

SECRET.**IMPERIAL WAR CONFERENCE.**

Memorandum on the Military Assistance given by India in the
Prosecution of the War.

The connection of India with the war opens up large questions affecting the constitution of the British Empire and the place occupied in it by India. These questions it is not proposed now to discuss. The object of this Memorandum is to present a concise yet fairly comprehensive account of the military assistance which India contributed in the first months of the war in despatching trained troops to France and Egypt; in supplying subsequently men, officers, munitions and materials; and lastly in conducting considerable operations in Mesopotamia and East-Africa. It is proposed first to indicate the general military position in India prior to the outbreak of war; then to describe the military arrangements made by the Indian Government and the extent of India's military contribution; and lastly to set forth the present situation, both external and internal, so far as India is concerned.

I.—THE GENERAL MILITARY POSITION IN INDIA PRIOR
TO THE OUTBREAK OF THE WAR.

In July 1914 the Army of India consisted of:—

- 9 Regiments of British Cavalry.
- 39 Regiments of Indian Cavalry.
- 52 Battalions of British Infantry.
- 138 Battalions of Indian Infantry.
- 56 Batteries of Horse and Field Artillery.
- 6 Batteries of Heavy Artillery.
- 8 Batteries of British Mountain Artillery.
- 12 Batteries of Indian Mountain Artillery.
- 21 Companies of British Royal Garrison Artillery.
- 1 Company of Indian Garrison Artillery.
- 3 Regiments of Indian Sappers and Miners (19 service companies).

The above, together with certain subsidiary units such as Signal Corps, Ammunition Columns, &c., aggregated an Army of about 78,000 British troops and 158,000 Indian troops. The Military Budget was approximately 20,000,000*l.*

There were also 18,000 Imperial Service troops. So that the whole combatant Regular force may be roughly estimated at a quarter of a million fighting men.

In addition to the above there were about 34,000 Military Police and Border Militia, as well as 37,000 Volunteers of varying quality.

The Army in India was organised in 10 Divisional Areas including Burma, and four Independent Brigades including Aden. Under the so-called "Kitchener Scheme" it was devised to provide on mobilisation a Field Force of 9 Infantry Divisions and 8 Cavalry Brigades; but as a matter of fact the proposed organisation was incomplete, and India was only really capable of mobilising about 7 Divisions and 6 Cavalry Brigades with due regard to Internal Defence.

India also furnished a certain number of native regiments for Imperial Service in China and the Colonies. At the outbreak of war there were 8 Indian battalions and one Indian Mountain Battery so employed.

Prior to the declaration of war India was enjoying profound peace. The Frontier was tranquil, and so far as Military India was concerned there was not a cloud on the horizon.

II.—MILITARY ARRANGEMENTS CONSEQUENT ON THE DECLARATION OF WAR.

On the 29th July 1914 the War Office intimated to the India Office the adoption of what is styled, "The Precautionary Stage." A telegram was at once despatched to the Viceroy and the Resident at Aden. On the 30th the Government of India acknowledged the telegram and intimated their ability to despatch overseas a Force consisting of 2 Divisions and one Cavalry Brigade. On the 1st August all officers on leave were recalled to duty by the India Office, while retired and unemployed officers were circularised regarding re-employment. On the 4th August war was declared.

In the course of the next few days it was arranged—

- (1) That the 3rd (Lahore) and 7th (Meerut) Divisions, and one Cavalry Brigade should be sent from India to Egypt. This Force was originally styled Force "A," as its destination was then undetermined.
- (2) That four officers from every British unit of Cavalry and Infantry, as well as a proportion of Engineer and Artillery Officers, on leave in England, should be transferred to the War Office, and that some 280 officers of the Indian Army on leave should similarly be placed at their disposal.
- (3) That Forces should be organised for despatch to British East Africa, and for offensive operations against the German Colony.

