

The Third Year of the War

A summing-up and a suggestion

By J. B. W. GARDINER

THE beginning of the third year of the war disclosed Germany in the process of undergoing an entirely new experience—the experience of being attacked simultaneously on all sides, so that she could not concentrate against any single one of her foes.

THE FRENCH FRONT

FROM the beginning of the conflict Germany has had one great advantage—the advantage of position. Operating from the center of a circle against the circumference, with relatively short lines of communication, Germany has been enabled, whether on attack or defense, to throw to any given point the maximum number of troops in a minimum time. There is only one way to neutralize such an advantage, and that is by exerting pressure simultaneously at many widely separated points on the circle, and so prevent any point from receiving strength at the expense of any other. But this implies unity of control, a single directing force which would guide every move. This the Allies did not have. On the contrary, each of the Allied powers was conducting the war almost independently, attacking when and where it saw fit, without any comprehensive, co-operative plan. The result was that Germany was permitted to fight each of the Allies separately, without ever feeling the full force of their concerted action. But fortunately for themselves, for the United States, and for democracy itself, the Allies perceived this error before Germany could obtain a decision.

In February, 1916, there was formed an Allied general staff composed of representatives of all of the Allied powers. This body had its first meeting in March

of that year, and immediately began the work of formulating a general plan by which the operations in every field might be conducted with maximum effect. So radical a change in the scheme of things took time to work out, and delayed somewhat activities that had previously been scheduled. It was not, therefore, until early summer that the plans laid in March gave evidence of fructification. These plans involved one central idea—continuous pressure at as many points as possible on the circle by which the Central powers were circumscribed.

Russia began operations on June 1, with an overwhelming attack against the Austrian line in Volhynia and Galicia. This was followed by an Italian offensive in Trentino against a line weakened by withdrawals made to bolster up the Russian front; and finally, on July 1, by the opening guns of the Battle of the Somme. August 1, 1916, the beginning of the third year of the war, saw, therefore, the Central powers contending for the first time against the full strength of the Entente on every important front—saw their lines in Russia, in France, and in Italy under such extreme pressure that any transfer of troops from one front to reinforce another could be made only in the face of possible disaster. The Allies had at last adopted the only way by which Germany's initial advantage could be neutralized.

THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME

THE Battle of the Somme was the great effort of the western Allies of the third year of the war. It was really not a single battle, but a series of major efforts, one following the other in quick succession, and each one directed against a particular

objective. It was entirely different from any other offensive campaign of the war. There was no dominant point or area of military or political importance to the capture of which the effort was directed. Nor was the object to break through the German lines. The possibility of such an accomplishment had been dispelled a year before in the battles of the Artois and in Champagne. It was rather an incident in the campaign of attrition, of wearing down the German strength and of thinning out the German ranks until the time came when there would not be sufficient strength left to prevent a decisive action.

There was, however, a strategic objective as well, though it was subordinate to the idea of depletion of man power. This latter object can be seen by a brief survey of the battle-line between Arras and Noyons. Coming south from Arras, the line traced a deep curve with a western convexity, then straightened out toward the south, turning westward on the arc of a great circle from the vicinity of Noyons. The fighting was directed against both of these curves. The plan was to press into this line at the point where the first curve turned south, straddling the Somme River in the advance, while at the same time moving along the radius of the curve from Albert to Bapaume; to seize Péronne, Bapaume, and Chaulnes, and so threaten the great supply lines running through La Fère, St. Quentin, and Douai. In brief, the idea was one of continuous nibbling into the German positions until some great connecting link was reached, the cutting of which would force a large section of the German line to recoil as the only measure of safety.

By an unprecedented use of artillery the French and British pressed on, each attack biting deeper into the German lines than did its predecessor. The Germans were absolutely unable to hold back the advance. One village after another, each one a veritable nest of machine-guns, was leveled by the artillery, and then taken by the infantry. Step by step the British crept up the valley of the Ancre Brook, while the French hammered their way

through farther south along the Somme. Line after line of German intrenchments was passed until the Germans were forced to dig overnight their defenses for the next day. A deep wedge was pushed in between Péronne and Bapaume, and it seemed that both cities must be evacuated. But an unusually early autumn, accompanied by heavy rains, made it impossible for either artillery or infantry to move, and the attack had to be suspended. In this fighting the Germans lost over seventy thousand prisoners and suffered a total loss of not less than half a million men. Their positions were penetrated to a depth of approximately ten miles, and the entire Noyons salient was thrown into danger.

