

was to be expected for at least 24 hours. The Turkish artillery were unusually inactive. All preparations for the execution of the final stage were complete.

The embarkation was fixed at such an hour that the troops detailed for the first trip might be able to leave their positions after dark. The second trip was timed so that at least a greater portion of the troops for this trip would, if all went well, be embarked before the final parties had left the front trenches. The numbers to be embarked at the first trip were fixed by the maximum that could be carried by the craft available, those of the second trip being reduced in order to provide for the possibility of casualties occurring amongst the craft required to carry them.

The numbers for the third trip consisted only of the parties left to hold front trenches to the last, together with the garrisons of the beach defences, the Naval and Military beach personnel and such R.E. personnel as might be required to effect the necessary repairs to any piers or harbour works that might be damaged.

About 7 p.m. the breeze freshened considerably from the south-west, the most unfavourable quarter, but the first trip, timed for 8 p.m., was despatched without difficulty. The wind, however, continued to rise until, by 11 p.m., the connecting pier between the hulks and the shore at "W" Beach was washed away by heavy seas, and further embarkation into destroyers from these hulks became impracticable. In spite of these difficulties the second trips, which commenced at 11.30 p.m., were carried out well up to time, and the embarkation of guns continued uninterrupted. Early in the evening reports had been received from the right flank that a hostile submarine was believed to be moving down the Straits, and about midnight H.M.S. "Prince George," which had embarked 2,000 men, and was sailing for Mudros, reported she was struck by a torpedo which failed to explode. The indications of the presence of a submarine added considerably to the anxiety for the safety of the troop carriers, and made it necessary for the Vice-Admiral to modify the arrangements made for the subsequent bombardment of the evacuated positions.

At 1.50 a.m., Gully Beach reported that the embarkation at that beach was complete, and that the lighters were about to push off, but at 2.10 a.m. a telephone message was received that one of the lighters was aground and could not be refloated. The N.T.O. at once took all possible steps to have another lighter sent in to Gully Beach, and this was, as a matter of fact, done within an hour, but in the meantime at 2.30 a.m. it was decided to move the 160 men, who had been relanded from the grounded lighter, to "W" Beach and embark them there.

From 2.40 a.m. the steadily increasing swell caused the N.T.O. the greatest anxiety as to the possibility of embarking the remainder of the troops if their arrival was much deferred.

At 3.30 a.m. the evacuation was complete, and abandoned heaps of stores and supplies were successfully set on fire by time fuzes after the last man had embarked. Two magazines of ammunition and explosives were also successfully blown up at 4 a.m. These conflagrations were apparently the first intimation received by the Turks that we had withdrawn.

Red lights were immediately discharged from the enemy's trenches, and heavy artillery fire opened on our trenches and beaches. This shelling was maintained until about 6.30 a.m.

Apart from four unserviceable fifteen-pounders which had been destroyed earlier in the month, 10 worn-out fifteen-pounders, 1 six-inch Mark VII. gun, and 6 old heavy French guns, all of which were previously blown up, were left on the Peninsula. In addition to the above, 508 animals, most of which were destroyed, and a number of vehicles and considerable quantities of stores, material, and supplies, all of which were destroyed by burning, had to be abandoned.

It would have been possible, of course, by extending the period during which the process of evacuation proceeded to have reduced the quantity of stores and material that was left behind on the Peninsula, but not to the degree that may seem apparent at first sight. Our chances of enjoying a continuity of fine weather in the Ægean were very slender in the month of January; it was indeed a contingency that had to be reckoned with that we might very probably be visited by a spell of bad weather which would cut us off completely from the Peninsula for a fortnight or perhaps for even longer.

Supplies, ammunition and material to a certain degree had therefore to be left to the last moment for fear of the isolation of the garrison at any moment when the evacuation might be in progress. I decided therefore that our aim should be primarily the withdrawal of the bulk of the personnel, artillery and ammunition in the intermediate period, and that no risks should be taken in prolonging the withdrawal of personnel at the final stage with a view to reducing the quantity of stores left.

The entire evacuation of the Peninsula had now been completed. It demanded for its successful realisation two important military essentials, viz., good luck and skilled disciplined organisation, and they were both forthcoming to a marked degree at the hour needed. Our luck was in the ascendant by the marvellous spell of calm weather which prevailed. But we were able to turn to the fullest advantage these accidents of fortune.

Lieutenant-General Sir W. Birdwood and his Corps Commanders elaborated and prepared the orders in reference to the evacuation with a skill, competence and courage which could not have been surpassed, and we had a further stroke of good fortune in being associated with Vice-Admiral Sir J. de Robeck, K.C.B., Vice-Admiral Wemyss, and a body of Naval Officers whose work remained throughout this anxious period at that standard of accuracy and professional ability which is beyond the power of criticism or cavil.

The Line of Communication Staff, both Naval and Military, represented respectively by Lieutenant-General E. A. Altham, C.B., C.M.G., Commodore M. S. FitzMaurice, R.N., principal Naval Transport Officer, and Captain E. V. Simpson, R.N., Superintending Transport Officer, contributed to the success of the operation by their untiring zeal and conspicuous ability.

The members of the Headquarters Staff showed themselves, without exception, to be officers with whom it was a privilege to be associated; their competence, zeal and devotion