

fluent tribes upon our border) and to cut them off from Afghan influence and support; to strike at any Afghan concentration within reach; and to induce the withdrawal of Afghan forces from our tribal borders elsewhere, for the purpose of covering Kabul. It was proposed to maintain an active defence on other portions of our front. In the Tochi and Derajat areas we were prepared, if necessary, to evacuate temporarily those portions of the country which lay between the administrative and political borders and which were held by militia garrisons; for their retention in the face of opposition would have involved us in a series of sieges, necessitating measures for their relief and consequent dissipation of transport.

23. To carry out this plan, the army was originally organised in two forces, viz., the North-West Frontier Force, commanded by General Sir A. A. Barrett, G.C.B., K.C.S.I., K.C.V.O., A.-D.-C., and the Baluchistan Force, commanded by Lieutenant-General R. Wapshare, C.B., C.S.I., the latter including the troops allotted to the defence of the Nushki extension railway and our line of communication through East Persia to Meshed. As the operations developed, however, it was decided to effect a further decentralisation, and on May 30th the troops allotted to the Bannu and Derajat areas were separated from the North-West Frontier Force, and placed under the command of Major-General S. H. Climo, C.B., D.S.O. This new command was designated the Waziristan Force. The force at Meshed under Major-General W. Malleon, C.B., C.I.E., must also be considered as part of the general organisation, for though charged with no offensive rôle in relation to the operations on the Indian frontier, the duty fell upon it of intervening, if necessary, in any attempt by the Turkistan Bolsheviks to send armed assistance into Afghanistan.

24. As constant references would be made to the Government of India and to Army Headquarters regarding the conduct and direction of the operations, and as in any case officers of sufficient status were not available to form a separate General Headquarters, it had been decided in advance that the functions of the latter were to be performed by Army Headquarters.

25. I need refer but briefly to the sequence of events which precipitated the outbreak of war. Towards the end of April, Saleh Muhammad Khan, the Afghan Commander-in-Chief, arrived at Dakka with an escort of two companies of infantry and two guns for the ostensible purpose of inspecting the Afghan frontier. On May 3rd the usual militia escort to the caravan proceeding through the Khaibar was confronted by piquets of armed Afghans on the disputed zone between Tor Kham and Landi Khana, and that night five coolies employed at the waterworks were killed by tribesmen. On May 4th large numbers of copies of a *farman*, signed by the Amir and concluding with an unmistakable exhortation to *Jihad*, were distributed in Peshawar city through the agency of the Afghan post-office there; and on the same day the Afghan postmaster arrived from Jalalabad with a motor car load of leaflets printed at Kabul, announcing that the Germans had resumed war and that India and Egypt had risen. On May 5th, the Field Army received orders for mobilisation.

26. The operations which followed fall

naturally under three heads, viz., those of the North-West Frontier Force, the Waziristan Force, and the Baluchistan Force respectively, and I propose to deal with them in three separate narratives. The chief features of the operations, viewed as a whole, can be summarised as follows. Our main effort was directed to the Khaibar front, with Dakka as the first objective. After defeating the Afghan covering troops in the vicinity of Landi Khana, our troops occupied Dakka on May 13th, i.e., within eight days of mobilization being ordered; and, following a successful action on May 17th, the Afghan main army dispersed and, for the time being, practically ceased to exist as an organised force. A pause was now necessary for the purpose of accumulating supplies preparatory to a further advance. All arrangements for the advance had been completed and the troops were ready to move when the Amir's request for negotiations rendered any further forward movement politically inexpedient. On the Waziristan front we were prepared, as explained above, to evacuate certain positions with the object of reducing detachments, avoiding embarrassing commitments, and concentrating as large a force as possible at the decisive point. The evacuation became necessary, and was carried out under arrangements concerted between General Sir A. A. Barrett and the Chief Commissioner of the North-West Frontier Province. Suitable dispositions were made to meet the situation thus created. On the Baluchistan front the only operation of importance was the attack and capture of Fort Spin Baldak. The close proximity of this fort to the Baluchistan border was a threat to our position at Chaman, and it served as a screen behind which the enemy could concentrate preparatory to an attack on Chaman itself, or against the flank of our position at Bogra. It was accordingly carried by assault on May 27th.

27. During the course of the war our troops were engaged on a front extending along the whole length of the Afghan frontier from Chitral on the north-east to Seistan on the south-west, a total distance of about 1,000 miles; indeed, the fighting front may be said to have extended still further, for our line of communication defence troops on the 300 miles of road between Robat and Rui Khaf were kept constantly on their guard against raids from across the border, and were at one time directly threatened by a small Afghan force which was detached from Herat towards the Persian frontier. Never before have simultaneous operations been undertaken on the frontier of India which have covered so wide an extent of front.

28. There are other important points of difference between this and previous campaigns on the Indian frontier. In the first and second Afghan wars and in the Tirah campaign the initiative lay with the Government of India. India was enjoying internal tranquility, and the Government was able to mature its plans and move in its own time during the cool season of the year. On the present occasion Afghanistan was the aggressor; certain districts of internal India were still under martial law; the time chosen was the hottest season of the year, and the invasion contemplated a rising in Peshawar. In 1878 and 1897 eight weeks elapsed between the issue of orders to concentrate and the advance of our forces up the Khaibar and into Tirah respectively. In