While the fighting on the Somme was in progress, the French made two attacks in force at Verdun. As if to demonstrate how well their plan was being carried out, they caught the German lines weakened, and in the first attack recaptured forts Douaumont and Vaux, restoring most of the important positions that had been taken from them earlier in the summer. Another attack toward the close of the year was still more successful, and resulted in the recovery of almost all of the ground on the east bank of the Meuse which had been lost in the six-months' battle. These operations closed the fighting, and all the belligerents in this field settled down in their trenches for the winter.

The real fruits of the Battle of the Somme were not garnered until the spring. The German high command had seen that his line was not sufficiently strong to resist the pounding of the Allies' artillery, and he was faced with the dilemma of either withdrawing his forces to a new line voluntarily or of having them driven back. In the latter case the retreat would have to be made under constant pressure.

The former method was adopted, and about the middle of March the movement was under way. The northern pivotal point was just south of Arras, and the entire line from Arras to Soissons was affected. The object was not alone to escape the danger which the Allied successes in

the Battle of the Somme had thrown around the line to the south. It was also to delay the offensive that Germany knew was coming as soon as weather permitted. The first object was successfully achieved in a most masterly retreat. The second was frustrated entirely because the British had never intended to attack on the Somme again, but had prepared their major effort against an entirely different section of the line—the section between Arras and Lens, the key to which is a ridge running almost parallel with the German front passing near the village of Vimy, from which it takes its name.

The Germans had just settled down after their retreat on a line running through Croisselles, St. Quentin, La Fère, and the Forest of St. Gobain, and over the Chemin des Dames, when the British blow was launched. It took the Germans entirely by surprise, and swept them back over the crest of Vimy Ridge into the level country beyond. Almost at the same time the French began an offensive along the Aisne with the object of crushing the German right flank at Laon. The Chemin des Dames position was taken, and the Germans were driven back into the valley of the Ailette River. Here, however, the French were held. The British suffered the same general experience. After the Battle of Vimy Ridge they pushed forward against the new German positions, but the way was slow and tortuous. The German lines had been built during the winter on sites of Germany's choosing. Moreover, the revolution in Russia had permitted the withdrawal of many divisions from the Russian front for use on the western front. The British advance, therefore, was literally made foot by foot and at severe loss. Finally, after weeks of such fighting, a loop was thrown around the great coal center of Lens, which, as this review is being written, is almost completely surrounded. Its fall is almost certain when the next attack is delivered against it.

While preparing for the blow against the Arras sector, the British at the same time were making ready the machinery for the destruction of the famous Ypres

salient, which had existed as a constant threat against their line in the north ever since the first attempt at Calais. This salient was guarded on the south by a ridge between Wytschaete and Messines, the only elevations in an otherwise perfectly flat country. The entire ridge had been extensively mined, and at a given signal the mines were exploded, and the British artillery opened fire on the German positions. After a brief artillery preparation, the infantry went forward, and in a day's fighting the entire ridge was in British hands and the Ypres salient ceased to exist.

The close of the year, then, finds the Germans in possession of a line constructed on carefully picked sites. The British and French have reached this line, but are apparently unable to effect a breach in it. Except for minor gains here and there, the attack has been brought to a complete standstill. There is nothing to indicate that the line can be seriously damaged until the Russian situation clears, and the forces of the new republic are again active in the field.

RUSSIAN FRONT

THE beginning of the year found Russia in the last phase of the most tremendous offensive movement the eastern European theater had seen since the days of the great Russian retreat. Russia had swept through Volhynia and Galicia, occupying completely the Austrian crown land of Bukovina, pushed her lines up to the Lipa River in Galicia and the Stochod in Volhynia, and was making most exhaustive efforts to reach the railroad between Lemberg and Kovel. Half a million prisoners had been captured, and the Austrian lines had been penetrated to a depth of over fifty kilometers. But German reinforcements had stopped all the gaps which the Russian artillery had torn in the line, and the resistance stiffened at every threatened point. The fighting continued for many days after the year began, but the results were negative. Russia had used up the greater part of her reserve store of artillery, and had no means of obtaining more.

