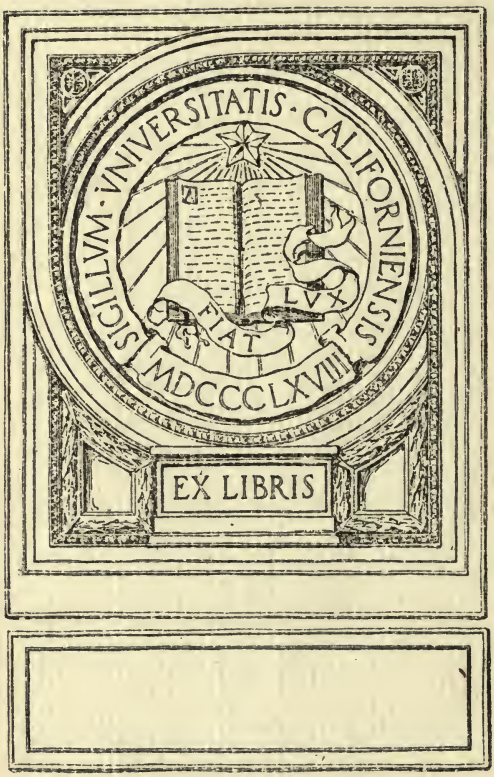
FIRST REFLECTIONS ON THE CAMPAIGN OF 1918

R. M. JOHNSTON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FIRST REFLECTIONS
ON THE
CAMPAIGN OF 1918

BY
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INTRODUCTION

I WAS attached to the General Staff at General Pershing's Headquarters in France over a period of twelve months. During that time I made a number of visits to the front while operations were in progress and was also sent to Paris and London on various missions. So that in a general sense I was fortunately placed for observing the working of our war machine, or rather of that part of it which was in the front zone. Of the Service of Supply I know little, having never really visited the rear zone.

Some matters of interest have not been touched on for reasons of discretion.

The views placed before the reader are intended as constructive criticism of our combat army, and not otherwise. But it must never be forgotten that, after all, the fundamental criticism and responsibility for our military shortcomings, and the conse-

quent waste of American lives, goes back to those individuals in public or private life who, before the war, either opposed or neglected national preparedness,—and they were many and conspicuous.

FIRST REFLECTIONS
ON THE
CAMPAIGN OF 1918

I

THE U. S. ARMY BEFORE THE WAR

It is hardly worth going over the criticisms of the U. S. army that were current before the war. New conditions face us. We have acquired experience, and should be able to rebuild in accord with our circumstances. Therefore we need note little as to the period before 1917 beyond one or two points turning on this general question: How far did the army, as then constituted, serve as a nucleus for a larger army, and how far did it fail in this particular? Incidentally, the discussion will touch many matters that will receive separate treatment later.

The first thing to point out is that the army was not organized as a nucleus. It might perfectly well have been so organized, but it was not. The periodical struggles over military appropriations turned generally on

how many men, how many coast guns and so forth there should be; it was rare for any one to approach the question of the possible uses of the force, of expansion, or organization. And even when such questions did come up, they did not receive the treatment they deserved. So that the army really was not an army, nor was it even the nucleus of an army; it was just so many infantry, so many guns and so forth. Its absurd weakness in numbers was therefore multiplied by its absurd weakness of system. It was not a real army, and yet we would not shape it so that it might become one in an emergency, so that it might become a real army nucleus. For the army with which we fought the war was not the old army expanded, it was a new army into which our old officers' corps was poured,—poured and almost submerged. The two things are totally different.

A system of reserves for our army had long been discussed, and is due to come up again. No system of reserves that injects, for immediate service, over twenty-five per

cent of new men into the ranks of a trained unit is sound; more is lost than is gained. But our case was not this case, for we had no system of reserves, and therefore we could not under any conditions place an army of any size in the field immediately, as possibly we might have with a reserve system. All we could do was to set to work to train and equip an entirely new army in the quickest possible time, say a year or two. And the only way in which our old army could serve us was as a training staff nucleus. But what we actually did, after neglecting in peace time to provide for this obvious use of the old army, was virtually to throw it overboard even as an improvised training staff when the emergency came, and to treat it as the nucleus of a combatant force, which was absurd as a numerical proposition.

Presently the training which we got from abroad will be specifically discussed. For the moment, attention is called merely to the use that might have been made of the old army for this purpose.

Had the old army been thought of not as so many thousand infantry, artillery, and so forth, but as a training corps for a large army, there might have been a proper recognition of efforts made during peace time to develop a sound doctrine and practice of the military art. Take medicine, or engineering, or any analogous case; it is obvious enough that any scheme contemplating the possibility of a large expansion of personnel would provide for the highest possible professional standard in the instruction of the nucleus personnel.

Curiously enough, the army, in the face of great difficulties, had evolved a good tactical doctrine. Where it failed, or rather was prevented from succeeding, was in the imparting of this doctrine to the officers' corps as a whole, and especially in obtaining peace time practice. Our Field Service Regulations of 1911 may be said to have stood the test of the war better than those of any other army; in some cases a great deal better. But they represented theory and

our army, distributed like constabulary in small posts, had virtually no opportunity to keep testing their validity by peace time manoeuvers. It was only a few of our best officers, following European military affairs, who realized how vital to the interests of the nation this doctrine might prove.

A sound professional theory was therefore not wanting. But that its validity and importance were not widely recognized proved to be a real danger. With this as a basis, we might have safely organized the army into a teaching force. There were several ways in which this could have been done, and the broad lines of solution that will now be stated should not be taken as excluding several alternative plans all tending to the same result.

In the first place, our little army could have been distributed with a view to developing instruction:—no units smaller than battalions; and at the least one division always concentrated within a manoeuver area. This division should have been our school for divi-

sion commanders, brigadiers and staff, and should have been linked up on the instructional side with the Army War College, that is, with a properly constituted Army War College.

In war time, each unit could be immediately doubled. Regiments would become brigades, and so on. In a few months the new half of officers and men would be assimilated to the old and doubling could again take place. In the war we actually got into line our first two divisions, which remained distinctly our best ones, in about fourteen months. The next dozen or so, some of which were conspicuously poor, were got forward soon afterwards. On the scheme above indicated we should have had in twelve months, starting with two divisions on a peace footing, eight divisions much superior to any we had in the field, or sixteen less good ones, yet, even at that, better than those we had. In the first case we would have doubled in six months, in the latter in four.

It must not be forgotten, however, that a nucleus army such as that just discussed is of no use for meeting an immediate military necessity.

