constantinople. The 27th and 28th Divisions were in Macedonia.

After consultation with the Naval Commander-in-Chief preliminary arrangements were made for the relief by British troops of the Turkish garrisons in the forts on the Dardanelles.

On 9th November, 1918, the Royal Navy having reported the channel at the entrance of the Dardanelles clear, troops of the 28th Division, under Major-General H. L. Croker, C.B., C.M.G., occupied the forts on both shores of the Straits. All forts were in our hands by the evening of 10th November, 1918.

On 12th November the Allied fleet, under the

command of Admiral the Hon. Sir S. A. Gough-Calthorpe, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., C.V.O., passed through the Dardanelles, led by the British flagship (H.M.S. "Superb").

This fleet anchored next morning off Constantinople, and General Wilson landed and assumed command.

On 14th November Admiral the Hon. Sir S. A. Gough-Calthorpe, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., C.V.O., who had been appointed British High Commissioner, made his official landing at Galata.

A considerable number of German and Austrian troops were found in the town. The Turkish Government was instructed to complete the evacuation of these troops from Pera and Stamboul within forty-eight hours and to collect them in a concentration camp in the vicinity of Scutari. These orders were carried out satisfactorily.

On the arrival of the French troops one battalion occupied the forts on the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus, while another relieved a British battalion in those on the Gallipoli Peninsula. The forts on the European side of the Bosphorus were occupied by a British battalion.

On arrival in Constantinople the enemy's wireless telegraph stations close to the town were at once occupied, and a cable censorship was established; orders were issued that all Turkish troops in the Gallipoli Peninsula were to be withdrawn to the north of the Bulair lines; demobilisation was to be commenced at once and arms collected at selected centres under Allied supervision.

The Turkish Chief of Staff now lodged a complaint on behalf of the Minister for War that Allied troops had landed at Constantinople, and that such action was not justified by the terms of the Armistice. It was pointed out that the troops were there for the purpose of supplying the usual guards to Allied headquarters and depôts.

Meanwhile British prisoners of war were filtering into Constantinople from all parts of Asiatic Turkey. They were embarked for home with the least possible delay.

## (2) *The Reduction of the Turkish Army.*

At the time of the Armistice with Turkey there were probably 400,000 Ottoman troops under arms. Apart from garrison and line-of-communication troops these were grouped into three armies, the Ninth Army in the Caucasus, the Sixth about Mosul and Jezre, and the Yilderim Group (so-called) on the western border of Cilicia. (The 6th Ottoman Army and the Yilderim Group were facing the British Armies of Mesopotamia and Egypt.)

I therefore considered it my first duty, while keeping within the terms of the Armistice, to take such measures as would result in the rapid reduction of the Ottoman military power. To achieve this end three stages were necessary:—

(a) The return of units to their territorial centres and the evacuation of such theatres as the Caucasus.

(b) The demobilisation of the personnel.

(c) The collection of all munitions of war.

In practice these processes overlapped, but all movements were completed reasonably early.

Demobilisation went on slowly long after the armies had withdrawn. Except in the district round Erzeroum, the process of surrender-

ing armament was beginning to work quite well, when the events which took place at Smyrna in May, 1919, brought it to an end.

Shortly after the conclusion of the Armistice the 9th Turkish Army in the Caucasus consisted of some seven divisions, the Ottoman Government appearing to be under the impression that it might ultimately be allowed to retain the ancient Ottoman Sanjaks of Kars, Ardahan and Batoum, which had been allotted to Turkey under the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. By the beginning of February I was in a position to report that in spite of the winter, the inefficient railways and the Turkish obstruction and delay, only a few Turkish detachments remained on the wrong side of the frontier.

By the terms of the Armistice the Ottoman Government was entitled to be consulted as to the number of troops to be left under arms on completion of demobilisation. As can be imagined, some little difficulty arose in coming to an agreement on this point. The Turkish Minister of War pointed out, and with some reason, that apart from the minor task of watching the frontier the main necessity for an army was the maintenance of internal security. As the strength of the gendarmerie had fallen to one-quarter of its establishment of 52,000, the retention of some disciplined force in the country was an absolute necessity in order to prevent the complete cessation of ordered government in Anatolia.

It was finally decided that the army should consist of twenty divisions, each with an establishment of 1,500 infantry, and a small proportion of artillery and machine gunners. Except in the vicinity of Constantinople no two divisions were to be located in the same town.

The demobilisation of personnel was, on the whole, carried out in good faith by the Ottoman Government. Such difficulties as occurred were due to obstruction by local commanders, as, for example, at Erzeroum, where the divisions of the 15th Army Corps were never reduced to the authorised limit, a situation rendered possible only by the independent attitude of the commander with the connivance of the Turkish Government.

The task of disarming the Ottoman Army presented peculiar difficulties. The main Turkish armies were many hundreds of miles away, and were sullenly withdrawing into the great tangle of mountains which forms the massif of Asia Minor. One of these armies had never been beaten at all; but, on the contrary, had recently carried out a victorious advance into the coveted Moslem territories of the Caucasus. Winter in the hills had rendered impracticable the movements of heavy consignments of arms, even had there been the goodwill to move them, which could hardly be expected.

As any instructions to surrender could not be acted upon during the winter, none were given till the early spring. This delay had the advantage of giving time to prepare close estimates of the armament actually in possession, and made it possible to press the demand when made. During this period the cadres of the Ottoman Army remained responsible for the custody of their armament, subject to supervision by British control officers. To have stationed Allied guards on the large numbers of collecting places and stores would

have resulted in scattering the few troops available in little packets all over the country. I came to the decision, therefore, that the collection of armament would best be carried out through the Ottoman Ministry of War, whose interest it was to collect as much as possible, rather than to have it dispersed or destroyed. If my orders allowed the Ottoman Government the possibility of retaining their armament, subject to the decision of the Peace Conference, greater Turkish assistance in the disarmament might be hoped for; and any trouble or delay might be expected to arise rather from the physical difficulty of transport than from deliberate obstruction or evasion. In order to simplify this part of the problem it was decided to demand only breech-blocks of guns and bolts of rifles. Machine guns were to be brought complete to Constantinople, and there the locks and side plates were to be taken over. Suitable stores were provided (e.g., in Gallipoli), where this material could be under Turkish care, for the purpose of technical preservation, but guarded by Allied military guards.

The events at Smyrna, and the development of the Nationalist movement in Anatolia, brought the progress of this surrender to an abrupt conclusion about the end of May, up to which time large quantities of armament had been surrendered. The successful results of this disarmament of the Turkish Army were evident during the Greek advance in June and July, 1920.

The neglect of the 15th Ottoman Corps to carry out the engagements of the Ottoman Government with regard to the surrender of armament must be regarded as one of the principal cases of breach of the terms of the Armistice.

### (3) *Allied Police Control in Constantinople.*

On 11th January, 1919, I received orders to assume executive control of the Constantinople police. This was carried out under my orders by Lieut.-General Sir H. F. M. Wilson, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., Commanding the Allied Corps, who established an inter-Allied Commission of Control (British, French and Italian) under the presidency of Brigadier-General F. G. Fuller, C.B., C.M.G., General Staff, Allied Corps. In February, 1920, Colonel Ballard, C.B., C.M.G., relieved General Fuller of his duties on the Commission, the combined police and general staff work having grown too onerous for one officer.

The system adopted for the control of the Constantinople police consisted of the establishment of small mixed Allied police posts throughout the city, chiefly at places where the contending elements of the population (Christian and Turk) were most likely to meet.

These were grouped in three police districts, each under the direction of one of the Allies, as follows.—

1. Pera and Galata, under the British.
2. Stamboul, under the French.
3. Scutari, under the Italian.

The control was later extended to the port, and posts provided with motor-boats were established at Galata and Stamboul.

The object aimed at by the Police Commission was to raise the status and moral of the Turkish police, to improve their methods, and while establishing an effective control, to avoid undue interference.

So long as the situation created by the Armistice made it impossible for Allied Consular courts to exercise their functions, officers of the Allied police had to discharge the duties of police court magistrates in addition to their proper duties.

With military force behind it, the Allied police control has maintained tranquillity in the town under circumstances of almost unparalleled complexity, and the Turks acknowledge their debt to it; as freely as do those of other nationalities. Results have proved the success of the system, and serious crime, which was most prevalent in Constantinople, is now less so than in other large cities. Lieut.-Colonel E. C. Maxwell, O.B.E., M.C., Cheshire Regiment, has shown special ability in command of the British sector.

At the same time as the Allies assumed charge of the Constantinople police, the sanitary control of the town was also taken over, and an inter-Allied Sanitary Commission was appointed to supervise the sanitation of the town. Military and civil representatives of the Allies and of the Ottoman Government sit on the Commission, which was first under the presidency of Colonel W. H. Nickerson, V.C., C.B., C.M.G., and later under that of Major-General Sir M. P. C. Holt, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.S.O., K.H.S., Director of Medical Services. The health of the population and the absence of epidemic disease are the best testimony to the work of this Commission.

### (4) *The Control of the Ottoman Railways.*

The satisfactory working of the railways was necessary, not only for the maintenance of the economic life of the country, but also for military reasons. Railways were essential to provide the necessary facilities for the Turkish Army to complete its demobilisation and disarmament, and on these railways depended the food supply of Constantinople.

Under Clause 15 of the Armistice the railways of the Ottoman Empire were placed under Allied control. Early in January, 1919, it was decided that the executive control of those in Asia Minor should be chiefly in British hands, whilst those in Turkey in Europe should be under French control. A Commission composed of the French and British directors of railways and their assistants was formed to co-ordinate and regulate the method of control, so that similar policies as regards tariffs, wages, etc., should be applied in both zones of influence.