The Russian army was almost exhausted by its great efforts, so that the attacks began to dwindle and finally ceased. The attack fell short of being a great success largely through the slowness of the Russians in seizing the advantage which they acquired through the opening efforts. The Austrian line was truly broken, and the Russians poured through the breach; but they allowed the break to heal before them. This was due partly to the transportation facilities, which are meager and poor; but was further due to the fact that the Russian troops were not kept in hand in their advance, and cohesion was lost. This is all that saved the Central powers on this front from a long and disastrous retreat.

The Russian attack, however, and the fact that it persisted to such an extent, proved conclusively that the revivification of the Russian forces after the great retreat of 1915 was an accomplished fact. To Germany it was the greatest shock of the entire year; for it showed clearly that Russia was yet a tremendous hammer, capable of beating the Teutonic armies back against the anvil of the Western lines.

RUMANIA

THE Russian attack had reached the stage of haphazard, unsustained attacks at various points of the line—a stage which always marks the end of an offensive—when Rumanian neutrality was thrown aside, and this state joined the lists of German enemies. It does not appear that Rumania's move was either voluntary or was forced by the Allies. On the contrary, it seems to have been forced by Germany herself. Rumania was not ready for war, and Germany knew it. As a result of a treaty negotiated a few months before, Rumania had acquired from Germany a number of Krupp guns in exchange for food supplies. But Rumania had no Krupp ammunition, and Russian ammunition would not fit Krupp guns. Germany, therefore, realizing that sooner or later Rumania would enter the war, anyhow, decided that she should enter it when it suited the Central powers best. Accordingly, Germany concentrated two large

armies, one in Transylvania under Falkenhayn and the other near the Dobrudja border under Mackensen, applied the necessary pressure diplomatically, and forced Rumania to act.

The Transylvanian army remained quiet and permitted the Rumanians to drive deeply into that province. In the meantime Mackensen began a drive through Dobrudja which finally gave him Constanza and Cernavoda, together with the great bridge which spans the Danube at the latter point. Then Falkenhayn began his operations. The plan was for him to drive southward from one of the passes which lead from Transylvania to the plains of Rumania, cut off the western half of the great Rumanian salient which projects into Hungary, and then begin a march eastward, take Bukharest, and link up with Mackensen. The plan was executed exactly as formulated. Falkenhayn broke through the Vulcan Pass, cut off nearly a division of Rumanian troops to the west, and exactly one hundred days after Rumania had declared war marched into Bukharest. From there it was a simple matter for him to extend his operations to the Danube, where he joined Mackensen and established the German line from Hungary across Rumania to the sea. Once this was accomplished, the combined armies attempted to continue the drive past the left flank of the Rumanian army, turn at the same time the Russian flank by an invasion of Bessarabia, and force another great Russian retreat. But the effort was unavailing. Along the Sereth and farther north along the Trotus, the Rumanian line, now an extension of the Russian line in southern Bukowina, held absolutely fast until winter put an end to the fighting.

There can be no question that this campaign of Germany's was one of the most brilliant of the entire war. At the same time it failed to reach a decision in exactly the same way as did the 1915 campaign against Russia. In fact, the Russian retreat and the Rumanian retreat were exactly similar, and were brought about through identical causes, the failure of ammunition supply. The Rumanian re-

treat was not the retreat of a defeated and disorganized army. On the contrary, it was well organized, carried out in perfect order, and was accompanied by a remarkably small loss in men and material. Rumania did lose about twenty-five per cent. of the men she put in the field as a result of battle, and the troops which were cut off when Falkenhayn split the Rumanian army in breaking through the mountains. The remainder, however, got well away, and began the work of reorganization.