II

LEAVENWORTH

General Morrison's gifts are many, but few of them more precious than that of arousing enthusiasm. Some of the officers who followed the Staff Course at Leavenworth, as he remodeled it, became veritable fanatics. Now there are circumstances under which fanaticism may be as dangerous to a religion as scepticism, but these circumstances have not as yet arisen with us in regard to staff training. Far from it! We can stand some of the fanaticism of the Leavenworth men,—while carefully watching it,—for they proved perhaps our greatest asset in the war.

How hard it is to persuade the man in the street that a fine young fellow straight from West Point or even Plattsburg, waving a sword or automatic in the air, is not all that

is required to lead an army to success! He admires the boy, and rightly; but every fiber of his body and soul resists the difficult analysis of the hundred details of military organization and control that require years of methodical study to qualify for high command. And the statement that twenty years of continuous study and experience is a bare minimum to qualify an army chief-of-staff for his duties will leave him totally incredulous. A staff course systematizes some of this business and reduces it to a routine for average minds. Without this routine, acquired in a class room, no officer is fit for staff work or for any command higher than a company.

An officer of high reputation in the old army, intelligent, full of initiative, energetic, a good soldier in the restricted sense, was selected as a divisional Chief of Staff. He had never been to Leavenworth,—too busy for mere *theoretical* teaching. As a divisional Chief of Staff he failed and had to be removed. As a brigadier, in a poor division,

he was hardly more successful. Yet on the face of it, we had few better officers, and personally I retain a high regard for his opinion in many matters.

A similar case was that of a brigadier, one of the best known officers of the army, marked out for speedy promotion to the highest rank. We have few men of higher military character; but he, too, had not been to Leavenworth, and tended to think that you can solve the problems of modern war as you can those of insurrecto warfare by a judicious combination of force, horse sense, and a little ingenuity. As a result, he needlessly butchered his brigade during several weeks, not knowing what orders to issue or how to issue them, and was eventually shifted to other duties than the command of troops. He rendered excellent services in his changed functions, but remains a disappointed man. Indeed, he is a wasted man under our system; and all for lack of a few months' staff course at Leavenworth.

The most serious failing of the Leaven-

worth teaching, as revealed by the experience of the campaign, was the fact that it concentrated attention too exclusively on operations. We must take Intelligence Section work vigorously in hand in our remodeled courses, and not neglect the Supply questions. Most important of all, we must develop not merely Chiefs of Section but Chiefs of Staff.

The Army War College has never played the part for which it was designed by Mr. Root. It should be the school for high military studies, the center for the newest ideas on the most fundamental and difficult problems; while Leavenworth trains the average field and staff officer in the accepted routine of troop leading and handling. As it was, we threw too much on Leavenworth and nothing on the Army War College. Fortunately a serious effort to remodel these two institutions is now in hand.

III

THE CONDUCT OF WAR

As society is constituted to-day, the conduct of war is inevitably influenced by popular emotion or opinion. It is a source of grave danger that the ordinary citizen believes himself competent to form a sound judgment within the field of the most difficult of all arts. With the morning paper in one hand and Colton's atlas in the other, any able-bodied citizen will resolve to his personal satisfaction, between two whiffs of tobacco, the worst tangle Caesar or Napoleon ever attempted to unravel. The conduct of diplomacy along similar lines produced the peace treaty of 1919!

Yet it remains true that political and public opinion have an inevitable and to some extent legitimate part in the conduct of war to-day. And recent events have demon-

strated that in the future public opinion on the conduct of war will pass under the direct control of the State or Government through the comparatively new agency of organized propaganda.

In the epoch just closed, a healthier condition prevailed. Public opinion might be uninformed or mistaken, but it was relatively free and unperverted. Notable books like von der Goltz's *Nation in Arms* might perceptibly heighten the understanding of war of the whole German people, or Mahan's *Influence of Sea Power on History* that of the whole English people. And other sound adjustments, that need not be discussed here, might make for a more intelligent attitude on the part of the public or politicians.

The ignorance of war on the part of civilians, with its attendant dangers, was constantly illustrated during the late war. The removal of Marshal Joffre from command brought France down in a few weeks from within a few inches of success to within a few inches of disaster. Again in 1918 the British

army in France was almost lost through the imposing of civilian views on the military command. And so it was all the way through.

Propaganda is the most hideous weapon of modern war. Shrapnel tears the flesh, gas eats out lungs and eyes, but propaganda perverts the soul and degrades the sentiments of men. Here is indeed a fit subject for international agreement: let us make propaganda internationally illegal! But we all know that this is an unattainable ideal, and that, in an age of universal semi-education, the future belongs to propaganda. We must accept the inevitable and make the best of it.

Just as propaganda is the most hideous, so is it the most formidable engine of modern war. An army's victoriousness is a matter of its belief. It was American self-confidence that turned the tide of the war in 1918; and the German army in defeat was still the best army in the field in everything except its psychology. Perhaps Hindenburg then recalled Frederick's words: "If my soldiers

start thinking not one of them will remain in the ranks." The Bolshevists prepare victory by pamphlets, not by high explosive and gas shells; and a heavily financed central press and propaganda bureau could come nearer to securing universal peace than any league that can be devised.

Whether we like it or not, propaganda has become a military function of the first importance, with a set of peace duties and a set of war duties. Socrates and von Moltke would not unite sufficient wisdom and technical skill to run it to perfection. It cannot be run to perfection, for it is a foul weapon, dangerous in its use. We must, at all events, place its use in the best possible hands. It is too hastily concluded that because propaganda works beneath the surface, is conducted in obscure corners and by tortuous methods that Captain Smith and Lieutenant Jones are proper agents to run it.

It was in part for lack of a firm grasp of the military art that the French and Eng-

lish, in different ways, accepted trench warfare as the standard for the handling and the training of their armies. When the Germans adopted the defensive in France, after the Marne, and went into trenches, they threw away at one stroke their greatest military asset, the mobility and tactical skill of their army. For in trenches mobility counts for little, while in a negative form of war tactical skill, however valuable, cannot bring commensurate returns. On the other hand the British went to an extreme in meeting a situation in which haste to cover the Channel coast line seemed all-important. It was decided that an army for this purpose could be handled by an officer corps trained for trench duties and nothing more. Now trench duties may be complex in their details, yet these details can be readily acquired, as separate specialties, in a very short time. Tactical knowledge, that is the knowledge of what are the best measures to take in any given case arising under the uncertain and fluctuating conditions of open warfare, is a totally dif-

ferent thing and, needless to say, far more difficult. But without tactical knowledge, no army is fit to deliver the rapid strokes that gain ground and lead to decisive results.