Those measures were, however, only a beginning, and as the weeks and months wore on further demands were made on India to which she loyally and promptly responded—

- (1) A battalion of Indian Infantry participated in the Japanese attack on Kiao Chao.
- (2) Reliefs of Indian troops in place of British were furnished for Singapore and Mauritius.
- (3) On the 27th August it was decided to send Force "A" to France, and with this in view the Cavalry for Force "A" was increased from one Brigade to two Divisions of three Brigades each. At the same time more Artillery was requisitioned from India, including four additional Royal Field Artillery Brigades for Force "A."
- (4) On the 18th September a portion of Force "E" was despatched from Bombay to Egypt.
- (5) On the 22nd September the Government of India was informed that the substitution of Territorials for Regulars in India in all but the three Frontier Divisions had been authorised by the Cabinet, and steps to carry out this order were at once taken.
- (6) On the 26th September the India Office put forward a scheme for the despatch of troops to the Persian Gulf. These proposals were accepted in principle by His Majesty's Government on the 28th September, but definite orders were not given till the 2nd October. The 6th or Poona Division was originally detailed for these operations. On the 5th November war with Turkey was declared and on the 6th the leading Brigade of the Division commenced hostilities. This force, designated Force "D," had been expanded by April 1915 to a strength of two Divisions and one Cavalry Brigade.
- (7) During October arrangements were made for sending further reinforcements of Indian troops to Egypt for the defence of the Canal (Force "E"). These ultimately consisted of an Imperial Service Cavalry Brigade, and the equivalent of two Divisions of Indian Infantry, including one Brigade of Imperial Service Troops.
- (8) Later in the autumn 20 Horse, Field and Heavy batteries and 32 battalions of British infantry were sent to England for incorporation in the Field Army for France.
- (9) The equivalent of a Brigade together with two Indian Mountain Batteries was detached from Force "E" to the Dardanelles in May 1915.
- (10) The garrison of Aden was reinforced by a Brigade from Force "E" during the summer of 1915.

The total of all these various forces, detachments and reinforcements may perhaps best be stated in terms of units. Up to June 1915 India had given for service beyond its political limits:—

- 6 Regiments British Cavalry.
- 44 Battalions British Infantry.
 - 1 Battalion Territorial Infantry.
- 9 Batteries Royal Horse Artillery.
- 34 Batteries Royal Field Artillery.
 - 1 Battery Territorial Artillery.
 - 5 Batteries Heavy Artillery (Royal Garrison Artillery).
 - 2 Batteries British Mountain Artillery.
 - 2 Companies Royal Garrison Artillery.
 - Various volunteer detachments.
- 18 Regiments Indian Cavalry.
- 71½ Battalions Indian Infantry.
 - 4 Batteries Indian Mountain Artillery.
 - 3 Signal Companies.
 - 8 Companies Indian Sappers and Miners.
 - 2 Companies Indian Railway Sappers.
 - 5 Regiments Imperial Service Cavalry.
 - 7 Battalions Imperial Service Infantry.
 - 2 Companies Imperial Service Sappers.

In place of the above India had received from England:—

- 29 Territorial Batteries.
- 34 Territorial Battalions.

Approximately stated, the number of troops despatched from India, up to the summer of 1915, exclusive of drafts to make good wastage, was—

- 60,000 British troops.
- 80,000 Indian troops.
- And 330 Guns.

As regards drafts India had to arrange, so far as the troops sent to France were concerned, for an immediate reinforcement over and above war strength of 30 per cent. of Indian ranks as well as for a constant flow of 10 per cent. per mensem of Indian ranks and British Officers to the several expeditionary forces.

As a matter of fact, the excessive casualties incurred by the Indian Army Corps in France and later in Mesopotamia necessitated the despatch of reinforcements on an even larger scale.

Apart from *personnel* India had been of great assistance to the Empire in furnishing supplies and munitions of war. Practically everything for Forces "B" and "D" had been sent from India, while large quantities of Ammunition, Clothing and Equipment were despatched to Forces "A" and "E" and to the Colonies.

III.—MILITARY OPERATIONS.

Facts and figures from the outbreak of war up to June 1915 have been given separately, as the period prior to that date not only synchronises with Mr. Asquith's administration before the Coalition Government was formed, but also covers certain definite phases in India's direct connection with the war, such as the despatch of troops for the expedition to East Africa to protect British interests, the defence of Egypt, the despatch of troops to France, and the invasion of Mesopotamia. In the early days of the war the military resources of Great Britain were described as "contemptible." The prompt and efficient military assistance of India helped to falsify that description and to save the situation in several theatres of war.