The railways involved were as follows:—

- (a) Chemins de fer Orientaux.
- (b) Chemins de fer Ottoman d'Anatolie.
- (c) Smyrna, Cassaba et Prolongement.
- (d) Ottoman Aidin Railway (Smyrna).
- (e) Moudania-Broussa Railway.

All the above, with the exception of the first, are in Asia Minor. The first two were enemy owned, and, as regards the superior employees, were staffed largely by enemy subjects (German, Austrian, etc.). The remaining three were Allied-owned railways, their directorates having been turned out by the Turks during the war.

On 13th January my Director of Railways, Brigadier-General G. B. Rhodes, C.B.E., D.S.O., took over control of the Anatolian Railway (Haidar Pasha to Konia, a distance of 300 miles, with a branch to Angora) and of the Ottoman Aidin Railway.

The control of the Anatolian line was a responsibility of considerable magnitude, and involved property valued at ten million pounds sterling. The Baghdad Railway, which joins the Anatolian Railway at Konia, was under the control of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force.

The French assumed control of the other three lines, with Lieut.-Colonel F. Delaunay as their director of railways.

British detachments were placed at selected points on the Anatolian Railway, coal was obtained from the Royal Navy, the train service was rapidly developed and the efficiency of the railway was improved considerably.

The accounts for the year 1919 showed a large book balance, and even better results were expected for 1920. These hopes were not realised, however, for Nationalist activities brought about an almost total cessation of traffic.

The reorganisation of the Ottoman Aidin Railway was making satisfactory progress until May, 1919, when the Greek occupation of Smyrna produced a state of war, which put a stop to all developments on that part of the railway which remained in Turkish hands, *i.e.*, east of Aidin.

The satisfactory results obtained from the railways under British control up to the time when their functions were curtailed by Nationalist activities do great credit to Brigadier-General Rhodes' zeal and organising ability. The working of the Railway Commission has been facilitated by the cordial co-operation of the French member, Lieut.-Colonel Delaunay.

#### (5) *Distribution and Alterations in the Force.*

During the year 1919 the personnel of the Force gradually underwent a double change. "New Army" units gradually disappeared and were eventually replaced by those of the Regular Army, and at the same time the percentage of Indian Army units in the force was largely increased, until each infantry brigade consisted of one British and three Indian battalions.

In January, 1919, the 22nd Division was disbanded, and in the following April the 26th Division, now reduced to the strength of one mixed brigade, was transferred to Egypt. The 27th and 28th Divisions were re-formed and their units replaced. In August, 1919, the 27th Division (except for the 80th Infantry Brigade) was disbanded on the withdrawal from the Caucasus.

In July, 1919, General Franchet D'Esperey decided to occupy eastern Thrace with an inter-Allied force. The British Army was represented by a detachment of the 31st Punjab, which was stationed at Gumuldjina.

In April, 1919, in order to give confidence to the Christian population on the southern shores of the Black Sea, I occupied Samsun and Merzivan. This occupation ceased in October, owing to the rapid demobilisation of the army.

During February, 1919, the strength of the Allied troops in Constantinople was increased by the arrival of an Italian battalion, to which was shortly added an infantry battalion of the Hellenic Army.

On the reopening of the railways in Anatolia I found it advisable to place detachments of

British troops at the main stations to afford protection to the railway staff, who were mostly Christians, and were nervous as to the future. The results were excellent. British troops occupied Angora, Konia, Afium Kara Hissar, Eskishehr, Ismid, Brusa and Mudania.

During the spring of 1919 the Supreme Council decided to send an Italian battalion to Konia, which eventually took over the guarding of the railway up to Afium Kara Hissar. Owing to lack of troops the detachments at Brusa, Mudania and Angora had to be withdrawn. The last-mentioned town subsequently became the centre of the Nationalist movement.

In March, 1920, owing to the increasingly hostile attitude of the Nationalist movement and the impending military occupation of Constantinople, I decided to close the Anatolian railway from Ismid onwards and to withdraw all Allied troops. This movement was delayed by the objection to the withdrawal from Konia raised by the Italian High Commissioner, who, however, agreed, when it was seen that all British troops were withdrawing. This delay, however, was responsible for the opposition encountered by the British battalion withdrawing from Eskishehr, on which occasion the railway was cut in its rear and reinforcements had to be despatched to extricate it. I deal with this incident in detail later on.

#### (6) *Greek Occupation of the Aidin Vilayet (Smyrna).*

The decision of the Supreme War Council regarding the occupation of Smyrna by the forces of the Hellenic Army was communicated, not to me, but to the High Commissioner and the Naval Commander-in-Chief, who took the necessary action. It was only at a later date that certain responsibilities as regards the lines of demarcation between the Hellenic and Ottoman forces were allotted to me.

The actual landing at Smyrna took place on the morning of 15th May, 1919, and towards the end of the month the Greek Commander issued orders for the occupation of Aidin and the districts of Manissa and Casaba. Up to that time British control posts had been established in the vilayet for the purpose of watching the disarmament and demobilisation of the Turkish army and providing military intelligence. As their presence within the area of operations of an Allied army was now no longer advisable, I withdrew all these officers early in June.

A month later I was informed that the Supreme Council had ordered me to assume the general command of all Allied troops in Asia Minor, and to demarcate, in conjunction with the Greek authorities, a suitable line between the opposing forces, which should be respected by the Hellenic and Ottoman Governments until the final decisions of the Peace Conference were made known. The selection of this line engaged my immediate attention.

On the occasion of the original landing certain limits had been set to the Greek advance, but, as often happens, tactical considerations had necessitated a change in the situation which could not have been previously foreseen, and I was therefore faced with the necessity of having to make the best I could of a *fait accompli*, keeping in view the two essentials of immediately easing the tense situation which

had arisen, and affording at the same time secure tactical position to the Greek forces.

I therefore proceeded at once to Smyrna, where I established a headquarters, and after interviewing the Greek authorities I issued instructions both to the Greek Commander and to the Ottoman Government that no troop movements were to take place without my sanction.

It is unnecessary to state that from the Commanders and Staffs of the Hellenic Army, headed by my comrade of the Macedonian campaign, General Paraskevopoulos, K.C.B., I received the loyal co-operation with which they have always met my wishes, while the Ottoman Government also endeavoured to restrict the movements of their troops pending a development which, they hoped, would be in their favour. Brigadier-General P. L. Hanbury, C.M.G., D.S.O., was directed to work out the details on the ground in conjunction with the Greek Staff, who gave him all possible assistance, as compared to the attitude adopted by the Turkish authorities, who prevented him in places from visiting their advanced posts. The line as finally selected differed little from that occupied by the Greeks at the time, though it was not in accord with their aspirations; but it was obvious that a continued advance would lead to further bloodshed, without any specially compensating military advantages. It ran from the sea at the mouth of the Meander River to the sea near Aivalik, including within the Greek zone Aidin, Odenish, Ahmetli, Manissa and Pergama. It had outside it a neutral zone 3,000 yards wide.

Once the approval of the Supreme Council was obtained, the General Officer Commanding the Hellenic Army in Asia Minor and the Ottoman Minister of War were informed accordingly. The latter was instructed to withdraw all Turkish troops from the neutral zone three days before the Greek advance, but my instructions were honoured more in the breach than in the observance.

The Greek forces gradually took up their new positions, meeting with little resistance, and from November, 1919, to the commencement of their advance in June, 1920, comparative quiet reigned along the front, during which time Brigadier-General Hanbury continued to act as my representative at Smyrna, a position which he filled with tact and ability.

#### (7) *The Development of the National Movement.*

Prior to the Greek landing in Smyrna the Central Ottoman Government exercised sufficient authority in Anatolia, except in the districts round Erzeroum, to ensure the gradual carrying into effect of the terms of the armistice and the instructions as regards demobilisation and disarmament.

The surrender of armament by the various commanders, with the exception of General Kiazim Kara Bekir at Erzeroum, was an indication that up to the month of May no plans for further resistance had been contemplated. Even the present Nationalist leaders, Mustafa Kemal and Djemal Pasha, sent in large consignments from their respective commands. By the commencement of June the surrender of armament from central and eastern Anatolia entirely ceased, and the Nationalist movement had begun, based on the exaggerated accounts of the actions of the Allies in western

Asia Minor and on the ever-present fear that a portion of eastern Anatolia was to form a new Armenian state, a proposal at that time freely discussed in the European Press.

During June I became aware of the existence of two separate organisations whose exact relationship to each other it was difficult to define.

(a) The first was an unofficial organisation kept very secret and headed by Raouf Bey, a naval officer, lately Minister of Marine. This organisation was engaged in sending men and money into the area near Smyrna; and I had little doubt that its main object was to make sure that wherever there were Greek troops, there disorder would reign.

(b) The second organisation was created by General Shekhet Tourgoud Pasha, Minister of War, in consultation with the Minister of the Interior. Asia Minor was divided into northern and southern inspectorates, and a distinguished general and staff were allotted to each. These were given control of the troops, and were responsible for public order to the Minister of the Interior. The first two appointments were General Mustapha Kemal to the northern inspectorate, and General Kutchuk Djemal to the southern inspectorate.

This official organisation appears to have been intended to endeavour to ensure peace in Anatolia during a period of intense strain.

Unfortunately the method adopted by Mustapha Kemal had the opposite result. He and his officers did everything in their power to stir up the population by condemning the action of the Allies with regard to the events in the Smyrna district. This agitation became so serious that it was necessary to demand Mustapha Kemal's return to Constantinople. He declined to obey the orders of his Government.

Early in July Mustapha Kemal went to Erzeroum, where he was joined by Raouf Bey, and about the same time, having been dismissed from the Army, he announced his intention of devoting himself to the work of saving his country.