The French fell between two stools. They had tactics to begin with, even though their system was not wholly sound. And they had enough military knowledge to reject the English solution. But before very long they accepted as inevitable that the struggle would continue to the end as a war of trenches, and they twisted all their tactical ideas in this direction. For this and other reasons, by the spring of 1917, the epoch when we entered the war, boldness had disappeared from the French military vocabulary and been replaced by prudence. The French army had accumulated a vast amount of skill for obtaining negative or, at best, half results; and it had lost its grasp of sound tactical principles.

Our political organization gave no recognition to the fact that there is an art of war. The military establishment was in the hands

of administrators, and even had the greatest tactician in the world been stationed in Washington, he would have had no influence on the situation that arose in the spring of 1917. Our best army opinion was perfectly sound. Officers like General Pershing and General Morrison were ready to defend the validity of training for open warfare as laid down in Field Service Regulations. But it was widely assumed in Washington that the Allied military authorities were more competent to judge how our new army could best be raised and trained than we; and the results proved pernicious.

Indeed, the Allies' attitude towards the United States at that time might be summed up by saying that we were viewed as little more than a reservoir of dollars and men for the furthering of the Allies' enterprises under their own direction. This was not unnatural and gives less ground for complaint than the attitude of those then responsible for the conduct of our affairs who, equally ignorant of military matters and of European politics,

practically acquiesced in these foreign views. It was not until May-August, 1918, that the vigorous insistence of General Pershing finally gave us back a real control over the training of our own army.

This foreign injection produced a number of bad effects:

It strengthened the tendency to slump all combatant troops into a single mass, which eventually showed its evils in connection with "replacements."

It retarded our training, as eventually established, by waste of time in learning the less important things.

It set up cross currents and jealousies, especially between French and American officers, that were very detrimental during the operations.

To summarize the whole matter, it may be said that a properly trained army does not need to be taught trench warfare. In the first place, it will struggle hard to keep out of trenches, knowing that in them it will lose its quality and power. If circumstances

force it in, as happened to the German army in 1914, it can learn all it needs about the new business quickly enough for all practical purposes.

It was not merely in the matter of tactical instruction,—I leave aside the question of materiel,—that we started in badly. We were also at a disadvantage because of our rudimentary conception of war and its conduct. And by war is meant neither the abstraction which philosophers are most competent to deal with, nor the formula of the pacifist platform, but simply war as it is in fact. We were plunging into the most decisive form of national action with practically no ideas on this form of action. At best there was a smattering here and there derived from Mahan, but generally from Mahan at his worst, enouncing facile and over-wide formulas.

Some extracts from an article I wrote, while on convalescent leave in the south of France during the spring of 1919, may serve to illustrate one of the fundamental conceptions of

the conduct of war which was not considered by us. I was in active service at the time and, of course, held to much reticence:—

. . . . .

"'War is only a continuation of State policy by other means,' said Clausewitz. And the other day, at Weimar, when the German National Assembly received the peace terms, the inevitable Herr Muller arose and declared: 'The peace proposed to Germany is only a continuation of the war by other means!' Undeniably Herr Muller was on solid ground, political and philosophical. The struggle, especially when the economic factors are strong, continues from peace, through war, to peace again, merely changing its means. And in considering the present war and peace we may discern all the elements of an increasingly bitter economic struggle that may possibly in the near future take on an absolutely unlimited character.

"It may be as well to explain briefly, before going further, what the great theorist had in mind when he distinguished between

two modes of war, limited and unlimited. As usual his thought was saturated with his personal experience. He was serving in the Russian Army during that terrific crisis when the French penetrated to Moscow and the Russian Government, by refusing even to acknowledge receipt of Napoleon's overtures for peace, proclaimed the fact that it was war to the knife, to the last ditch, unlimited war, against the French emperor. An analogous deadlock was broken last October when President Wilson finally replied to the reiterated German demands for an armistice.

"When, on the other hand, Clausewitz visualizes limited war, he is thinking very specifically of a Chief-of-Staff's problem, the one that arose in Berlin after the Belgian revolution of 1830. The question was, how could Prussia maintain a relatively small army in Belgium against the French long enough to force a diplomatic settlement adverse to France. Limited war, he concluded, must be defensive, and defensive war is the stronger form of war with a negative object

—a hard saying which the present war has, however, justified. Unlimited war must obviously be offensive, and indeed demands the offensive spirit pushed to the uttermost bounds.

"Clausewitz did not carry his observations on limited and unlimited war very far. Had he done so he doubtless would have noted that many wars are intermediate between the two types; and examples of this common case are the last phase of the Napoleonic wars, 1812-15, and the struggle of 1914-18. The straight case of unlimited war is abnormal save in the annals of savage tribes. The partitions of Poland and some of the wars of religion in modern times, the American Civil War, the Carthaginian wars in ancient times, are rare examples among civilized nations.

"The intermediate character of the two great wars of modern times will appear better by a review of some of their incidents. In this light they both present the same general characteristics. They began apparently 'limited' in scope; they quickly developed

'unlimited' aspects; the 'unlimited' character once established showed considerable fluctuation. . . .

"Turning to the present war, it may be said that it was initiated by Germany on a limited basis. Her objects were large, even vast, but they were defined or limited; and her military action corresponded. It is true that the first move aimed at nothing less than putting the French first-line army out of the game within a couple of months of the declaration—a gigantic and, as it proved, impossible task. Yet the idea behind this operation remained within the bounds of limited war. For the move was inspired by a consideration of all the theaters of operations, with the advantages to be gained in each; and it was far more because military principle dictated the prompt elimination of the opponent's greatest military asset as the surest foundation for every subsequent move, than because Germany aimed at the destruction of France, that this great blow was delivered. It was simply the best move of a

series, that aimed, as a whole, at limited objectives.

"On the German side the war took on an unlimited aspect locally, as in the Servian campaign. On the other hand a special study of an instructive character, especially for the economic factors in the conduct of war, might be made of the peculiarly limited aspect of the struggle as between Germany and Italy. But it will be better to leave these topics on one side and to come at once to the submarine question. . . .

"The decisiveness of unrestricted submarine warfare had long been predicted. Yet until the beginning of the war such opinions were pretty well restricted to naval and military circles, and those who attempted to spread them were inevitably dismissed as cranks. But from the moment the war began the extreme possibility was realized by an increasingly large circle until finally British and German national consciousness were permeated with this idea, the idea of unlimited war, war to the knife. This national

consciousness on both sides must inevitably remain, for some few years at least, an important factor in international politics. It was translated in the armistice and peace treaty by those terms in which England attempted to throttle Germany's navy not merely in the present but in the future. It may be remarked, however, that in the long run this may prove merely an incentive to German naval inventiveness. In the same way the limitation of the German army in numbers is a measure from which arise possibilities of a new-type army which are not difficult to perceive. . . .