Nearly one-third of the whole British Army in France in the winter of 1914-15 had been drawn from India, viz., the 27th and 28th British Divisions and the Indian troops, consisting of two Cavalry and two Infantry Divisions. The arrival of the leading Indian Brigades on the Belgian frontier in October 1914 was most opportune. The timely arrival

of troops in East Africa, though at first attended with failure in the field at least protected the British Colony from an invasion which might have been disastrous. The Indian troops were practically the only fully trained soldiers in Egypt, and it fell to them to repel the first Turkish attack on the Suez Canal. The swift and brilliant stroke which gave us Basra in November 1914 assured the protection of the installations of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company at Abadan and the oilfields, in which the Admiralty are so largely interested, and probably arrested a Pan-Islamic Movement on a large scale throughout Mesopotamia, Persia and Afghanistan, which might easily have developed into "Jihad" on the Indian Frontier. It may justly be asserted that this timely offensive stroke saved India from being involved in a great war on her own borders, the consequences of which would have been a serious strain on the vital resources of the whole British Empire.

Since the summer of 1915 India has played in some respects a subsidiary rôle in the war. The Indian troops, with the exception of five Indian Cavalry Brigades and a Brigade of Mountain Artillery, were withdrawn from France and the Balkans. The conduct of operations in East Africa passed largely into the hands of Generals and troops from South Africa, while the defence of Egypt fell mainly on the troops withdrawn from the Dardanelles and on new formations from England and Australia. On the other hand, the development of the Mesopotamian expedition into an offensive campaign up the Tigris and Euphrates led to a critical change in the military situation in those regions, one which has placed an immense strain on the resources of India, both in men and material. The small Expeditionary Force of two Divisions has grown into a great army of more than 140,000 men. The history of the campaign has been one of alternate success and failure, beginning with the brilliant operations at Nasiriyeh and Kut-el-Amara, and culminating in the pyrrhic victory of Ctesiphon and the retreat on Kut, the historic defence of that important strategical point, the lamentable failure to relieve the beleaguered garrison, and the consequent surrender of General Townshend's gallant Division. British prestige in these regions has now been restored by the rout of the Turkish forces by General Maude and the capture of Baghdad.

IV.—INDIA'S NET CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE EMPIRE IN MEN AND MATERIAL.

The assistance contributed by India may best be given under several heads. The figures are by no means complete or final, as they are based on reports furnished up to the autumn of 1916. They include the figures of the first phase (1914-15).

British Officers.

On the outbreak of war, as already mentioned, 530 officers of the Army in India who were on leave in England were made over to the War Office for employment with the New Armies or otherwise. Since then, apart from those who accompanied the Expeditionary Forces out of India, the following officers have been placed at the disposal of the War Office or sent from India as reinforcements:—

British Service Officers	-	-	-	503
Indian Army and Indian Army Reserve of Officers	-	-	-	1,606

making a total of 2,639 British officers drawn from India, apart from those who accompanied their units abroad.

On the outbreak of war the Indian Army Reserve of Officers consisted of 40 members. It now comprises over 2,240, of whom about 800 are on Field service.

Apart from the Indian Army Reserve of Officers, Commissions have been given in the Indian Army to 271 Cadets from Quetta and Wellington, where military schools corresponding to Sandhurst have been established since 1914.

The casualties amongst Officers of the Indian Army and Indian Army Reserve of Officers have been heavy. According to the latest returns they comprise:—

Killed or died of wounds and disease	-	-	-	684
Wounded	-	-	-	857
Missing and prisoners of war	-	-	-	187
Total	-	-	-	<u>1,730</u>

Officers of British units or of the British service are not included in these figures, nor are any casualties later than the 20th February.

The loss of so many trained and experienced Indian officers is particularly grievous, as they cannot easily be replaced, except by youths without knowledge of the languages and customs of the Indian races.

Indian Medical Service.

Since the outbreak of war 604 Medical Officers have been provided by surrender of officers holding civil medical appointments, by ordinary and special recruitment, by grant of temporary commissions to private practitioners and by re-employment of retired officers.

Over 300 Military Assistant Surgeons and Sub-assistant Surgeons in civil employ have reverted to military duty. In addition 478 Civil Sub-assistant Surgeons have been detailed for military duty.

Rank and File.

As regards men India has despatched in organised units approximately:—

	British Ranks.	Indian Ranks.
To France	16,200	28,800
To England and subsequently to France	33,400	—
To Egypt and the Mediterranean	1,600	27,200
To East Africa	1,400	10,200
To Mesopotamia (from India direct)	14,600	37,100
To Aden and the Colonies	250	1,000
Totals	67,450	105,300

The above figures represent the total original strengths of the various units despatched overseas and are exclusive of drafts to maintain field service establishments. The figures under "Mesopotamia" are exclusive of troops transferred thither from France, Egypt, Aden and Ceylon. The total number of soldiers from India, British and Indian, who have gone on foreign service since the beginning of the war are well over 300,000 men, and possibly as much as 350,000.