The first step he took was the summoning of a Congress at Erzeroum, with delegates from what are known as the six eastern vilayets. A declaration in defence of the national rights was issued; in this the leaders declared that while they were prepared to lose Mesopotamia, Palestine, Arabia and Syria, they would defend, if necessary by force, the remainder of Turkey, which represented the home of their race. As a preliminary move this Congress decided to get rid of the cabinet of the Grand Vizier, Damad Ferid, on the grounds that it had done nothing to defend the national rights in Smyrna, and that it did not represent the country. The Congress, however, expressed its loyalty to the Sultan and the Khalifate.

While maintaining complete order in Anatolia, Mustapha Kemal and his associates continued to organise the country for war, by registering the male population without withdrawing them from their homes. He summoned a conference of the delegates from the whole of Turkey to meet in Sivas during the first week in September. It was decided to seize the telegraph offices all over the country, and thus to isolate the Government from the

provinces. It is interesting to note that at this time telegrams from the British control officers stationed in the interior were in no way interfered with.

Towards the beginning of October Damad Ferid, the Grand Vizier, resigned office, and was followed into power by a Government of strong Nationalist tendencies. It was early evident that this new Government was secretly occupied in organising for war, a fact of which there is now ample proof.

Djemal Pasha was installed as Minister of War, with Djevad Pasha as Ottoman Chief of the General Staff, and Colonel Galatali Shevket Bey as Commander of the Dardanelles defences. Working in close touch with the Nationalists these officers were employed in the elaboration of schemes for placing at the disposal of the Nationalist forces the large stocks of military material, arms and ammunition collected in the various Turkish arsenals and depôts, the guarding of which, with the reduced Allied effectives, had long been a difficulty.

Previous to the fall of the Damad Ferid Cabinet Nationalist bands from the vicinity of Angora, under the command of General Ali Fuad, the dismissed commander of the 20th Army Corps, approached the Anatolian railway at Eskişehir, and destroyed two small bridges on the railway in the vicinity of Bilejik. Their objective appeared to be to gain possession of the large stores of ammunition distributed along the railway, which it had been impossible to remove. I therefore dispatched Brigadier-General R. E. Solly Flood, C.M.G., D.S.O., with a strong Brigade of all arms to Eskişehir, with instructions to transfer the large depôt of small arms ammunition at Kutaya to Ismid. This was satisfactorily accomplished, and leaving only sufficient troops to guard the railway, the remainder were withdrawn. It was now seen for the first time that the Nationalists intended to adopt an attitude hostile to the British.

Breaches of the Armistice became of almost daily occurrence, and, in consequence of the obstruction and bad faith on the part of Djemal Pasha, Ottoman Minister of War, and Djevad Pasha, Chief of the General Staff, an ultimatum by the Allied High Commissioners, demanding their removal from office within forty-eight hours, was handed to the Ottoman Government. The intimation that they had resigned their positions was received within the time limit.

The secret hostile activities of the Ottoman War Office were continued under their successors, and the position, in which a Government which was openly organising for war was permitted to continue in power, was intolerable. The effective military occupation of Constantinople was necessary, and for this end the preliminary measures had already been taken.

The general plan agreed upon by the Allied naval and military representatives consisted of the junction of the Allied troops ashore with the Allied naval forces landed for the purpose, and of their occupation of the Turkish War Office, Ministry of Marine, and post and telegraph offices. In accordance with the orders received from His Majesty's Government I instructed Lieutenant-General Sir H. F. M. Wilson, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., commanding Allied troops in Constantinople, to carry out the occupation on the morning of

16th March. By 11 a.m. the operation was completed, no resistance being offered. This result was due largely to the excellent arrangements made by the naval and military staffs concerned, and to the strong naval reinforcement placed at my disposal by Admiral Sir J. de Robeck, Bart., G.C.M.G., K.C.B., whose command had been reinforced only a few days previously by the arrival of the First Battle Squadron, Atlantic Fleet, under the command of Vice-Admiral Sir Sydney Fremantle, K.C.B., M.V.O.

The 2nd Battalion East Surrey Regiment arrived from England on 14th March. In the early hours of 16th March and during the following days certain important military and political personages were arrested. In the carrying out of this unpleasant duty officers, N.C.Os. and men displayed a high standard of dash and determination. In one case a platoon of 1/95th Russell's Infantry encountered stubborn resistance and suffered some casualties.

In view of the situation which was certain to arise in Anatolia on the news of the occupation of Constantinople becoming known, and of my instructions to avoid becoming embroiled in operations in Asia Minor, I had early in March decided to complete the withdrawal of the British and Italian troops from the Anatolian Railway.

Owing to certain unforeseen delays the withdrawal of the most distant troops (the Italian battalion at Konia) was not completed until the day before the occupation of Constantinople; it was immediately followed by the withdrawal of the 1/25th Punjabis at Afion Kara Hissar and Eskişehir. Its concentration and withdrawal was opposed by Nationalist forces. Bridges on either side of Eskişehir were destroyed.

On 22nd March the 1/25th Punjabis reached the broken bridge at Akhissar (twenty miles east of Ismid), bringing with them practically all the railway rolling stock from Eskişehir, which it was advisable to prevent falling into the hands of the Nationalists. Here they were met by a strong mixed force of all arms under Brigadier-General F. S. Montague-Bates, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., which covered the repair of the bridge during the attacks of the Nationalist bands, a task for which the Royal Engineers, under Captain (A./Major) E. U. Grimshaw, R.E., deserve special mention.

On the 27th the final withdrawal to Ismid was effected. Landing parties of the Royal Navy had garrisoned Ismid during the operations. Meanwhile the 1/21st Punjabis and the 1/54th Sikhs had arrived from Egypt, and orders were issued for the formation at Ismid of the 242nd Infantry Brigade under the command of Brigadier-General F. S. Montague-Bates, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.

During the month of April the Turkish Government endeavoured, by the employment of armed force, to regain the control which they had lost to the Nationalists in the districts bordering the Sea of Marmora.

East of Ismid Circassian irregulars, under their leader Anzavour, had succeeded in capturing Ada Bazar and Boli from the Nationalists and had commenced an attack upon Gueye, a town on the railway, while Ottoman regular



troops were assembling in the vicinity of Sabanja and Ismid. Difficulties, however, soon arose; Ada Bazar was lost on 23rd May, the Government troops showed no inclination to fight and fell back in disorder to the vicinity of Ismid, which had been entrenched and was held by a British garrison.

As in my opinion the presence of these Turkish troops constituted a source of weakness to the defence of Constantinople against the Nationalist forces I decided to disarm and disband them, and issued orders accordingly on 10th June. As is usual in Turkey considerable delay arose in the carrying out of these orders, and on the 14th the Nationalist forces attacked the Government troops in the vicinity of Ismid before their withdrawal had even commenced. As a result the greater part of the Turkish forces, which I had instructed to retire by the military road to the north of Ismid, fell back on the town itself, where they were disarmed and shipped to Constantinople. At the same time the Nationalist forces, which had begun to surround Ismid, were informed of the action taken and of the fact that they would not be permitted to occupy the town. A truculent reply was received. Final preparations for defence were then made. A party of seamen landed from H.M.S. "Ramillies" and the 1st Battalion of the Gordon Highlanders were ordered up as a reinforcement. My instructions were to the effect that British troops were not to commence hostilities with the Nationalists. During the night of 14/15th June, however, the first Nationalist attacks on the Ismid garrison commenced. They met with no success.

As the enemy appeared to be increasing in strength, and were rapidly surrounding the town, it was decided to withdraw a company of the 24th Punjab, which had been detailed to guard the road junction some four miles to the north. During this retirement, which it was hoped to conduct without opposition, the company was suddenly attacked and suffered severe losses; it succeeded, however, in reaching the Ismid main defences, whence two companies of the Gordon Highlanders had been despatched to its assistance.

Meanwhile H.M.S. "Revenge," the flagship of the 1st Battle Squadron, Atlantic Fleet, had arrived in the Gulf, and further detachments of seamen and marines had been landed. As the Nationalist forces were now threatening the railway from Constantinople I decided to withdraw all posts east of Tuzlan and to rely solely on communication by sea. At the same time the depôt at Derindje was evacuated, and all Turkish munitions of war stored there were destroyed. Undoubtedly the attack on Ismid was organised with a view to securing possession of this large depôt, from which I had, however, previously removed all small-arm ammunition.

The attacks on Ismid, which took place during the next few days, were easily repulsed by the garrison, supported by the fire of His Majesty's ships, and it would appear that the Nationalist forces received a severe lesson, as all formed bodies were withdrawn towards Eskishehr.

Since about the middle of June irregular bands of so-called Nationalists have been roaming about the Ismid Peninsula, threatening the railway and intimidating the population. The arrival of British and Greek re-

inforcements enabled me to take drastic action against these, by the employment of small mobile columns, under the command of Major-General H. L. Croker, C.B., C.M.G., and Major-General Sir W. E. Ironside, K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., in the western and eastern areas of the peninsula respectively. Mounted infantry had been formed locally from infantry personnel for this purpose; the timely arrival of the 20th Hussars was, nevertheless, most welcome. The bands have suffered severely; several hundred rifles have been collected, and order has been practically restored in the peninsula.