"The Allies, during a long period, hoped to compensate for their relative military weakness by an economic blockade. And the economic blockade undoubtedly had far-reaching military effects. Had this, as at one time seemed possible, been the outstanding factor in the defeat of Germany, then once more victory would have been achieved by the play of unlimited methods.

"From the advent of the United States

into the war it retained a well-defined unlimited character until near the end. The three leading statesmen of Great Britain, France, and the United States were highly representative of this outstanding feature of the situation. Yet it is possible to discriminate in their respective attitudes. The common ground was the attack on Germany's representative man, the Emperor William. That was, as American public opinion stood, the only formula on which the United States could make the war unlimited; while England might more naturally have turned to an economic, and France to a merely political formula.

"Why did President Wilson reply to the German overtures in October, and thereby change the basis from unlimited to limited? Because at that moment the psychological breakdown of the German army and people had already gone so far that the Kaiser was tottering to a fall. With the Kaiser removed, the United States had only a limited basis left for her military operations, and a

little reflection will demonstrate that the American Expeditionary Force in Europe could hardly have been employed effectively on such a basis. . . ." *

Such are some of the considerations that need to be taken into account when war is embarked on. We must see where we are going, how we intend to come out, and the wrong turnings which we can sail into. What those considerations should have been in April, 1917, it would be untimely to set forth now, but there is no difficulty about exposing the reverse side of the picture. Our war policy was dominated by that of France. Just as we assumed the superiority of her military methods, so did we accept at face value her calls for direct assistance on the Western front. She was then paying for the costly blunders of twelve months by demoralization and the partial mutiny of her army; and in her alarm saw no solution of the military problem save in the indefinite

* "War and Peace, Limited or Unlimited?" *Nineteenth Century*, July, 1919.

accumulation of American troops on the Western front.

In point of fact, it was possible to deal with Germany far more decisively than by taking the steps that were actually adopted; and, as Lord Fisher has recently pointed out, she was infinitely more vulnerable in Pomerania than she was in Champagne.* Our action might have combined with it to better advantage the element of national policy from war through to peace once more. But to attempt a demonstration of this difficult range of facts would carry the argument out of all proportions, and all that need be added is that the peace negotiation, so far as the American delegation was concerned, was especially marked by our needlessly involving ourselves in a number of questions of direct consequence to France but not to ourselves; while on the other hand the questions that concerned us in relation to Germany

* During the war Admiral Degouy in France, and the *Military Historian and Economist* in the United States, constantly pointed this out. The analogy between the strategic values of the James River and Richmond during the Civil War, and the Baltic and Berlin during the late war, is quite close.

were virtually neglected; this was the inevitable consequence of our mode of entering the war. Among those questions were: the establishment of closer relations with England; the securing of our position in the middle Atlantic; and the fortifying of China against Japanese and eventually Russo-German aggression.

IV

THE RANK AND FILE

THE rank and file of our army were splendid. Never can their unflinching facing of the ordeal,—hardship, suffering, and death,—be forgotten. And each one tried his best to help the next man. We can never say enough in their praise. In quality they could not be surpassed. Energy, endurance, combativeness, adaptability, the spirit of team play, common sense,—they had everything for them. Technically they were, of course, woefully deficient. But they showed that they might be trained to use ground and the rifle as quickly as any troops in the world.

Their deficiencies in technique are not worth mentioning, for they all go back to the long era of unpreparedness and its consequences. Technical efficiency in combat was entirely impossible under the circumstances and is not

worth discussing. The only interesting problem appears to be that of discipline.

So far as my limited observation goes, in the front zone, I should say that so long as we had active operations our soldiers accepted discipline more readily than might have been expected. And the conditions for discipline were unfavorable, owing to the greenness of the officers' corps. On the other hand, it is true to say that after the armistice the slackening was very great and a tendency for the army to dissolve back into a civilian mob promptly developed. All this applies to the combat troops; the service of the rear, as in all armies, was on a much lower level.

With a well instructed officers' corps we should have no substantial trouble over the question of discipline, of discipline administered in an American spirit. Yet I have considerably modified some of my own views in this matter. I no longer believe in the advisability of improvising soldiers on short terms of training, three or six months, and

so forth. Discipline is the rock on which every other military asset reposes. And to be solid, discipline requires habit, an action that is instinctive and automatic. I doubt whether this habit can be formed in a young man in less than two years' continuous service. During the campaign of 1918 discipline was satisfactory largely owing to the extraordinarily high morale of our troops; after the campaign was over it took great efforts to maintain it; and few would care to prophecy how it would have stood the test of ill success. Yet ill success is fifty per cent of war.

No military organization can live without the element of stiffness which constitutes its radical difference from civilian organizations. Among modern nations Prussia has carried this to an extreme, and those who reject or fear all things military have hastened to label all stiffness Prussianism. But neither sophistry nor sentiment can alter the fundamental fact. The soldier's soul must be stern. Hardship and sacrifice are his lot.

The battalion must be driven forward even if half its men fall in the advance. And discipline is the only possible stiffening for men in the mass when they tend to weaken.

V

THE REGULAR OFFICERS

THE amount of stiffening which our officers' corps of the old army succeeded in imparting to our army in France was little short of marvelous. About 2,500 officers distributed among over 2,000,000 civilians was roughly what it came to in figures; that is, a proportion of little more than one to a thousand; but in the front zone the proportion was naturally higher than in the zone of supply. The Regulars have not been given anything like the credit they deserve. Their faults, mainly the outcome of our system, were too obvious; their good points passed unappreciated among a mass of men too recently turned soldiers to estimate military things. The faults were there, however, and are worth considering.

There was plenty of stupidity and incapacity; but so there is in every large group

of professional men. An officers' corps can only be dealt with in terms of the human average, subject, however, to one thing, which is the maintenance of a reasonably good professional standard. And in this particular we can certainly make improvements. In addition to a proper development of peace time training, it is safe to say that a good system of inspection should eliminate from our army about ten per cent of its officers for failure to reach standard; beyond that percentage we should probably run into practical difficulties.

Complaints were constant among the new officers of discrimination and narrowness displayed towards them. This was unfortunately the case frequently, but should not be taken too seriously. The Regular ran the war and had nothing to look forward to with peace; that he attempted to monopolize the honors was natural, and on the whole a small matter. He earned them in any case.

More serious was the lack of professional equipment in the higher questions of war.

The comparatively few officers who had had the Staff course at Leavenworth proved competent to handle a good many of the problems of staff work and orders. But not all of them. At least one Section of the General Staff, which was supposed to have the pick of the army, failed to reach a good professional standard, and might have proved fatally weak had the army been engaged in independent operations. It was impossible to find enough staff trained officers for commands down to brigades; and the consequences were lamentable. But the responsibility, it need hardly be said, goes back to the neglect of years in the organizing of higher military studies by our Government.