Two things stand out in this campaign: the failure of the Saloniki army to begin operations when it was evident what Germany was trying to do, and the failure of Russia to come to Rumania's aid. The first of these was probably caused by fear of Constantine, at that time king of Greece, the second by disorganization and treachery in Petrograd, brought about by German agents who were working on Russia to good effect in the interests of a separate peace. Although Germany had not achieved a decisive victory because of the escape of the Rumanian army, the Allies had suffered a heavy defeat through the loss of the opportunity which the entrance of Rumania had opened up to them. With the undefended gateway of southern Dobrudja opening wide to Bulgaria and Constantinople, a remarkable opportunity was afforded to drive to the Golden Horn and separate Germany from her Moslem ally. But the Allies have from the beginning exhibited an uncanny penchant for muddling in the Balkan States, and running true to form, they permitted the opportunity for dealing Germany a mortal blow to pass by. With the early spring came the Russian Revolution. This put an end to all Allied hopes for 1917. There was a period when the Russian army openly fraternized with their old enemies, and German Socialists appeared to be in control of the situation. But out of the confusion and chaos rose one man, Kerensky, who saw straight, and who forced the new republic into the paths which led to safety and honor. On July 1, the anniversary of the Battle of the Somme, Russia again struck with something of her former

power, and although as this review is being written nothing definite has been accomplished, the mere fact that Russia has exhibited the strength and the élan to take up arms again holds out great promise for the future.

The Russian attack was directed against the same section of the line which saw such signal success a year ago—the line from Lemberg to Halicz. In the first few days nearly twenty thousand prisoners were taken, mostly Austrians. There was, however, no breaking through the line such as marked the offensive of last year. After the initial attack, the Germans countered heavily, but the Russians held their gains, and the attacks soon desisted.

The Russian Revolution may prove of advantage to the Allies in the end, but it came at a time when it virtually insured the defeat of any plans they may have had for this year. Germany was permitted to weaken the eastern front and throw her forces against France and England at a time when they held the greatest advantage since the Marne; Austria was privileged to add several divisions to her Isonzo army at a time when the Italians seemed about to grasp the control of the entire Carso region; Turkey was given a needed respite when all indications pointed to the complete disintegration of her entire military strength. Thus has the length of the war been increased and its sufferings augmented by the action of those who most strongly profess a desire for peace.

ITALY

ITALY'S plan in the war seems absurdly simple. From the outset it has been the same—to neutralize Trentino, blocking its passes so as to guard against a northern invasion, and then to strike across the open front of the Isonzo River. Nothing, indeed, could be simpler in essence, and yet in the execution Italy has been contending against disadvantages greater than those faced by any other nation now fighting. Virtually all of Italy's land frontier is mountain-bound. Only at Gorizia, where the rapid Isonzo emerges from the deep gorge of the mountains, does the frontier

open out; and even there the width of the valley does not exceed a few miles before the mountains are again encountered. No matter, then, in what direction Italy launched an attack, a mountain barrier had first to be conquered before any material success could be achieved. This must be borne constantly in mind in any effort to appraise Italy's accomplishments since she entered the war.

As the third year of the war was ushered in, Italy was just concluding a terrific counter-offensive against the Austrians, who only a short time before had threatened the invasion of northern Italy through Trentino. Italy's purpose accomplished here, she suddenly shifted the attack to the Isonzo front, several miles north and south of the Gorizia bridgehead. This city and its bridge were vital points in Italy's line of attack, and had to be taken before the acquisition of Istria could be dreamed of. The attack took the Austrians completely by surprise, and after a brief, but terrific, bombardment the Italian infantry went forward, seized the heights which guard the town on the north and the south, and established themselves on the east bank of the river. Before the Austrians could react, the Italians made themselves secure in Gorizia, and thus completed what was really the first stage of the Italian offensive.