## II.—EVENTS IN THE CAUCASUS AND TRANS-CASPIA.

### (1) Introduction.

In the summer of 1918, in consequence of the disintegration of the Russian armies, caused by the revolution, the Turks had invaded the Caucasus, at the instigation of their fellow Mahomedans, and were in process of establishing the independent states of Azerbaijan in the eastern and of Dagestan in the northern Caucasus. They succeeded in compelling the small British force which was in Baku to evacuate that town on 15th September, 1918, and a two days' massacre of Armenians followed, as a reprisal for the Armenian massacre of Tartars in March, 1918. In continuation of their policy of forming the Mahomedan State of Dagestan, their troops had advanced northwards, and invested a Russo-Armenian force at Petrovsk, where, despite the recently concluded Armistice, fighting continued, the Turks hoping to complete their conquest of the Caucasus before withdrawal was forced on them. Petrovsk was defended by General Bicherakov, in command of a Russian-Armenian force. This General had in the past assisted the British in North-West Persia, and was now employed in opposing the Turkish plans for the conquest of the Caucasus. Though President of the so-called Central Caspian Government at Petrovsk, he acknowledged only the authority of the Russian Central Government at Omsk. The policy of the Central Caspian Government was to establish democratic Russian rule in the Caucasus and Russian predominance in northern Persia. The Central Caspian Government was in possession of the warships of the Russian Caspian Fleet, the crews of which were tainted with Bolshevik ideas, and, although it recognised General Bicherakov's authority, it did not carry out his orders. The power possessing this fleet controlled the mercantile shipping in the Caspian Sea.

At this time relations between the Azerbaijan and Georgian Governments were strained, and railway communication between these two states was interrupted. Hostilities between Georgia and Armenia were reported to be imminent. On the eastern shore of the Caspian Sea, Krasnovodsk was held by a weak battalion of the 39th British Infantry Brigade, which had up to that time prevented the occupation of this town by either Turks or Bolsheviks. The possession of Krasnovodsk was of importance, as it was not only ice-free all the year round, but was also the terminus of the central Asian railway. By its aid communication was maintained with two British forces, one in Persia, under Brigadier-General H. F. Bateman-Champain, C.M.G., the other in the Ashkhabad

area, under Major-General W. Malleson, C.B., C.I.E. This latter, which was based upon India, had advanced from Meshed to Askhabad, and from there had thrown out a detachment to Merv, to assist in checking the Bolshevik advance from Tashkend towards the Caspian Sea. Major-General Malleson's force came under my command on the occupation of the Caucasus.

In October, 1918, on receipt of the news of the conclusion of an Armistice with Turkey, the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief in Mesopotamia ordered Major-General Sir W. M. Thomson, K.C.M.G., C.B., M.C., to reoccupy Baku as a preliminary measure to the expulsion of the Turks and Germans from the Caucasus, which was to be carried out in co-operation with the troops under my command. This occupation he effected with the 39th Infantry Brigade on 17th November, 1918, the town being handed over by the representatives of the Azerbaijan Government. From now onwards these troops came under my command.

Nuri Pasha and Murcel Pasha, who commanded the Turkish troops in Azerbaijan and Baku respectively, had left Baku before the arrival of the British, and were followed during the day by the remainder of the Turkish troops.

In the meantime, on 8th November, General Bicherakov had been compelled to evacuate Petrovsk, and some hundreds of his ill-disciplined troops and several thousand refugees had poured into the already overcrowded towns of Enzeli and Krasnovodsk. The Russian portion of the forces accompanied the British on their return to Baku.

## (2) *The Arrival of the 27th Division in the Caucasus.*

On 22nd December, 1918, the 27th Division arrived at Batoum under the command of Major-General Sir G. T. Forestier-Walker, K.C.B., who took over military command of that place from the Turks under Djemal Pasha.

The leading troops of this Division advanced to Tiflis on 24th December, and General Forestier-Walker assumed control of Georgia, Armenia and Batoum. Direct contact was now made with the British forces at Baku.

## (3) *The General Policy Followed.*

The general policy to be carried out by the British Command in the Caucasus and Trans-Caspia was as follows:—

(a) To enforce the terms of the Armistice with Turkey.

(b) To secure the line of communication between Baku and Batoum, and to open the oil pipe line between these places.

(c) To maintain law and order in Trans-Caucasia.

The following paragraphs indicate the action taken in pursuance of this policy.

## (4) *The Evacuation of Enemy Troops and Munitions.*

At the time of the signature of the Armistice there was a Turkish force estimated at 73,000 in occupation of the Caucasus and north-west Persia.

Practically the whole of this force was evacuated into Turkish territory by the beginning of February, 1919, partly through

Batoum and partly through Aleksandropol, Kars and Sari Kamish, in spite of the grave difficulties attendant on this operation and of the constant Turkish prevarication and procrastination.

The essential parts of the Turkish guns, machine guns and rifles were collected and stored in Gallipoli. Large stocks of Russian and Turkish military stores were taken over at Kars and Sari Kamish.

By the same date some 4,000 German troops had been evacuated from the Caucasus, in spite of the objections of the Chief of the German Military Mission, General Kress von Kressenstein, whose internment became essential.

## (5) *The Evacuation of Russian Forces.*

As already stated, a Russian force under General Bicherakov had participated in the occupation of Baku along with the British troops under General Thomson. These Russians had joined General Thomson from Enzeli and Krasnovodsk, to which places they had been driven when they were forced out of Petrovsk on 8th November. In addition, a large number of manned Russian warships and merchantmen were found in Baku. There was also in Dagestan and Lenkoran a considerable force of Russian and Armenian troops, with which the late Centro-Caspian Government had been making a show of resistance against the Turks. The combined commands of the fleet and of the Russian and Armenian army, some 8,000 strong, was vested in General Bicherakov. The existence of these undisciplined and unruly troops was a cause of grave embarrassment to the authorities of Baku, and towards the end of January their disbandment was agreed upon. They were gradually evacuated to Novorossisk, Petrovsk and Trans-Caspia, after considerable difficulty had been experienced in obtaining a passage through Georgia.

The fleet, the personnel of which showed strong Bolshevik tendencies, was successfully taken over and its personnel disbanded on 1st March, 1919, a very difficult and delicate operation which General Thomson carried out with the assistance of the coastal motor-boats of the Royal Navy.

## (6) *British Garrison at Krasnovodsk.*

Prior to the occupation of Baku on 17th November, 1918, Krasnovodsk had been occupied by a small detachment formed from the forces in north Persia. The objects of this occupation were:—

(a) To deny the port to the Bolshevik Army.

(b) To facilitate the repatriation of the German and Austrian prisoners of war in Turkestan.

(c) To maintain communication with the Military Mission under Major-General W. Malleson, C.B., C.I.E., in the neighbourhood of Askhabad.

On General Thomson's arrival at Baku this force came under his orders.

At this time the mission under General Malleson had its headquarters at Meshed, and a detachment of British and Indian troops under the command of Brigadier-General G. A. H. Beatty, D.S.O., was in the vicinity of Merv, constituting with Russian and Turcoman troops an Allied force opposed to the Turkestan Bolshevik army. This army con-



sisted largely of German and Austrian prisoners of war, from whom the Armistice had been successfully concealed. It was hoped that it would be found possible to acquaint them with the true situation in Europe, and to persuade them to cease fighting. My intention was to repatriate via Krasnovodsk and Trans-Caucasia all who surrendered on the Trans-Caspian front. These hopes, however, failed to mature. During February and March, 1919, only small parties surrendered.

On 16th January, 1919, the Bolshevik forces, aided by the German and Austrian prisoners, attacked the Allies at Ammankova, fifty miles north-east of Merv. The British garrison, which consisted of the 28th Light Cavalry and 19th Punjabis, though greatly outnumbered and almost deserted by the Russians and Turcomans, fought with the greatest gallantry and repulsed the enemy with heavy loss.

Towards the end of the month I visited Trans-Caspia, and, in accordance with my instructions, assumed command. As a result of my report on the whole situation I received orders to the effect that the British forces in Trans-Caspia, exclusive of those at Krasnovodsk, were to be withdrawn gradually. This operation commenced on 15th March, and by 1st April all British and Indian troops had been withdrawn via Askhabad, the former to Krasnovodsk, the latter to Meshed. At the same time General Malleon transferred his mission, which had moved up to Askhabad, back to Meshed and ceased to be under my orders. A Russian general, nominated by General Denikin, now assumed command of the Trans-Caspian front.

In the beginning of May the Turkestan Bolshevik Army assumed the offensive on this front and pushed the Russian Trans-Caspian Army back past Askhabad towards Kizil Arvat. On account of this advance the garrison of Krasnovodsk was increased to the strength of one battalion, at which it remained until withdrawn on 4th August as a preliminary to the British evacuation of the Caucasus.

#### (7) *Occupation of Petrovsk.*

Petrovsk was occupied by British troops on 13th January, 1919, in order to protect the Royal Air Force, working in conjunction with the Royal Navy on the Caspian, who subsequently used this harbour as a subsidiary base.

The presence of British troops also served the useful purpose of preventing hostilities between the troops of the Volunteer Army and those of the North Caucasian Republic.

#### (8) *Control of Railways.*

In January, 1919, when Brigadier-General A. Brough, C.M.G., D.S.O., reached Trans-Caucasia to enter upon his duties as D.D.G.T., the Trans-Caucasian railways were practically at a standstill. The main reasons for this state of affairs were the following:—

(a) During the withdrawal of the Russian-Caucasian front a large proportion of rolling stock had been worked round to the Rostov line and had not been returned. This resulted in a great shortage of rolling stock in Trans-Caucasia.

(b) Bolshevism and Turkish occupation had resulted in much wilful destruction of

the permanent way, the rolling stock and material of all kinds.

(c) Many labour unions and committees existed amongst the workmen and there were continual threats of strikes.

(d) The financial situation in the three Trans-Caucasian Republics was chaotic, and the railways were running at a financial loss.

(e) Mutual distrust among the Trans-Caucasian Republics rendered it practically impossible to maintain through traffic, each State refusing to allow its rolling stock to cross the frontiers into the territory of either of the other States. (The state of affairs then existing at the Georgian-Azerbaijan frontier station of Poili affords a fair example. Here rival customs tariffs had been established and all goods had to be transhipped from Georgian trains to Azerbaijan trains and vice versa.)