On the whole, the country owes a debt to our Regular officers it can never repay. Notwithstanding a conspicuous proportion of failure, they showed themselves as fine and highly representative a group of men as America can show. With any reasonable system of professional instruction, nothing could stand against them.

VI

THE NATIONAL ARMY OFFICER

THE new officers, in the same sense as the rank and file, were wonderful. If making war were an art of throwing your life away, they knew all about it. The figures of our officers' casualties are too eloquent, however, to need comment. Of the officers of infantry, for the chief losses fell on them, we can truly say that braver men never fought. Brave, and excellent with their soldiers.

Their great deficiency has already been stated: they had had no chance to master tactics, and just had to do the best they could. This, too, may be noted, that the first ones, the earliest products of volunteering and Plattsburg were appreciably better than those who came later.

After the armistice they found it hard to resist the disintegrating tendencies, and were easily alienated from their new profession.

VII

THE NATIONAL GUARD OFFICER

THE National Guard problem,—eliminating politics,—centers on the officer. Given good officers and we can get a good National Guard. And what constitutes a good officer? The combination of two things more than once previously mentioned: first, military stiffness and disciplined habits; secondly, professional skill.

With our Regular divisions, it proved to be the case that the quality of the Division varied pretty closely with the length of its formation. With the National Guard divisions the variation of quality did not turn on this fact; nor does any one who saw them in action believe that it depended in any appreciable sense on the part of the country they came from.* But the variation was

* This may be said, however, of the Rainbow, 42d Division, that the placing of units from different States side by side

great. Two of them were fairly good; more than that number were decidedly poor, and the average was low. There can be no doubt as to the explanation.

As the system works at the average, the National Guard officer conspicuously lacks stiffness. Even when not elected by his men, he is too generally concerned in securing their good will to drive them or be severe with them. Now this happens, unfortunately, to be the fundamental thing. Drill, grenade or machine gun instruction, fine materiel, all of these count for little if behind them all there is not the driving spirit that will make men refuse to accept hunger, exhaustion, or danger, as excuses for not trying just once more. And it is the officer's first duty to compel his men, by example and by firmness, to produce just that last ounce of effort.

It is well known that the National Guard divisions that did best owed it chiefly to the determined character of their divisional com-

fostered *esprit de corps* and was one of the reasons for which this division proved to be one of the best of the National Guard.

mander or chief of staff. But with a general lacking firmness, a National Guard division might be very inefficient indeed. The slight failure never punished, the comfort of the men turned into a first consideration, quickly create a psychological situation that tells heavily during operations. Positions are never quite reached; confusion and crossings are left uncorrected; contact with the enemy is not maintained; fake gas casualties roll in by the hundreds.

The National Guard system, though it failed to stand the test in 1918, has good points that are not sufficiently appreciated. There is too much demand for centralization at Washington. The fact is that centralization is best for some things and localization for others. All that pertains to actual operations, training and equipment (in terms of standardizing materiel) absolutely demands central control. On the other hand, supply, recruiting and such matters can be more economically and effectively handled locally. Our State system fits in admirably with this

dual requirement. And in peace time, decentralization, subject to a central training and inspecting system, would coincide in almost everything with the present local handling and State feeling. As to the officers' corps, there are certainly numerous points open to discussion, but this is too special and controversial a topic to be dealt with here. But the point of emphasis remains in every case the professional standard of the officer. If the States can make good at that point, there is no reason why the National Guard system should not be continued. Otherwise it is nothing but a sham, a source of national danger, the worst school for our boys in peace, their greatest peril in war.

VIII

THE GENERAL STAFF

On the whole, we succeeded in the most difficult military task that confronted us: improvising a General Staff for the American Expeditionary Forces.

The teaching at Leavenworth had this among other results, that we knew the lines along which we should organize, and that we had a group, though a very small one, of able officers trained in staff duties. But it would be absurd to suppose that improvising from this starting point we could anticipate perfect results. The German General Staff itself, after many years of intensive work, was very far indeed from such a standard. It is natural, therefore, that the operation of our own Staff has revealed many points at which improvements can be made. Some

of these may be summarized under the following heads:

increased and better trained personnel;
unity of action;
better distribution of the functions of Staff and command;
study of the art of war as apart from the study of the control of troops;
sound peace organization.

No one who witnessed the working of the army at close quarters doubts that we lacked a sufficient number of trained staff officers. This deficiency is in its nature unlike any other in a military organization; the nearer you get to the top or directing group, the more difficult it is to improvise. It is just like in a large business. To meet a rush order you can make shift by taking on the least unskilled labor you can find. But if you lack technical directors no quantity of unskilled workmen will save the situation. The larger the business the more it will pay

to have as many expert technical heads as can be secured.

An old tendency of our army needs to be guarded against as far as the Staff is concerned: this is for units to act individually, to get into watertight compartments. The Third Section, in its natural anxiety to preserve the secret of operations, will tend to be uncommunicative, to isolate itself. The Second, for analogous reasons, will tend to do likewise. Then the Third, instead of relying wholly on the Second, will start searching for facts on its own account; while the Second, estimating the direction in which its information points, will begin to suggest its own plans of operations. Strong chiefs of staff should have no difficulty in securing harmony and unity of action; yet the fact remains that in France the Sections of the Staff often showed a tendency towards sectionalism and away from unity.

The stress of the situation, together with the uncertain composition of the command of the army, were met by very strenuous ac-

tion. In the personal sense, as Commander-in-Chief, General Pershing struck at inefficiency with great vigor. But attention must here be limited to the action of the Staff. The tendency was certainly perceptible for the Sections at General Headquarters to deal directly with the G's on the lower staffs down to divisions, in some cases even producing the impression that the commanding officers and even Chiefs of Staff of corps and divisions were being virtually ignored. On the whole, this may have had energizing and beneficial effects, under the peculiar conditions we had to face, though there was a debit side to the account. But, as a system, anything that tends to substitute the Staff for the Command is indefensible.* Many enthusiastic staff officers, and some of our very best, tacitly accept this conclusion. But the position is not sound. And if nothing else, the supreme part played by General Pershing in the campaign, which the Headquarters' Staff

* In the dearth of officers for the higher posts it was too often the case that the competent Chief-of-Staff was the mainstay of a division, with the Major General only a passenger.

know so well, should demonstrate that now, just as in the past, it is the general more than the army or staff, that spells success or failure.