The second stage, as yet incomplete, is the occupation of the Carso Plateau. Beginning at the Isonzo and running close by the coast is a wedge-shaped table-land which guards the approach to the city of Trieste. Honeycombed with caverns and pock-marked with great hollows, it has innumerable positions of great defensive strength. After taking Gorizia, the Italians immediately attacked this new barrier, and established themselves on its western and northern edges. At this point, however, they were overtaken by winter, and further operations were suspended until the advent of spring. Not until May was the fighting resumed. In that month Italy again took the offensive. Initial successes both in ground gained and in prisoners taken promised material progress, but the

failure of Russia incident to the revolution enabled Austria to put strong reinforcements in the field, and so check further advances. Italy's accomplishments in the third year of the war may therefore be summed up as follows: the capture of Gorizia, the occupation of the eastern bank of the Isonzo from Tolmino to the sea, and the conquest of the western end of the Carso Plateau. Italy, it is true, has furnished a large contingent on the Saloniki front, but the results obtained by these forces have been as negative as their future value is questionable.

THE SALONIKI FRONT

IN a belated effort to prevent the complete destruction of Serbia, the Allies, toward the end of the Serbian campaign, threw a cordon of troops about the Greek port of Saloniki, one flank extending well to the west of the Saloniki-Monastir Railroad, the other to Lake Tahinos, an arm of the Struma River. This force was augmented by Italians who crossed overland from Avlona and by British from Gallipoli, as well as by French and Russians from home. The hope was evidently cherished that through this force, aided later, perhaps, by Rumania, a situation akin to the Torres Vedras of Napoleon's day would be duplicated, the back door of Austria pried open, and the Teutonic alliance split asunder, to be subsequently defeated in detail.

There was little activity on this front until October, 1916, other than the natural clash of patrols; but in the early part of that month the Bulgarians took the offensive and penetrated deep into Greek territory south of Florina station on the Monastir road. Sudden concentrations, however, effected through unusually rapid marching, brought large bodies of French and Russians close to the Bulgarian main line of communications, and forced a retreat back beyond the original positions. But the Allies did not stop here. The Serbians, eager to recover their own land, took up the burden of driving the Bulgarians back into Macedonia. They first seized Florina station, and, establishing

there a supply base, launched a determined and well-sustained campaign for the capture of Monastir. Their plan of campaign was simple, and was formulated entirely by considerations of terrain. The Cerna River was generally the line of advance. On the east of this stream the mountains come up almost to the water's-edge. There is virtually no width of floor valley on this side. West of the river, however, the valley opens out into two wide plains, the plain of Florina and that of Monastir, with a somewhat narrower plain linking them together. The Serbian plan was to advance along the mountains buttressing the river on the east, and, as these command the valley floor beneath, to flank the Bulgarians out of position as they advanced. This plan was carried out methodically, and after nearly two months of desperate fighting, most of it in the wild and waterless mountains of northern Greece, the Serbians forced the evacuation of Monastir.

The occupation of the Macedonian capital was the climax of a well-ordered and brilliantly executed campaign. The sentimental appeal to the Serbs was great, but the military results were small. Monastir is in a sense an important road center of southeastern Europe, and, could it be used as an advanced base for continued operations, would be of enormous value. But it is a terminal point for railroads entering from the south. There is not a single railroad leaving the town for the north. As a base for a major operation, therefore, its value is not great. An excellent metaled highway runs north, it is true, but motor transport is not adequate to keep a large army supplied with munitions on the scale demanded by modern battle conditions. Consequently, after taking Monastir, the Allied forces settled once more into inaction. It also appeared that they did not dare press whatever advantage they had secured. And this, indeed, was the case. In addition to the poor transport facilities, there was another cause for their apparent apathy—a cause which is responsible for most of the lethargy on this front. Constantine, the Greek king, was openly

favorable to the Central powers, and Serrail, the French commander, was fearful lest, should he reach out too far northward, the Greek army would openly champion the cause of the kaiser, cut the railroad behind him, and so destroy his supply line. This condition prevailed until early June of this year, when the Allies deposed Constantine and placed his second son on the throne. The new king at once brought the ex-premier Venizelos into power and instructed him to form a new cabinet. Diplomatic relations with Germany were severed immediately, and Greece took her stand with the Allies. All danger to Serrail was thus removed, and he was given free rein to plan for the future.

