

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-