There is certainly one point at which the exaggeration of staff control of operations came out very clearly; and this was the case on either side of the line, both with the Allies and with the Germans. With the latter the fault goes back to an over-methodical or statistical conception of operations; with the Allies, in so far as it was not simply the copying of German methods, it arose from the generally pernicious influence of position warfare on fundamental tactical ideas.*

The conditions of the position warfare that was for so long waged along the Western front had resulted among other things in the following conception. An attack was likely to drive in the enemy's front in direct ratio to the breadth of the base from which it was delivered. From this it was presumably inferred by the German General

* I have already dealt with this question in the *Infantry Journal*, August, 1919, in an article entitled "Staff and Command."

Staff that penetrating the Allied front, and obtaining decisive results following that penetration, would be the natural outcome of extending the base of attack to the enormous frontages,—40,000 meters and over,—that were employed in the spring of 1918.* On the other hand, attacks on wide fronts, giving considerable penetration, involved a large time factor. Such attacks would naturally last a number of days and, further, the movement of divisions to feed the front successively also involved a long calculation, running in some cases over not merely days but weeks.

Taking now another aspect of these attacks, it is obvious that in their first phase they were wholly analogous to siege operations; that is to say, the order for the attack could be drawn up on the same lines as an order for the attack of a fortified position. Nothing could exceed the care and system which the staffs of the different armies in the

* This was theoretically unsound, however, as pointed out in a circular on "German Tactics in 1918," issued by the Historical Section of the General Staff, A. E. F., in October, 1918.

field exercised in the drawing up of such orders. Yet they presented a fundamental defect, least perceptible when operations were on a small scale and involved little movement, but most apparent the greater the operation and the more nearly it approximated to an operation of open warfare.

That defect may shortly be stated as follows: In its covering of details and in its appropriateness to conditions as ascertained by the Intelligence Section, the orders might be described as nearly 100 per cent perfect for the moment, place, and time of the attack; or let us say, precisely at the enemy's front at zero hour. But all operations, however small, have time and space factors. And if the order was 100 per cent perfect at the time and place of impact, it is equally certain that it was $100 - x$ perfect 1,000 yards deeper in or one hour later. When, instead of 1,000 yards or one hour, you have to reckon on a difference of several miles and several days, x, which in the previous case might be not more than 5 per cent, has prob-

ably become 50 per cent or even 90 per cent. In other words, the tacit assumption at the back of the order is that staff work, systematically carried out, can make it perfect; and by an entirely natural reaction, the staff puts a limit on an operation owing to its belief or sentiment that beyond a certain point in time and space it is unable to approximate to 100 per cent perfection in its orders.

All this sounds somewhat abstract and it will be well, before going further, to illustrate concretely what is meant. I prefer, however, not to do this in terms of our own operations, merely stating that the application of the principles I am trying to bring out to our work at St. Mihiel and in the Argonne will be clear enough to those who were concerned with the plans. At the time of the first German attack against Verdun, the following situation arose. The German advance reached Douaumont so rapidly, that the French command, for one reason or another, had no garrison in the fort,—there were only gun crews. The German infantry

got possession, and indeed their patrols were unable to discover anything in their immediate front. We now know, from French sources, that there actually were no troops left at that moment between Verdun and Douaumont. At the same time the French troops to the northwest, which had up to that time, while retreating, maintained their formations, had now broken up; and the stragglers were drifting into the city, where the municipal authorities had already started to pack up the archives for removal. From this part of the front, information was sent back by various German commanders, indicating that a further advance was possible. But the Staff plan had not foreseen the possibility of such an extensive success. The furthest limit contemplated for the first movement had been reached and, in fact, passed. Headquarters, therefore, refused permission for any further advance to be made, until a properly drawn-up plan could be drafted. And Verdun remained in French possession.

Taking an entirely different sort of opera-

tion, the first German offensive of 1918, we find in this case a vast scheme and set of orders. This provided for an attack on a front of something like 80,000 yards and covered the movements of divisions to feed the line over several weeks of time and several hundred miles of space. But the curious fact, and the defect,—I am following General Ludendorff's own statement of the case, —is that the crisis of the operation was foreseen in time and space. At a certain stage the British army was to receive the fatal stroke north of the Somme and south of Arras. Now, as a matter of fact, the operation worked out in such a way that the Germans were least effective on their right, while the British were most effective on their left, and the real crisis and opportunity of the whole operation were presented south of the Somme at a point which the plan made no provision for. And the fact is, not that this was just a misfortune for the Germans, but that their whole conception violated flagrantly a fundamental principle of war. This

may be stated in some such terms as these: that in all military operations,—excepting only siege operations and the rare case of total immediate surprise,—the crisis will occur not at the moment of impact, but at an undetermined point in space and in time. While modern conditions of fighting have made it far more difficult than in the past to concentrate military action at this point, the tendency of Staff control at the present day is decidedly to lose sight of this fact. Not only is it a tendency of the Staff, but many examples can be found in the operations of the armies where a grave setback resulted from these conditions.

I will give one more illustration, this time reversing the telescope and looking at the past. Take the case, familiar to all students of military affairs, of General von Alvensleben at Vionville on the 16th of August, 1870. From Headquarters, and probably from his own deductions, he had a totally false view of the situation. According to this view, Bazaine's army lay in the direction of

Verdun some twenty-five miles to the west. But, when the columns of the III corps reached the neighborhood of the Metz-Verdun road, von Alvensleben discovered that so far from the French being at a distance and to the west of him, they were massed immediately in his front and to the east under the walls of Metz. He knew that the general direction of the German corps was taking them away from him to the westward and that only the X corps was near enough for possible support. He decided, under these conditions, to assume the tactical offensive against Bazaine, a brilliant and sound military decision that may be accounted the turning point of the campaign. In this case we find the crisis arising in the most unexpected conditions of time and space; we find a local decision made that settled the issue; and we find that this decision was of such a remarkable character that it is safe to say that no Staff order could possibly have made allowance either for the conditions that had arisen or for the manner in which von Alvens-

leben decided they must be met. Further, this was a typical military situation.

In the actual handling of our army, we were of course immensely handicapped by having so few officers who could be intrusted with the control of as large bodies as divisions, whether as commanding generals or as chiefs of staff. Very few of our divisions could point to both a good general and a good chief of staff. This happened to one of our National Guard divisions, and it proved for this reason decidedly better than any of the others. One or two of our best divisions got through with nothing more than a good chief of staff. Under these circumstances, and they were the inevitable result of a long course of unpreparedness, it is impossible to level a direct criticism at the conduct of operations in this respect by the officers of our General Staff. They were faced by an almost unsolvable problem, and as a matter of fact they solved it brilliantly. Yet in the solving of it, the tendency decidedly arose to apply a hard and fast staff system

to orders and incidentally to view the command as less important than the Staff. And the danger is that in the future instruction of our Staff and High Command, there is not going to be a clear recognition of the supreme importance of the Command.