What this future will be no man can foresee. It does not seem possible that much can be accomplished by the Saloniki army. The difficulties of water transport, with the Mediterranean infested with submarines, are considerable; the military difficulties of an advance up the only line—the valley of the Vardar River—almost insurmountable. Moreover, the possibilities of this army rendering valuable cooperation were greatly lessened by the defeat of Rumania. It is true that a large body of enemy troops is neutralized by the very presence of the Saloniki forces, but this is an imperfect gage by which to measure the value of active forces in the field, and is therefore of little value as a legitimate conception. The probabilities are that when the Greek army takes the field, the present forces will be greatly reduced, leaving the Greeks the task of acting defensively before the Mediterranean port.

THE NEAR EAST

THE Golden Horn, the Turkish gateway from Asia to Europe, is the most important strategic possession held by any of the nations at war. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that the Allies have made repeated efforts to destroy the military power of Turkey and so acquire control of this entrance. In the first two years of the war these efforts were manifest in the attack on Gallipoli, the first campaign against Bagdad, both of which were fail-

ures, and the Russian campaign in the Caucasus, which resulted in the occupation of the greater part of Armenia and the extension of the Russian line south of Lake Van almost to Khanikin on the Turko-Persian border. During the first half of the third year of the war there was little or no activity in the western Asiatic theater. The only move of importance was the withdrawal of the Russian right wing from the torridly hot plain of northern Mesopotamia to the mountains of Persia.

Early in 1917, however, two offensives were launched, one by the Russians in the mountains of Persia, and a second expedition against Bagdad by the British. Somewhat later a third was added, a British attack in Palestine. Though widely separated, these attacks all had the common purpose of driving Turkey from the war. The Bagdad operations were the first to begin. The British, who for months had been accumulating supplies and concentrating men for the purpose, began an advance up the Tigris, aiming first at Kut-el-Amara. The basic plan of General Maude, the British commander, was to hold the Turks in place on the left bank of the Tigris, where they were entrenched, and then by a series of rapid marches by cavalry on the right bank to flank the Turks out of position. The Turks saw the plan too late to take advantage of this division of forces, and were compelled to evacuate Kut in order to maintain their supply-line.

The British pushed this success rapidly. The cavalry and horse artillery, now on both banks of the Tigris, pressed hard against the Turkish right, while the gunboats on the river caught up with the Turkish retreat, and bombarded the columns at every opportunity. Not even at Ctesiphon were the Turks permitted to halt. Not until the mouth of the Diala River was reached, ten miles south of Bagdad, did the Turks turn and give battle. After several days of severe fighting at this point the Turks finally gave way, and on March 11 the British marched into Bagdad.

In the meantime the Russians had begun their offensive in Persia. Their object was to force their way through the mountains and storm the pass at Khanikin, where the main road from Kermanshah to Bagdad breaks through into the Mesopotamian plain; then to move down the valley of the Diala and form a junction with the forces of General Maude, which were moving up the river from Bagdad. Everything worked out according to schedule. Khanikin Pass was taken without opposition, and the Russians and the British joined hands on the banks of the Diala.

Coincident with the offensives in Mesopotamia was the British move in Palestine. The scene of the operations was the narrow belt of land between the railroad running south from Aleppo, through Damascus and Jerusalem, and the Mediterranean coast. Only one battle, preceded by many skirmishes, was fought—the Battle of Gaza, which resulted in a complete British victory. The Turks were driven back with heavy losses to the city of Gaza, where strong reinforcements enabled them to make a stand.

The combined campaigns against Turkey demonstrated that the Turkish military power was in every way unable to sustain the pressure from three fronts. It was deficient in numbers of trained, disciplined soldiery, in artillery, in air-craft. It was, moreover, cut off by long gaps of incompleting railroad from both Germany and Austria, so that its deficiencies could not be remedied by these powers. The initial successes of these three campaigns, therefore, held out promises of speedy disintegration of Turkish power if the pressure could be continued. It is easy to understand how this would have come about. The general plan in pursuance of which the campaigns of western Asia were undertaken was first for the British and the Russians to form a junction, and then for the British, pushing westward along both the Tigris and the Euphrates, to join with the right wing of the army in Palestine. Thus from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean the Turks would have been circumscribed by a steadily contracting circle. With Damas-

cus, Beirut, and Aleppo in British hands, the Turk would be hemmed in behind the wall of the Taurus Mountains, beaten, and out of the fight. A separate peace with the Moslem would then be in the air, and the entire empire east of Serbia would totter.