(f) Repair facilities for the existing rolling stock were totally insufficient.

(g) On their declaration of independence each of the Trans-Caucasian States had dismissed the Russian workmen and had replaced them with untrained men. Any attempt to re-instate Russian workmen was keenly resented.

In the interests of the three Trans-Caucasian States, some sort of central control was advisable.

Accordingly negotiations were opened in January, when the Trans-Caucasian Republics were invited to form a central committee under Brigadier-General Brough, who would be directly responsible for the work of the committee. Azerbaijan agreed to this suggestion, but Georgia offered opposition, owing to her desire to institute a similar form of control under Georgian direction. On 13th February the Georgian Government offered acceptance on condition that the regulations for the working of the committee were dictated by herself. In reply General Brough formulated regulations for the committee and notified his proposals to the three Trans-Caucasian Republics. No progress was made as far as Georgia was concerned, but Armenia accepted the proposals on 11th March.

Relief measures having by that time become one of the principal duties of rail transport, an inter-Allied control was suggested. This was accepted by Georgia on 31st March, and by Armenia on 10th April. Discussions were held with the Azerbaijan representative on 14th April, but, although certain modifications were agreed to, complete acceptance was not obtained. On 2nd June further modifications were offered to Azerbaijan, and she was on the point of accepting (which would have resulted in complete acceptance by all the Trans-Caucasian States) when the Volunteer Army advanced into Dagestan, and negotiations again broke down.

In spite of this failure British supervision and assistance effected a great improvement in the transportation situation. Lack of materials for repair of permanent way, engines and rolling stock, however, proved a serious handicap throughout.

The question of supply of oil fuel was a further cause of much difficulty and negotiation. In order to supply the railways with fuel, crude oil was pumped through the pipe line, but

financial and political differences between Georgia and Azerbaijan caused continuous friction. This friction reached a crisis in February, 1919, when Azerbaijan refused to pump any more oil into Georgia, owing to the unwillingness or incapability of Georgia to pay for the oil which she had already received. Georgia was reduced to only three days' reserve before British efforts succeeded, after great difficulty, in reaching a settlement, and pumping was resumed.

Supply of relief material to Armenia became possible in February, 1919, at first only on a small scale since the Armenian railways were in even worse condition than the Batoum-Tiflis-Baku line. To commence with, a few relief trucks were attached to each British supply train, but a separate service of 20 trucks daily was eventually arranged. Armenia's attempts to open passenger traffic, however, upset this arrangement, and, shortly after this had been rectified, political differences between Armenia and Georgia resulted in obstruction on the part of the latter to the passage of relief material. Hardly had this obstruction been dealt with when railway transport in Armenia again broke down, owing to Tartar-Armenian hostilities in the Araxes valley.

An indication of the improvement effected in the working of the Trans-Caucasian Railway during the period of British occupation is afforded by the fact that throughout the evacuation of the British troops from Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan (15th August to 9th September), every train ran to schedule time, and the transport of troops was effected without a hitch of any kind.

#### (9) *The Administration of the Oil Industry and Pipe Line.*

On the arrival of the British at Baku, the oil situation was chaotic. There was no attempt at either co-operation, mutual exchange or purchase between Georgia and Azerbaijan. Both the pumping of oil through the pipe line and the carriage of oil by rail had ceased. Labour troubles were continual. All these difficulties were finally overcome by careful handling under British management, and by the advance of money to pay the workmen, and this in spite of a maximum of ignorant obstruction on the part of the Azerbaijan Government.

The industry was thus saved from apparent ruin. The oil fuel supply to the railways of the Caucasus and Persia was assured, and a reserve supply was built up for the use of the Royal Navy in the Black Sea.

The administration of the oil industry was carried out by Lieut.-Colonel J. A. Rule, O.B.E., to whose knowledge and ability its success was largely due.

#### (10) *Control of Caspian Shipping.*

British control of the merchant fleet at Enzeli had already been instituted during the summer of 1918, and in the autumn a shipping controller had been appointed. On the occupation of Baku, every endeavour was made to restart trade without delay. The shipping, which had been nationalised, was denationalised, and the controller worked through a representative board of shipowners. During this period of supervision and control a large percentage of the merchant fleet, which numbered 147 ships

in all, were repaired, the dockyards were opened, piers put in order, harbours dredged, notably at Petrovsk, shipping companies reopened their offices, the lighthouse department was put into good working order, and all demands for transport were successfully met.

When the military evacuation of Trans-Caucasia took place in the autumn of 1919, the Royal Navy personnel were also withdrawn from the Caspian.

The following statistics show the work done up to 31st July, 1919:—

Ships under British control	...	147
Average tonnage	...	2,000 tons
Russian troops carried	...	63,859
Refugees repatriated	...	63,000
Other passengers carried	...	325,900
Cargoes carried	...	416,058 tons
Vessels salvaged	...	5

#### (11) *British Intervention in Internal Hostilities.*

Possibly the most important function of the British army in Trans-Caucasia was that of intervening in the hostilities, which were a matter of frequent occurrence, between the various states and factions. The following are the more important instances in which British intervention was necessary. There were many others of a less important, though none the less difficult, nature, all of which were successfully dealt with by British officers, backed sometimes by small detachments of British troops:—

##### (a) *Georgian-Armenian Hostilities in the Borchalinsk Area.*

On 9th December, 1918, hostilities between Georgian and Armenian frontier posts broke out in the area south of Tiflis, known as Borchalinsk, which had been ceded to Turkey by the Treaty of Batoum in June, 1918, but which was claimed by both Georgia and Armenia.

On 21st December, Armenia formally declared war upon Georgia, and hostilities commenced, during which the Armenian troops achieved considerable success.

Three days later negotiations were opened at Tiflis under the presidency of Major-General Sir W. H. Rycroft, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., who was then on a visit of inspection in the Caucasus, and an armistice was arranged.

Hostilities did not, however, cease until the arrival on 2nd January of Captain A. S. G. Douglas, O.B.E., Rifle Brigade, with a small detachment of British troops.

The peace negotiations were continued for some time under the presidency of Lieut.-Colonel R. N. Stewart, O.B.E., M.C., 2nd Bn., Cameron Highlanders, and, thanks mainly to the tact and diplomacy of this officer, a detailed peace was signed on 17th January, 1919.

Meanwhile Captain Douglas had been appointed Military Governor of the disputed territory with a small escort from the Rifle Brigade and a few troopers from the Lothian and Border Horse, supplemented by local police, enlisted and trained by himself. He successfully and peacefully controlled and administered a turbulent district of 1,000 square miles throughout the period of British occupation of Trans-Caucasia.

*(b) The Russian Volunteer Army and Georgia.*

Disputes as to the boundary between the territory occupied on the one side by the Volunteer Army and on the other by Georgia and Azerbaijan were the cause of many of our difficulties.

The trouble on the Black Sea coast arose over the question of the ownership of the Black Sea Province. After many collisions in the Sochi neighbourhood, to which the Georgians had withdrawn, it became necessary to despatch British troops to intervene between the opponents and to picket the line of the river Bzib.

This did not, however, prevent hostilities, and finally a British detachment was stationed at Gagri in order to keep the peace. All attempts to arrange a more permanent settlement of this unsatisfactory situation, remained unsuccessful, and on 9th September, 1919, the British garrison at Gagri was withdrawn to Batoum, leaving the rival parties to settle their differences as best they could.

*(c) Armenian-Tartar Hostilities in the Nakhichevan Area.*

Early in January, 1919, hostilities broke out between Armenians and Tartars on the railway south of Erivan, and it became necessary to send a British officer, Captain F. E. Laughton, M.C., 2nd Bn., Cameron Highlanders, with a company of British infantry, to control the situation. The result of his action was the establishment of peace from Erivan to Djulfa, and the opening of telegraphic and rail communication between the Caucasus and Persia.

Nakhichevan district remained under the administration of this officer as British Military Governor until early in May, 1919, by which time Armenian administration had been gradually installed.

By 5th June all British troops had been withdrawn from the area and Armenia had completed her occupation of the district.

*(d) Armenian-Tartar Hostilities in Nakhichevan in July and August, 1919.*

After Armenian control had been substituted for British in the Nakhichevan district as stated above, the situation remained comparatively quiet until early in July, 1919. Then, however, hostilities broke out between the Armenians and Tartars near Erivan town. Armenian troops attempted to make a settlement, but were treacherously fired on, and in consequence of this incident a series of Tartar risings began throughout the south-east of Erivan province. By the end of July the Tartars were in possession of the railway from Djulfa to Shakh Takhti, and the Armenian garrison of Nakhichevan had been forced to retire into the hills, while the British Military Representative and the American Relief Mission withdrew to Tabriz.

At the end of July, Armenia declared a general mobilisation, but her troops were hampered by a shortage of rifle and machine-gun ammunition, and the Tartars extended their possession of the railway as far as Kamarlu (15 miles south of Erivan). The Tartar forces were led by a Turk named Khalil Bey, and Turkish soldiers were present among them. It became clear later that the Government of Azerbaijan were also participating on the side of the Tartars. Towards the end of

August they admitted this, and stated that they had telegraphed to Khalil Bey to stop hostilities. On August 20th the British Military Representative at Erivan, Lieut.-Colonel J. C. Plowden, M.C., Shropshire Light Infantry, succeeded in reaching Nakhichevan, and tried to arrange a settlement, but without result. Later he was withdrawn to Tiflis on account of the general evacuation of the Caucasus, and the Armenian-Tartar disturbances have continued practically ever since, with the result that the Armenian Aras Valley has been lost to the Armenians, and an unbroken belt under Mahomedan power now stretches from Asia Minor into Azerbaijan.