Casualties.

The Indian casualties reported up to the 20th February 1917 were as stated below:—

Indian Troops.	Killed and Died of Disease or Wounds.	Wounded.	Missing and Prisoners.
France	4,002	14,912	1,798
East Africa	1,241	1,070	257
Mesopotamia	8,693	20,584	10,877
Egypt	284	171	15
Dardanelles, &c.	1,343	1,431	110
Aden	44	179	17
Kiao Chao	2	13	—
North-West Frontier	23	147	—
Total casualties	15,632	38,507	13,074
Grand Total		67,213	

These figures do not include British officers of Indian Regiments, nor do they include men invalided for disease. The total casualties represent

roughly 30 per cent. of the total number of Indians who have gone on service from first to last, but certain units have lost considerably over 100 per cent. since they left India.

Indian Establishments and new Formations.

The normal Indian establishments have been largely drawn on since the outbreak of war. The figures given below show approximately the number of units despatched from India up to the end of 1916 :—

- 7 British Cavalry Regiments.
- 44 British Infantry Regiments.
- 7 British Territorial Regiments.
- 43 British Batteries of Royal Horse Artillery and Royal Field Artillery.
- 2 British Mountain Batteries.
- 4 Indian Mountain Batteries.
- 11 Heavy Batteries, Royal Garrison Artillery.¹
- 1 Garrison Company, Royal Garrison Artillery.
- 20 Indian Cavalry Regiments.
- 5 Imperial Service Cavalry Regiments.
- 1 Imperial Service Camel Corps.
- 90 Indian Battalions.
- 7 Imperial Service Battalions.
- 16 Companies of Sappers and Miners.

Besides the above India also furnished over 700 non-commissioned officers and men of Artillery and Infantry as Instructors for the new Army.

Since the commencement of the war several new formations have been raised, and additions made to existing organisations, of which the following may be mentioned :—

- 1 Section Indian Mountain Artillery.
- 2 Sections Indian Camel guns for Aden.
- 1 Squadron Indian Cavalry (Guides).
- 5 Battalions Indian Infantry.
- 59 Emergency Companies to reinforce battalions in the field.
- 29 Special Companies of classes other than those normally enlisted.
- 10 Companies of old sepoys for guard duties.
- 3 Companies of Sappers and Miners.
- 2 Field Troops, Sappers and Miners.
- 5 Bridging Trains, Sappers and Miners.

In round numbers the new formations of all sorts amounted to 1,250 British and 16,300 Indian ranks.

Of Volunteer units the following were mobilised for service up to the end of 1916 :—

For Mesopotamia—

- 1 Battery (Gunners only).
- 1 Anglo-Indian Battery.

For East Africa—

- 1 Battery Calcutta Volunteers.
- 1 Maxim Gun Company.
- 1 Armoured Train detachment.

Recruitment.

In India great efforts have been made to stimulate recruiting and to maintain a constant flow of reinforcements, while the European population has responded splendidly to the call for officers for the Indian Army Reserve, and for men to complete the establishments of Volunteer Corps. It is regretted that no exact figures can be given under these heads.

British Army :—

Ex-soldiers re-enlisted	-	-	-	437
Civilians enlisted for the war	-	-	-	918
Indian Volunteers specially enlisted in various units	-	-	-	793
Total	-	-	-	<u>2,148</u>

¹ i.e. 6 Heavy Batteries to Mesopotamia and the personnel of 5 Heavy Batteries to England.

An Anglo-Indian Force is also in process of being organised. It is paid and treated as a British unit.

Indian Army:—

The enlistment for all arms of the Indian Army from the 1st August 1914 to the 30th June 1916 amounted to 178,700 combatants as against about 15,000 recruited annually in normal times. Since June 1916 recruits have been coming in at the rate of about 7,000 per mensem.

The Burma and Assam Military Police have been increased by 2,300 men in order to provide a flow of drafts for the Army.

Thanks to the loyal co-operation of the Nepalese Durbar, 10 Battalions of Nepalese Infantry have been placed at our disposal and have been armed and trained by us for incorporation in the Field Army on the Frontier.

Miscellaneous Personnel.

Apart from the regular combatant units, India has given considerable assistance to the Empire in the shape of non-combatant services. About 2,100 British soldiers have been temporarily transferred to Departments for war purposes.

The Supply and Transport Department, which corresponds to the Army Service Corps, has given about 300 officers and over 600 British ranks for service overseas, while more than 35,000 Indian personnel have been found for Supply and Transport duties.