But the revolution in Russia intervened, and its effect on the Asiatic field was even more disastrous than on the theaters in Europe. The inaction of Russia following the revolution postponed the entire plan, and a postponement at such a critical moment meant abandonment. The Russians would not move, and without the Russians the British could not. The net result, then, of all the fighting in this field is, as the matter now stands, indeterminate.

But there is in the near East a greater object to be obtained than the occupation of a line east of the Taurus Mountains, and an object which it is possible to obtain, at great cost, it is true, but not at a cost which is excessive. Constantinople is the keystone of the Balkan arch; but it is more. It is the culmination of the German kaiser's dream. It is the *sine qua non* of a German empire of the East. With the Allies in possession of Constantinople, the castle of the Germans would fall to the ground, and all their military plans and aspirations find their way into the scrap-heap. Constantinople can be taken from the East by using the resources of the East for that purpose; and it would not be surprising if this was not in the minds of the British high command when the operations which have been previously mentioned were planned. China has a wealth of iron ore, Japan has enormous manufacturing ability by which Chinese ore may be converted, India, Egypt, and the Philippines have food, and there are no submarines east of Suez to break the flow of supplies. Russia's greatest ore-deposits and iron-works are in the Black Sea provinces, and the Black Sea belt is known as one of the world's largest granaries.

From Suez, from Bagdad, and from the Armenian Black Sea ports as bases, a com-

bined attack leading to Constantinople would stand a good chance of success. Transportation is difficult, but not impossible. The great wall of the Taurus Mountains is a barrier pregnant with defensive possibilities; but they can be overcome, if not by direct operations, by flanking movements launched from the Mediterranean and the Black seas. With the eastern Mediterranean coast in British hands, the Allied forces at Saloniki could in large measure be transported to Beirut, Tripoli, possibly to Alexandretta, to take part in the movement converging on the Turkish capital. It would probably be an expensive campaign, but it would be worth half a million men.

THE UNITED STATES DECLARES WAR

WITH the coming of spring of this year, the German leaders saw the specter of defeat rising before them. In every vital theater the fighting during the first half of the third-year campaign had gone against them. In the subsidiary field of Rumania alone had they achieved any signal success. And although they kept the conquered banners of Rumania waving before the people at home, they themselves knew that the Allies had bested them and that defeat was reaching out to envelop them. The reasons are simple. Successful war is the product of three factors, leadership, mechanics, and men. In all of these factors it had been proved that the Allies were supreme. Falkenhayn, their chief of staff, had been supplanted by Hindenburg, the people's idol. But Hindenburg's military genius is not of a high order; in fact, nothing that he has accomplished justifies the high regard in which he is held by the German people. The defeat at Verdun and on the Somme needed a scapegoat, and Hindenburg was popular; therefore he displaced Falkenhayn. Nevertheless, military men in Germany know that as a commanding general Hindenburg is of mediocre caliber.

The mechanics of war include guns, munitions, and air-craft. In all of these Germany has unquestioned superiority on the Russian front and has used it to great

advantage; but the issue will not be decided on the Russian front. Germany, the backbone of the Central powers, has at least three quarters of her strength on the western front, and a decision can be reached only by the defeat of this force. And it is on the western front, too, where the great mechanical superiority of the Allies is apparent. A modern battle is a contest of artillery. The infantry furnishes the final curtain, but the artillery is both prologue and play. The success of the Somme fighting was an artillery triumph, and proved beyond question that in the size and number of guns and in the supply of shells Germany was outclassed. But artillery depends for success upon accurate information and exact observation, the former to locate the objective, the latter to correct errors in firing. These functions are performed by the aeroplane scout. Just as the Somme indicated the superiority of the Allies in guns and shells, so did it prove that in the air they also had the upper hand. As to men, it is sufficient to say that the Allies had two to one on almost every front. And not alone was the superiority in numbers, but in quality as well. German losses had been concentrated; those of the Allies distributed over many nations.