*(e) Georgian-Tartar Hostilities in Akhaltsikh and Akhalkalaki.*

Towards the end of January, 1919, a British officer, Lieut.-Colonel A. McD. Ritchie, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, was appointed Military Representative at Akhalkalaki, and proceeded there with a small escort. On reaching the Akhaltsikh district on his way to Akhalkalaki he found that hostilities were already in progress owing to the activities of a certain Atabek, who had succeeded in exciting a Tartar rising which, in the space of a few days, swept the Georgian garrison of 3,000 infantry with cavalry and mountain artillery out of Apastumen and Akhaltsikh in headlong flight towards Borjom. The British Military Representative remained at Akhaltsikh till he had restored order, and then proceeded to Akhalkalaki, leaving a detachment at the former place. At Akhalkalaki Lieut.-Colonel Ritchie was completely successful in reinstating the Georgian administration without meeting with any resistance from the Tartars.

*(f) Azerbaijan-Armenian Hostilities at Shusha.*

The hotly disputed region of Karabagh was a constant source of friction between the republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan throughout the period of the British occupation of the Caucasus, and it became necessary in December, 1918, to instal a British Military Mission under Lieut.-Colonel W. D. Gibbon, D.S.O., M.C., Worcestershire Regiment, with a small escort at Shusha.

By the continual effort of this British mission peace in Karabagh was successfully maintained, except for one short outbreak between 4th and 6th June, when a massacre of Christians was carried out by Kurds. This was stopped by the arrival of a British battalion and by the action of the British officers in the district.

All British troops had left Shusha area by the end of June, 1919, but a British representative remained until late in August.

*(12) The Establishment of Lines of Demarcation and Neutral Zones.*

The actual result of the presence of the British force in Trans-Caucasia was the establishment of the following lines of demarcation and neutral zones:—

(a) Differences between Armenia and Georgia were settled by British control in the neutral zone of Borchalinsk.

(b) Georgia and the Volunteer Army were restrained from hostilities on the line of the river Mekhadir.

(c) The conflicting claims of Georgia on the one hand and of Armenia and the local Tartars

on the other were adjusted by establishing Georgian control as far as the southern borders of the districts of Akhaltsikh and Akhalkalaki.

(d) Differences between Georgians, Armenians and local Tartars in the district of Ardahan were settled by including that district within the British Military Governorate of Batoum.

(e) The presence of British troops at Shusha rendered possible a form of compromise between Azerbaijan and Armenia, whereby an Azerbaijan administration functioned in Karabagh, whilst an Armenian council ruled in Zangezur.

### (13) *Repatriation of Refugees and the Supply of Relief.*

The repatriation of refugees was another important question which had to be solved by the British administration.

In the Kars district repatriation was rendered possible only by the removal of the local Shura, which was engaged in promoting anti-Armenian agitation among the Moslem population. Repatriation of Armenians commenced on 21st April, and was carried on successfully. In all, some 80,000 refugees were repatriated. The local Moslems showed comparative friendliness, and willingly sold agricultural implements and grain to the refugees.

On the introduction of Armenian administration into the district of Nakhichevan some 30,000 Armenians were despatched to their homes. Owing to the Tartar rising in July, relief measures broke down, and it is feared that many deaths occurred from lack of food.

When the British occupied Baku the Armenian leader, Andronick, with an irregular force, about 1,200 strong, was operating against the Tartars in Karabagh, and besides his troops he was shepherding and feeding some 30,000 Armenian refugees from the Dilman area.

By the middle of April, 1919, these troops were disbanded and disarmed, and the refugees dispersed in the districts of Zangezur, Nakhichevan, Erivan and elsewhere, after which Andronick, with a small personal staff, left for Europe.

Such was the state of want in the Caucasus when the British occupation began that it is calculated that some 500,000 of the inhabitants were then destitute, and of these probably 200,000 were actually in danger of death by starvation.

Relief measures were undertaken chiefly by two American societies, the "American Relief Association" and the "American Committee for Relief in the Near East." The work which these two societies organised and carried out has been of inestimable value to the sorely tried and destitute inhabitants. It has meant the alleviation of an untold amount of misery and the saving of a great number of lives. I cannot speak too highly of the truly practical philanthropic rôle which the devoted members of these societies in the Caucasus have fulfilled since the early days of our occupation, often under conditions of danger and of the greatest discomfort. The British Army in the Caucasus has at all times given them such assistance as was in its power.

As already stated, the supply of relief material under British auspices began in February, 1919, and, although hampered by the state of the railways, it was gradually increased in spite of every form of local obstruction and other difficulty. By the beginning of September,

1919, a total of over 30,000 tons of relief material had been transported to refugee areas.

In Baku, food control was instituted immediately on the occupation, and arrangements were made to import food by sea from Persia and by rail from Derbent. This control was dispensed with in March, 1919. Similar measures were also put in force in Batoum.

### (14) *The Administration of the more Important Districts.*

#### (a) *The town of Baku.*

On arrival in Baku, Major-General Thomson found it necessary to place the city and the oil-fields under martial law from 17th November, 1918. The Azerbaijan Government at that time consisted entirely of Mussulmans of the business class, anti-British, anti-Russian, and anti-Socialist. Trade had entirely ceased; practically all the shops and factories were closed. There was a shortage of food and a complete absence of manufactured goods. The value of the rouble was decreasing, prices were rising, the populace had lost all belief in just government and all confidence in credit institutions. The population of Baku at the time of the re-occupation was about 260,000, of whom 200,000 were Tartars. The prompt evacuation of the town by Turkish and Azerbaijan troops was demanded, the former to Turkey, the latter to Elisabetpol. A truculent and obstructive attitude was adopted by the Turkish command, and it was not until the end of December that the last Turkish soldier had left Azerbaijan territory.

The police were organised under a British commissioner. Control of all food supplies was proclaimed, and arrangements were made to import food and fuel by sea. Food was sold on a rationing system, worked by the municipal authorities under British supervision. As communications improved trade recommenced, shops began to open, and food distribution finally ceased in March.

The General Officer Commanding in Baku acted as Military Governor until the departure of the forces in August. Although it was seldom necessary to intervene in local affairs, the retention of the power to do so ensured that moderate councils prevailed.

Labour unrest required attention, and a British Labour Controller was appointed. The Turkish regulation giving preference to Mussulman labourers was cancelled. Food was issued daily through the British Food Control, and a bureau was formed which paid workers their wages every fortnight. Some 65,000 men were settled with fortnightly up to March, 1919, when the duty was transferred to the local government. The sums involved were large; the expenditure on the oilfields alone was 50,000,000 roubles monthly, while railways, shipping, dockyards, factories, port and lighthouse services had all at one time to be subsidised.

Confidence was then gradually restored, and the introduction of labour laws encouraged.

As previously stated, a British Shipping Control was established, the Russian seamen and dockers refusing to work except under British control, and the reorganisation of the railways and of the oil industry was started.

Owing to the restarting of trade, railways and factories, the establishment of a State bank could not long be deferred. The old Russian State bank was then in the hands of the Central

Caspian Government, and most of the treasure had been expended. After prolonged negotiations, and on the advice of a representative committee of bankers, a reorganised Baku State bank was formed by the amalgamation of the Russian and Azerbaijan State banks. It was under British control, and, being properly managed, proved a decided success. On the evacuation, all the depositors were given an opportunity of withdrawing their deposits.

One of the earliest actions of the Army on entering Baku was to reinstate in their houses all Russian and Armenian refugees who had been dispossessed, first by the Bolsheviks and then by the Turks.

Law and order was thus re-established in Baku without in any way compromising the political situation, thanks to the energy and ability displayed by Major-General Sir W. M. Thomson, K.C.M.G., C.B., M.C., ably assisted by Lieut.-Colonel D. I. Shuttleworth, C.B.E., D.S.O.

(b) *The province of Kars.*

On 7th January, 1919, Captain C. E. Temperley, O.B.E., M.C., Rifle Brigade, was appointed to Kars as Military Governor, and on 21st January a British Mission, accompanied by some British troops, was despatched to assist in guarding the material handed over by the retreating Turks and to supervise the removal of the grain which they had collected.

Later the Military Governor was withdrawn, and the administration of the province was entirely conducted by a local body called the Kars Shura.

This body, however, finally became insubordinate, and as they were undoubtedly working to restore Turkish authority, I ordered that the members should be arrested and deported to Malta. A combined arrest was most successfully carried out on 12th April, when the Shura was in session, and resulted in a complete restoration of the situation. The repatriation of the Armenians could now be proceeded with.

On the removal of the Kars Shura, most of the province was taken over by Armenia, the northern part of the district of Ardahan (known as the Potskov area) was assigned to Georgia, and the south-western area was administered by the Military Governor of Batoum.

(c) *Province and Town of Batoum.*

On the arrival of Major-General Sir G. T. Forestier-Walker, K.C.B., at Batoum, late in December, 1918, Brigadier-General W. J. N. Cooke-Collis, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., had been appointed British Military Governor in place of the Turkish administration.

A new administration was formed from among the local civilians who carried out their duties for some time in a fairly satisfactory manner. Early in April, this civilian staff supported a general strike in opposition to the Military Governor, and it became necessary to replace it by a staff of British regimental officers, assisted by a certain number of local subordinates.

Some idea of what this assumption of the administration entailed can be gathered from the fact that these British officers were called upon to fill the following varied and highly technical administrative posts — treasury, labour control, customs and excise, taxes,

refugee department, posts and telegraphs, police, fire brigade and courts of justice. These posts they have filled for the period of over 18 months with the greatest success. They also administered such institutions as the civil hospitals, the botanical gardens and the Chakvat tea estate and bamboo factory.