IX

GENERAL PERSHING

General Pershing would be the last man to claim that he was versed in staff work or that he had studied modern war. And one may even go further and say that it is quite possible that his experience in France may have led him to believe these accomplishments entirely unnecessary! But, as a matter of fact, the General has long shown an apprehension of the utility of these things. For his intelligence is on a par with his character, and he is perfectly able to recognise the importance of things even when they are not within his personal competence. This breadth of view served him admirably when dealing with the political questions which his functions in Europe thrust upon him. And, recalling the trite old saying that war is a phase of politics, it may be noted that

nearly if not all great soldiers have shown themselves to be statesmen as well. This duality was certainly displayed by General Pershing.

Several years must probably elapse before it will be possible to state publicly what his problems were and how he solved them. But in general terms one may say he was involved in several crises in which he had to fight single-handed against many; and in all he showed himself the true representative of his country. In great councils of war his unflinching confidence, splendidly backed up by the Chiefs of the Second and Third Sections, stood out in sharp relief with surrounding timidity and tentativeness; he could force an issue when he saw fit; he could keep in view at one and the same moment the interests of the Allies and those of the United States, and drive them along side by side.

But I must come more specifically to his character as a soldier. Daring, far-sighted, indefatigable, fearless of responsibility, he showed himself equal to every increasing de-

mand made on him. But, after the moment of the great crisis in July, 1918, his character and his schooling prevented him from remaining at the fixed point of his Headquarters and holding himself down to the methodical survey and direction of operations. The nearer he was to the firing line the more comfortable he felt, and, an operation once begun, he darted to the front in his automobile, giving personal directions wherever he went. It was unsystematic as a mode of command, dangerous, destructive. Yet there were great compensations in the energizing that resulted, and in the rough and ready rectification of mistakes and misfits.

Resembling Grant, in that his greatness came not from training and intellect but rather from character allied with breadth and simplicity of view, he differed from him totally in temperament. The conqueror of the Confederacy tended steadily to become a man of the cabinet, a director of operations, while General Pershing, whatever duties and responsibilities he faced, remained to the end

the dashing cavalry officer and horseman of his younger days.

The size and complexity of the great war, the deliberate obscuring of the military leaders' names, tended to produce the impression that war had changed in one of its particulars: that the influence of the individual commander was less than in the past. We knew well enough that it was not so much Caesar's army or Frederick's that had won its triumphs, but Caesar and Frederick. At American General Headquarters in France I discovered that war has not changed in this particular. The more we know of the events, the closer we get to the facts, the greater will appear Clemenceau, Hindenburg, and especially Pershing.

The army had no means of judging of their general's accomplishment. His fine military presence always produced a good impression. But his efforts at oratory and his occasional patriotic effusions, worked up by sundry headquarters scribes, were not effective; though the general's intimate style

has a vigorous tang. He drove the army to the limit; and, while the doughboys responded nobly, like all soldiers in all ages they did not love the driving. Some say General Pershing was not magnetic. To me he was always a great soldier, and perhaps because of that, quite sufficiently magnetic. In time the men who served under him in France will surely come to realize with intense satisfaction that their general was the truly splendid chief of a splendid army, and repay him for that with every ounce of their esteem and devotion.

Purposely I refrain from a closer estimate of General Pershing as a soldier, in part because it would carry me far into a discussion of the operations of the army, a discussion that would be altogether premature.

X

TACTICS

THE outstanding fact in this field appears to be that added complexities do not appear to have substantially modified well established principles.

We hear much from civilians and half-trained soldiers about the war of the future being decided by the use of some particular arm, such as the bombing plane. The operations of 1918 emphasize a totally different conclusion: that never before has the combination of all arms been so essential, and so difficult to achieve. One of our outstanding problems,—among our most definite and least difficult ones,—is how to connect the airplane service more effectively with the other arms; a probable solution being the placing of air unit commands under the direct control of Corps commanders, as indeed the practice was at the close of operation.

The question of "accompanying guns" was much discussed.* It was not, however, generally recognised that the utility of guns accompanying infantry depended largely on the degree of training of the infantry field officer who was to direct their use. As matters stood, we had few such officers able to obtain good results from accompanying guns; this proves nothing against the accompanying gun, but only the need for properly training officers.

At Valdahon, after the armistice, the artillery school was placed on a novel basis by bringing in infantry units and making all artillery work part of a combined exercise. This is the soundest kind of doctrine. For years past I have expressed the opinion that young officers of infantry and artillery should serve at least twelve months with the alternate arm. The war has persuaded many of our best officers that some such step

* Our artillery officers made a specially good record in the war. The remarks that follow contain nothing new for those of them who have read the report of General Westerveldt's board.

is essential to the proper coöperation of infantry and artillery in action.

Big guns make fine propaganda, but in practice the fewer the better and for special purposes only. The expression Field Artillery must receive a wider interpretation and be applied to every gun and howitzer that can, whether motorized or not, be kept moving with the infantry. Mobility is the test; and we must endeavor to produce the most powerful gun that can get quickly to any part of the front. Then, with an offensive spirit and bold tactics, we can attain the maximum fire effect at the decisive point. The mobile gun's part will always be in combination with infantry; the heavy gun can be handled as a problem simply of artillery tactics. Field officers of infantry and of field artillery must be good tacticians in both branches.

The picture of the enemy and of the situation built up by the Second and Third Sections at General Headquarters inevitably dif-

fers from that developed by the individual brigade and regimental commanders all along the front. The first will be heavily charged with a subjective optimism or pessimism derived from high political and military circles; the second will be very close to the actual facts of the particular sector. From these two points, currents of information will flow in to divisional headquarters and often prove contradictory. General Headquarters will send a favorable analysis based on a broad analysis of the facts and direct an immediate advance, while the brigade commander has meanwhile reported locally adverse conditions. The divisional commander is less well informed, in different ways, than either the brigadier or General Headquarters; but his orders naturally tend to conform rather with the situation as seen at General Headquarters than as seen at the front.

On the whole it would seem that more emphasis must still be placed on reducing to the utmost the detail and the absoluteness of orders at each successive step downward, on

the assumption that the nearer you get to the front the better is the local information at the disposal of the local commander. Every effort must be made to give him more latitude in his decisions and when this is not possible, when an absolute order must be issued to him, this should be viewed as the exceptional and undesirable case.