This was the situation, then, as it was seen by the German high command. These leaders were desperate. Their carefully laid plans for a Germanized Europe were in the balance; they themselves were threatened with political oblivion. With that utter disregard for the rights of others which has characterized Germany's course throughout the war, Germany declared a submarine blockade of Europe, and announced her intention of torpedoing any vessel found outside of certain prescribed lanes. It was a desperate gamble with a last stake. It was an admission of defeat, with only a single chance to turn defeat to victory. That chance was to starve England and France before their

superiority on land could force a decision on the battle-field.

One portentous result sprang immediately from this barbaric decree. The United States promptly severed diplomatic relations, seized all German ships in its harbors, and shortly afterward declared war. Future historians will convict Germany of many acts of stupidity, but crowning them all will be that act which at a crucial time forced into the lists of the Allies not only the wealthiest and most powerful neutral, but a nation which is potentially the strongest in the world's family of nations. It was a direful beginning to Germany's spring campaign.

The close of the third year finds the Central powers in desperate straits. In money, in men, in guns, and in shell production, in air-craft and in pilots, they are hopelessly inferior. The submarine campaign, on the success of which hopes ran high, while it has proved terribly destructive, has been a failure in so far as it tends to bring victory. The issue must be decided on land, and it must be won by force of arms. The only silver in the cloud is Russia, and recent developments in that state show that the revolution has only deferred German defeat, not prevented it. A year must pass before reorganized Russia can be a dominant factor, and until that time arrives, Germany cannot be forced to make terms. The food situation in Germany is serious, but not desperate. No responsible person has yet stated that there is any likelihood of an economic collapse. Germany is suffering, but all nations suffer in war. No one has plenty, many have not enough; but life can be sustained on little, and as long as that little is to be had, the German armies will remain in the field. One year, two years, more—none can tell—must pass before Germany acknowledges defeat. And this acknowledgment will come through one instrumentality and one alone, superior physical force.

ROYAL
WELSH
FUSILIERS
ON DUTY
BEFORE
BUCKINGHAM
PALACE



Blood is Thicker than Water

The United States Marine Corps' Recollections of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers

By Brigadier-General GEORGE RICHARDS

WHEN the American people noted in the morning papers of June 10 that Major-General John J. Pershing, commander of our armies to be sent to France, had at last disembarked from the *Baltic* and set foot on British soil, they read there with satisfaction that the military bands greeted him with only one air, that to which the national hymns "America" and "God Save the King" are set. But there were a few of us, American marines, who were filled with greater pride in reading this welcome news. We saw there that the guard of honor that presented arms to our most distinguished soldier was composed of a battalion of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, the famous Twenty-third Regiment of Foot. The selection of the Welsh is of particular significance to all Americans, for the Twenty-third Foot is the only regiment of British regular infantry that has ever served with regular forces of the United States in battle against a common enemy. The Royal Welsh Fusiliers has a record of distinguished service covering more than two centuries. Called into being in 1689, it was created to take part there in the struggle of William of Orange, on the English throne, against the well-organized attempts of a mighty Bour-

bon military autocrat to force his will upon other freer, but less disciplined, nations of Europe. History is now repeating itself in this particular; the Twenty-third is now again engaged in a like struggle with the greatest military autocrat of all time in a cause in which the American people are also consecrated. It is therefore most fitting that all Americans should know the famous Royal Welsh Fusiliers and the circumstances of their previous service with United States forces.

It was during the Boxer Uprising in China, in the summer of 1900, that we of the United States marines formed our acquaintance with the Twenty-third Foot. When General (then Major) Waller of the Marine Corps landed at Taku, China, with a battalion of American marines, hurriedly despatched from the Philippines, he was joined by a battalion of the Royal Welsh. There at the mouth of the Pei-ho River, more than fifty years before, Captain Josiah Tattnall of the United States Navy, on the American man-of-war *Toeywan*, uttered his memorable words, "Blood is thicker than water"—words forever to be cherished by all English-speaking peoples. But the Royal Welsh and the American marines there wrote these words into