A frontier guard and provincial police some 800 strong was maintained to protect the frontier and the coast, prevent contraband trade, guard the railway and pipe-line and generally police the province, which for this purpose was divided into eight districts, with posts in all important villages and along the main roads. Recruitment was from both Georgians and Russians, and the force has proved itself trustworthy and loyal.

The post and telegraph department met with considerable difficulties, owing to the unpromising attitude of the Georgian officials and lack of up-to-date instruments.

The courts of justice comprised a magisterial court, which dealt with offences under the British proclamations, a civil court, and a district court for the trial of serious civil and criminal cases.

Owing to the fact that Georgia would not allow the importation of any supplies into Batoum province, all flour had to be brought in bulk by the local administration from the various ports on the Black Sea, and resold to the population.

The administration of the province was largely complicated by the very difficult monetary situation. The complications due to the depreciation of the rouble can be estimated from the fact that the pound sterling, which at the time of the armistice could be purchased for 80 roubles, had increased in value by the time of the evacuation to 2,500 or 3,500 "Nikolaieff roubles," while the quotation for "Don roubles" at that time was 14,500 to the pound sterling, and even higher.

In spite of the great increase of population caused by the influx of refugees from the Caucasus and south Russia, and the turbulent nature of the populace, the town of Batoum, when eventually evacuated, was a model of cleanliness, law and order, and the province, which is inhabited principally by Adjarians, was in a flourishing condition.

(15) *The Evacuation of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia.*

The evacuation of all British troops in the Caucasus having been decided, the train movements from Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia to the Port of Batoum commenced on 15th August, 1919, and proceeded methodically.

By 9th September, the last British troops had left Tiflis, and the evacuation of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia was complete.

As the question of the future status and government of Batoum province was still under discussion, I received instructions that Batoum would remain under British control, and that I should retain a sufficient garrison there to protect the province and maintain authority. I therefore decided to retain three battalions of the 80th Infantry Brigade, and that its commander, Brigadier-General Cooke-Collis, should continue his duties as Military Governor of Batoum province.

*(16) Evacuation of Batoum Province.*

After the evacuation of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia, there was a period of comparative quiet, during which Batoum province prospered under British administration. In January, 1920, the *de facto* recognition of the Georgian and Azerbaijan Governments by the Allied Governments was received with great satisfaction by these two peoples, and later similar recognition was accorded to the Armenian Government.

Early in February, 1920, the question of the evacuation of the province was again raised, and in March disturbances commenced, due to Georgian aggression, influenced by an anticipation of the peace terms. The situation was further complicated by an advance southwards along the Black Sea coast road of the victorious Bolshevik forces from Novorossisk and by a threat by Turkish forces from the Olti direction.

On the night of 26th/27th May a revolution took place in Baku. This was arranged by local Bolsheviks assisted by Turkish elements, Dagestani levies, and certain troops and representatives of Soviet Russia. This new regime adopted towards Georgia and towards the Tartar population a most intolerant attitude, which resulted in a complete breach between the Georgian and Azerbaijan Republics and a state of war upon the frontier near Poiili, followed later by Tartar insurrections within Azerbaijan. All French and British officials in Baku were arrested and imprisoned.

The Georgian Republic had meanwhile commenced negotiations with Soviet Russia.

A serious situation immediately arose in Georgia. The threat of Bolshevism caused the Georgian Government to endeavour to strengthen its position by adopting measures to establish a strong foothold in the province of Batoum by the despatch of various columns to invade its borders, and these columns came into contact with the hostile Adjarian inhabitants. This action on the part of Georgia I found it necessary to prohibit, and British troops had to be despatched to enforce my orders.

Although the Georgian Government accepted my demands, the result was to bring into a ferment, closely resembling a state of war, a province which for 18 months had enjoyed peace and comparative prosperity.

I visited Batoum on 10th May, and found the situation there so critical that I considered the garrison, which consisted of only two battalions, to be insufficient. I accordingly requested the move to Batoum of a French battalion, which had been set aside by the French authorities for that purpose.

Early in June instructions to prepare for the final evacuation of Batoum were received, and all commercial firms were warned of the fact.

The situation in the province was at the time one of some difficulty, owing to the hostilities which had broken out between the Adjarians and the Georgians, and it appeared possible that the former might attempt to frustrate the Georgian occupation by cutting the railway between Batoum and Tiflis. Guards along the vulnerable portions of the line were therefore increased. The constant demands from the Georgian authorities for their troops to be allowed immediately to occupy the town were refused, as no further action could be taken

until the arrival of the officials sent out by His Majesty's Government to negotiate the transfer. The British proposals for the relief of the Allies by Georgian troops were accepted by the Georgian staff on 28th June, and during the early hours of 1st July all British troops on the railway down to Kobuletti inclusive were relieved without incident, notwithstanding the fact that some 4,000 armed Adjarians had concentrated on the hills some few miles away. These, however, had stated that they would not fire on British troops. Three days later all remaining British troops on the railway were relieved, and Georgian troops and armoured trains arrived on the outskirts of the town. Their ceremonious entry was made on 7th July. British guards were at once relieved, and by evening no British troops remained outside the dock area.

The civil administration was handed over at the same time, the Georgian authorities taking over all departments as they stood. In the presence of the British and French High Commissioners and the Georgian Minister for Foreign Affairs Allied flags were struck, and the Georgian flag broken on the flagstaff at a formal parade at 6 p.m. on 7th July. On the 8th and 9th the transports sailed for their respective destinations, and the British occupation of the Caucasus came to an end.

The successful carrying out of this operation reflects the greatest credit on all ranks of the garrison. The work of the staff and administrative services was especially creditable.

The Royal Navy, under Rear-Admiral Sir M. Culme-Seymour, K.C.B., M.V.O., was most helpful, and rendered valuable services at all times.

The attitude of the civil population throughout testified to the respect and admiration felt for the garrison, and clearly showed the esteem in which the troops were held.

*(17) General Remarks.*

The health of the troops while in Transcaucasia was generally good. Towards the end of the summer of 1919, however, malaria reappeared in the force, and was a source of some anxiety. The fact that many of the men then serving with the Army of the Black Sea had previously suffered from this malady while in Macedonia had a considerable influence on the medical statistics.

Relations between the troops and the inhabitants were invariably friendly. The smart appearance and steady behaviour of the British and Indian troops made a deep impression on the inhabitants from the first, and the good nature and the general lack of arrogance on the part of officers and men made them very popular.

In reviewing the work done by all ranks of the forces in the Caucasus it should be borne in mind that the whole administration of this huge country, with the exception of that of the railways, was carried on, without any special increase of personnel, by the Divisional and Brigade staffs and by regimental officers from the troops in occupation. Military Governors and Military Representatives were also entirely regimental officers, and in many cases very young regimental officers.

Non-commissioned officers and even privates had at times to fill positions of great responsibility, requiring the exercise of much tact and initiative.



The results were such as might be expected from officers, non-commissioned officers and men of the British Army. Their adaptability to circumstances and energy in administration overcame all obstacles, and deserve the highest praise. Their duties were often carried out in circumstances of considerable danger, and, I much regret, in some cases with fatal results.

I desire specially to bring to notice the services of Major and Brevet Lieut.-Colonel (temporary Brigadier-General) W. J. N. Cooke-Collis, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., Royal Irish Rifles, Military Governor of Batoum province, who displayed administrative capacity of a high order, and whose actions, founded on common sense and thorough knowledge of the situation, were fearlessly carried out with energy and decision.

### III. EVACUATION OF THE BRITISH MILITARY MISSION IN SOUTH RUSSIA.

Except in its early days, the British Military Mission in South Russia had been in no way under my orders. In the beginning of March, 1920, when the Volunteer Army was in full retreat, I received instructions to the effect that I was responsible for its safe withdrawal and for the evacuation of a certain number of refugees, whose security had been guaranteed.

I had previously discussed the question with Major-General Sir H. C. Holman, K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., in charge of the Mission, who fully realised that, should the forces under the command of General Denikin be driven precipitately into the town of Novorossisk without adequate means of evacuation, a situation dangerous to the safety of the Mission might arise.

On 8th March this crisis appeared to be rapidly approaching, and I at once despatched to Novorossisk the 2nd Bn., Royal Scots Fusiliers, under the command of Lieut.-Colonel R. K. Walsh, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., with the object of securing the safety of the Mission; their arrival had a calming effect on the population. At the same time, as I was unable to leave Constantinople, Lieut.-General Sir G. T. M. Bridges, K.C.M.G., C.B., D.S.O., whose services had been placed at my disposal, proceeded to Novorossisk to supervise the concentration and withdrawal of both the Mission and the refugees.

I followed on 23rd March, and on arrival found the Volunteer Army falling back into the town; but everything possible had been done for the evacuation of the refugees, and the Mission was ready to embark at short notice. Little remained that could be done to avert the conclusion to which events were rushing, and the few remaining hours were employed in collecting and despatching to the Crimea as many wounded and refugees as possible. Those of the wounded whom it was impossible to move were collected in one hospital under the protection of the Red Cross and the flags of the Allies.

On 26th March the evacuation of the Volunteer Army and the Don Army proceeded, covered by the fire of the Allied ships, and it is calculated that before night, when the Bolsheviks entered Novorossisk, 45,000 Russian soldiers, besides sick and wounded, had been embarked. This rapid evacuation was largely due to the excellent organisation and untiring energy of the Royal Navy under Rear-Admiral

Sir M. Culme-Seymour, K.C.B., M.V.O.; Second in Command of the Mediterranean Fleet.