It is not sufficiently realized that the armies that fought on the Western Front were all of them armies of low training. The German officer corps, and the French officer corps in its lower ranks, were well trained when the war began; but the armies, though they differed much in training quality, were made up of conscripted and not of professional soldiers. A force of 100,000 highly trained professional troops could have marched through many places in the Western front, and in either direction. By highly trained professional soldiers I have in mind men enlisting as boys, at sixteen, passing into the ranks three years later, thor-

oughly competent in another five years, and serving eight more years thereafter. With such a soldiery every man would be capable of individual decisions and action, always harmonizing with the general plan and with the tactical situation. Formations could be made almost indefinitely thin and flexible without losing cohesion and retaining a sufficient power of grouping to overcome resistance at decisive points. How far from such a picture were we when our brave but untutored replacements were forging their way ahead in the Meuse-Argonne struggle!

XI

THE REPLACEMENT SYSTEM

Our replacement system was a good makeshift, but not a good system. One of the greatest causes of waste of life and low efficiency in the Civil War was the fact that we had no replacement system. We kept using a good cadre until it was destroyed and then put in a green one in its stead. In France, by converting a certain number of divisions into stationary troop depots, we were able to feed into the more seasoned cadres at the front a constant stream of replacements for their losses. The weak point of the system was its crudeness. The man had it very plainly conveyed to him that he was nothing better than impersonal food for cannon. How much better is the English replacement system, based on territorial units and depots. We must surely take this as our

model, territorializing our divisions or even regiments, and giving each its own separate current of replacements from its own home depots. The psychological value of such an adjustment is hard to over-estimate.

XII

OUR ARMY OF THE FUTURE

Our ideas of national military organization are just about where those of Europe were a century ago. We do not realize that between 1793, when the great French national levies began, and 1918, a cycle has been run. Without tracing the different stages of this cycle, it may be as well to estimate the present west-European situation in regard to national service as it developed through the Napoleonic, nationalistic, and economic periods.

The Germans have been theoretically right during the last half century in assuming that the employment of an army recruited from the mass of citizens implied the swiftest kind of action, the briefest sort of war. The struggle against Austria in 1866 lasted seven weeks only; in 1870, the French first line

army was virtually put out of action in four weeks; and the belief was almost universal in 1914 that a few months would suffice to decide who was victor or vanquished in the great world war.

This opinion proved unfounded. When the German High Command placed its army in trenches after the battle of the Marne it substituted exhaustion for tactics as a decisive factor; and it raised an even more momentous question, hitherto evaded: Could an "armed citizen" army support the psychological strain of protracted and negative military operations?

The answer to this, and related questions, has been very clearly given. Indeed, it could have been given accurately enough without experimentation, as the case was an old one; we may turn, for example, to Marlborough, two centuries earlier, who declared that five weeks of trench warfare would ruin the finest infantry in the world. Now Marlborough's infantry was of the professional type and far better disciplined than the troops we have to

deal with. But the lower the training the greater the probability of trench or negative warfare. And this is especially the case with modern armies.

The presumption in favor of short wars in western Europe has been much reduced by the combination of low training with high power materiel. Indeed now the presumption points far more strongly than in 1914 to the protraction of a struggle turning more on economic adjustments and calculations than on decisive military action. It is not probable that governments, or even their military advisers, will base their policies on this fact, as they should; they will almost certainly rehash plans on old formulas sanctified by Time and by Repetition. Yet, in my belief, the people directly concerned are, subconsciously, quite alive to the realities of the situation. In other words, the ordinary citizen of France, Germany, and England has had it deeply wrought into his consciousness that it is worse than unprofitable to take the field as a soldier. And even though a na-

tional service system will doubtless be maintained by some or most of the great Powers, it is almost certain that in the event of war threatening to break out, public opinion will enforce a pacific solution by some means or other. Not for at least a generation to come is it at all probable that the unmilitary west Europeans will permit their governments to get them into the trenches again.

It is obvious, however, that this argument applies more to western Europe than to eastern. To put it more soundly it applies to the densely peopled industrial countries. In the more sparsely peopled countries of eastern Europe and of northwestern Asia its application is on a diminishing scale. Parallel with this is the fact that the more sparse the population the smaller the force that can be effectively employed. If millions can be handled in northern France, tens of thousands may be excessive for the valley of the Dvina. But there is another consequence. With immense numbers, fronts are correspondingly long; the tendency to manœuver

is superseded by the tendency to dig in, positive war gives way to negative. With short fronts, manœuver and tactics come into their own, and against equal or even greater numbers the highly trained army has every chance of success. Low trained masses may secure a negative result in the great industrial agglomerations; but in the remote regions it is the smallest possible force of the highest possible training that will command positive results.

Now what does the future hold in store? No great probability of a new Western front, stationary over a period of four years. On the other hand, great probability of wars in remote or sparsely peopled regions, in Asia, South America, or Africa, for the control of important economic areas. And for these wars the smaller the number of troops employed the better, for transportation, supply, swiftness; but the smaller the number of troops the higher must the training be.

In our country everything still conspires

against military efficiency. There is no immediate probability that the handling of our military problems will be placed on a business or a scientific basis. Our best officers have been shepherded into a Staff College where their voice will be stifled so that swivel chair "ideas" may continue to prevail. It is, therefore, unessential to consider seriously the schemes for army reform now before the public; the question may be reduced to academic terms: What is the best solution of our military problem in the light of recent events in Europe?

In the first place it is politically clear that for a variety of reasons we are unlikely to be engaged in conflict on this side of the Atlantic with one of the great "national service" Powers, with very large armies in the field. There are, it is true, some possibilities of this sort, but they are far from being in the front plane. On the other hand, there are several directions in which we are practically certain to take military action on a relatively small scale in the near future. This

will in every case involve joint naval and military action.

Naval questions cannot be adequately discussed here; I merely repeat, what I have long preached, that naval and military action are for us inherently inseparable. But this much is necessary to complete the argument. Military action by the United States overseas depends on sea power. Troops must be transported and supplied from home bases. The fewer the troops, then the easier the problems of transportation and supply. And our requirement is obviously for a comparatively small force of extremely high efficiency, and not for a large force of comparatively low efficiency.

Summarizing, it would appear that we need an army of two lines. The first might possibly number from four to eight divisions * of professional soldiers, enlisted for not less than twelve years and therefore earning a high pay. A small reserve might be added to this force. Then we should have

* As at present contsituted.

a second line army giving us about a million low power troops *immediately* available in an emergency. For this the materiel should be ready and always kept up to date; while an officer corps of considerable dimensions should be maintained and highly trained for this duty.

The competition of highly organized industrial communities for markets and for raw material is on the point of producing a series of wars over the whole surface of the globe. Success in these wars will depend on the highest possible efficiency and combination of naval and military power. No political schemes, no social welfare schemes, no physical benefit schemes, should receive a moment's consideration in connection with national preparedness. Let political and military facts be weighed as facts and proper steps be devised. That is the only safe and the only economical course. A military policy to be valid must be concerned first, last, and all the time with military efficiency and success.

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