Representatives of His Majesty's Army and Navy remained till the end and received the personal thanks of General Denikin for what was in reality a work of humanity and mercy. The discipline shown by the young soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, Royal Scots Fusiliers, was what was to be expected from that distinguished regiment, and their presence and tactful behaviour did much to inspire a confidence at critical moments which was almost pathetic.

Brigadier-General J. S. J. Percy, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., who had rendered yeoman service as chief staff officer during these difficult times, now assumed command of that portion of the mission which had accompanied the Volunteer Army to the Crimea, and General Holman accompanied General Denikin to Constantinople *en route* for Great Britain.

After rendering such aid as was possible to the armed forces of South Russia, now under the command of General Wrangel, Brigadier-General Percy and the mission were withdrawn from the Crimea towards the end of June.

During the period of evacuation some 10,000 refugees, sick and wounded were despatched to Salonika, Egypt, Cyprus, Mudros and Prinkipo, where they received adequate assistance and medical treatment.

I desire to record my indebtedness to Major-General Sir H. C. Holman, K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., who commanded during the difficult period through which the mission had passed during the protracted struggle, which General Denikin had waged so stubbornly; and to Lieut.-General Sir G. T. M. Bridges, K.C.M.G., C.B., D.S.O., for the successful withdrawal, which reflected the greatest credit on all concerned.

### IV. GENERAL REMARKS.

Throughout the period covered by this despatch the staff and administrative services and departments have been severely handicapped owing to demobilisation, the lack of trained warrant and non-commissioned officers, and the shortage of British technical personnel and specialists.

The position of the Army has been peculiar, since, while its staff and administrative services were reduced to a peace footing, it had to be prepared to resume active operations at short notice. A peace régime of training, education and physical exercises had to go hand in hand with constant readiness for war.

Units have been continually on the move, due to the rapidly altering conditions. It has been impossible to grant leave; the comforts of peace and barrack life have been wanting, and, owing to the uncertainty as to the future and the lack of accommodation, it has been impossible to allow the men's families to come out. Newly-formed regular units have gradually arrived to take the place of the wartime formations, and over 90,000 men have been sent home. Demobilisation has been necessarily slow owing to the scarcity of transport, but the difficulties have been generally realised and the patience and good discipline displayed by all ranks in trying circumstances have been admirable.

I would specially commend the spirit of the many officers and men, who, although their civilian careers were in jeopardy, volunteered to remain because they realised that, without

their help or replacement from home, the work of the Force, and consequently the good name of the British Army, would suffer.

The health of the troops has been good, and the greatest zeal, foresight and skill have been displayed by the Royal Army Medical Corps under my Director of Medical Services, Major-General Sir M. P. C. Holt, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.S.O., K.H.S., to effect this result. By July, 1919, most of the men suffering from malarial relapses had been sent home, and there has been practically no primary malaria since the Army left Macedonia. Besides purely military duties, it has been necessary for the Medical Services to undertake, in conjunction with our Allies, the sanitary supervision of the port and town of Constantinople—a task of peculiar difficulty owing to the constant transit of refugees and the many epidemics prevalent in this part of the world. They have given devoted services to the sick refugees and wounded from South Russia.

I take this opportunity of recording my appreciation of the excellent work performed by Queen Alexandra's Imperial Nursing Service and by the ladies of the Voluntary Aid Detachments.

The Army Signal Service, whether in Turkey, the Caucasus or South Russia, has never failed to maintain communication under most arduous conditions, in spite of the fact that its personnel consisted mainly of civilians of diverse nationalities and creeds. Great credit is due to the Chief Signal Officer at General Headquarters, Lieut.-Colonel T. H. L. Spaight, D.S.O., and to his staff. I have to acknowledge the assistance given by Mr. Douglas Watson, of the Constantinople Telephone Company.

I wish to record the excellent work performed under difficult conditions by the newly-formed educational staff at these Headquarters, and especially by the Correspondence Teaching Bureau.

The shortage of personnel, due to demobilisation, has severely handicapped the departmental work of the force at a time when special efforts have been necessary. In these circumstances, the work of the Royal Engineers, of the Royal Army Service Corps, and of the Royal Army Ordnance Corps call for special praise. The Royal Engineer postal services under Lieut.-Colonel F. W. Wayne, O.B.E., have successfully dealt with the difficult task of organising and installing the civil section of the British Post Office at Constantinople, as well as the distribution of military correspondence over a large area.

During the period under review, the Corps of Military Police was denuded, by demobilisation, of practically every man it possessed. In spite of this, the work of controlling the troops and maintaining that high standard of discipline and smartness, which is especially essential in an occupied enemy country, has been most ably carried out by my Assistant Provost-Marshal, Major W. F. O. Faviell, D.S.O., and his subordinates.

The work of the Royal Army Chaplains' Department has been of the greatest value to the Force, and my thanks are especially due to the Reverend J. L. O. B. Findlay, D.S.O., Acting Principal Chaplain, for the zeal and good will with which he has carried out his duties.

A special word of praise is due to my Chief

Paymaster, Colonel H. C. B. Payne, C.M.G., C.B.E., for good work carried out under difficult conditions, which will be understood when I state that at one time he dealt with nineteen different currencies, varying monthly and often daily. I regret to have to record the death of Lieut.-Colonel M. Biddulph, O.B.E., Staff Paymaster in the Caucasus, a martyr to his high sense of duty.

The very difficult financial problems which have arisen have been successfully dealt with by my late Financial Adviser, Colonel A. B. Beavis, C.B.E., his successor, Lieut.-Colonel G. du Heaume, and in the Caucasus by Lieut.-Colonel H. K. Newcombe, O.B.E. I wish here gratefully to acknowledge the help which has always been readily afforded by Sir Adam Block, K.C.M.G. (British representative on the Imperial Ottoman Debt), and by Mr. S. de Bilinski, C.B.E. (manager of the National Bank of Turkey).

The work of the base staff at Constantinople, in connection with the movements of troops and stores, which have continually been taking place, has naturally been very heavy, but it has been ably carried out under the orders of Lieut.-Colonel A. F. Pery-Knox-Gore, D.S.O., Base Commandant.

I desire also to acknowledge the valuable assistance rendered by the Royal Navy Transport Service, at first under Captain J. F. Vibart, C.B.E., R.I.M., and for the last eight months under Commander F. West, R.N.R.

The disposal of the military stores at Salonika has been accomplished in the face of great difficulties, chiefly due to lack of personnel.

It reflects great credit on Colonel D. K. E. Hall, C.M.G., D.S.O. (Commissioner for Disposals), and Major T. B. Olive, M.C. (Base Commandant, Salonika) that between five and six million pounds worth of Army stores were sold with only a slight loss.

All surplus animals have been disposed of under arrangements made by my Director of Remounts, Brigadier-General G. W. Dowell, C.M.G., C.B.E. Approximately 5,000 horses and 17,000 mules brought in prices which averaged £50 and £42 respectively. The fact that such prices were obtained was largely due to the splendid condition of the animals, thanks to the conscientious work of the Royal Army Veterinary Corps, under Lieut.-Colonel W. A. Jelbart.

The task of the personnel of the Graves Registration Units has been considerable. In Macedonia, all the graves have been concentrated, and the cemeteries are now being handed over to the Imperial War Graves Commission. In Asia Minor, the graves of 1,500 prisoners of war, spread over twenty-six distinct localities, have been visited and recorded. On the Gallipoli Peninsula, there are nearly 16,000 graves, of which some 7,000 remain to be concentrated into central cemeteries. 1,360 graves have been located, scattered over the various islands of the Aegian. In addition, British graves in Roumania, Serbia, the Caucasus and South Russia are being located.

I wish to thank Mr. C. W. Bates, Secretary of the Young Men's Christian Association, for the energetic way in which he has assisted me. Throughout the period under review, this Association has been an inestimable boon to the troops under my command.

I am much indebted to Lieut.-General Sir G. T. M. Bridges, K.C.M.G., C.B., D.S.O.,

and the officers of the mission under his orders. Throughout the whole period from his arrival in Salonika until his departure for Smyrna in May last, General Bridges has carried out, with unflinching tact and ability, the delicate work which has fallen to the lot of the British Military Mission with the headquarters of the allied armies in the Orient.

I also desire to bring to your notice the following officers and other ranks,\* for their distinguished and gallant services:—

I cannot close this despatch without recording my deep appreciation of the support and co-operation which I have received from the Royal Navy during the whole period of my command, more especially in connection with the military occupation of Constantinople in March last, on the shores of the Ismid Peninsula, and at the time of the evacuation of Novorossisk.

The Royal Navy have invariably acted in the very closest co-operation with the Army of the Black Sea by supplying landing parties, by affording efficient support with gunfire from the sea, and by sparing themselves no pains, discomfort or danger in rendering assistance

\* The names of these officers, etc., together with those of officers, etc., subsequently recommended, will be published in the London Gazette at a later date.

during the various evacuations in which this Army has had to take part.

My thanks are especially due to Admiral Sir John de Robeck, Bart., G.C.M.G., K.C.B., Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean; Rear-Admiral Sir M. Culme-Seymour, K.C.B., M.V.O., Second in Command, Mediterranean Station; Vice-Admiral Sir Sydney Fremantle, K.C.B., M.V.O., Commanding First Battle Squadron (Atlantic Fleet, attached Mediterranean Station); and Rear-Admiral Sir G. P. W. Hope, K.C.M.G., C.B., Commanding the Third Light Cruiser Squadron.

Especially to His Excellency the British High Commissioner, the Deputy High Commissioner, Rear-Admiral Sir Richard Webb, K.C.M.G., and the Staff of the British High Commission do I owe a deep debt of gratitude for their constant and cordial co-operation and assistance and their sound advice as to the action to be taken in the many difficult situations which have arisen.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

GEO. F. MILNE,

General,

Commanding-in-Chief,

Army of the Black Sea.

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