Again, over 350 officers and 1,500 subordinates as well as 6,200 artisans, labourers, and menials, have been sent from India for service with military railways. In this connection it may be mentioned that railways have been constructed, repaired and worked by Indian personnel in East Africa, Aden, and Mesopotamia.

India has also enlisted a large number of coolies for employment in Labour Corps, in Mesopotamia, the Dardanelles and elsewhere. Arrangements are also now being made for the despatch of Labour Corps to France.

Matériel.

In addition to the troops a very large quantity of munitions of all sorts such as ammunition, rifles, clothing, military equipment, medical equipment and stores, railway and engineering plant and supplies of all kinds for man and beast were despatched for the use of the several forces.

India's abnormal output of war material may be gauged by a comparison of the figures for a few items between the years 1913-14 and 1915-16.

	1913-14.	1915-16.
	£	£
Expenditure on Stores - - -	727,000	2,152,000
" Labour - - -	189,000	414,000
303 ammunition (rounds) - - -	52,000,000	140,000,000
Cartridges (field guns)- - -	14,837	169,006
Shell - - -	24,205	297,211
Saddlery (sets) - - -	1,500	21,000
Tents - - -	3,487	39,844

India has not only met most of her own requirements, but has complied with a vast amount of "Home" demands for cordite, fuzes, projectiles, cartridges, tents, saddlery, &c.

Medical and veterinary stores of many descriptions have also been supplied from India.

The Supply and Transport Corps has met all demands from overseas for Indian supplies, more especially for the forces in Mesopotamia, East Africa, and Egypt.

Clothing and boots have also been supplied in large quantities, the output each month exceeding the total annual output in peace.

It should also be remembered that apart from such valuable commodities as wheat, rice, tea, leather, hides, oil-seeds and raw jute, India exports to England large quantities of such articles of great military value as sand-bags, saltpetre, manganese ~~and~~ wolfram, &c.

Remounts, Transport, &c.

The output of India under these heads has been remarkable. The Remount Department alone has despatched 29,000 horses and ordnance mules, while the number carried overseas of horses, mules, camels, and bullocks for transport purposes exceeds 50,000.

Twenty-eight Mule Corps and over 5,000 transport carts represent Indian transport with the several forces. Even mechanical transport has been found to a limited extent by India. About 300 motor and armoured lorries, cars, vans and mobile kitchens have been sent overseas.

Shipping.

The services of India to the Empire in this respect have been on a notable scale. Since the outbreak of war close on 200 vessels have been chartered for the conveyance of troops, animals and stores, while nearly 100 steamers, 150 launches and 300 barges have been provided for local use in Mesopotamia and elsewhere. Apart from the work done for the Royal Navy nearly 600 transports have been fitted or refitted at Bombay. Nine hospital ships have been equipped and manned in India, also six stern-wheelers as hospital river boats and several barges fitted specially for ambulance use have been sent to Mesopotamia. Nearly 100 hospital ships have been repaired or refitted in Bombay. These figures show the heavy work which has fallen on the Indian Marine Department.

V.—THE PRESENT SITUATION.

The course of events described above has denuded India of the bulk of its troops and has drained off the cream of its armed forces, thus leaving it with the bare minimum required to maintain internal order and to defend the frontier. It is not too much to say that at the present moment the military security of India rests largely on a well-established military prestige and on the trust reposed in a just and paternal administration.

The military forces left in India are not only numerically deficient but also of inferior quality. The British troops are largely composed of Territorial and Garrison Regiments, which naturally are not equal to the old "regulars" withdrawn from India. As regards Indian troops, owing to the constant demands for reinforcements to make good the wastage of war, regiments in India have been depleted of many of their best men. Some regiments have given from 200-400 men each as drafts for the forces at the seat of war, and in consequence are short of trained soldiers and have an undue proportion of recruits and elderly reservists unfit for any strenuous service. They are also very deficient in experienced officers.

The Government of India have now undertaken to release 12 Territorial Battalions from India for service elsewhere, as well as to relieve the 13th Division in Mesopotamia by troops from India. They are also arranging to expand three battalions now in Egypt to a strength of six battalions. In place of the above the War Office have engaged to send five more Garrison battalions to India and also to return an Indian battalion from Ceylon.

In order to carry out the above engagements the Indian Government has had to take steps to embody 1½ battalions of Volunteers and raise 16 new battalions of Indian Infantry. They have also passed an Act imposing the obligation of military service on the European population.

It is unnecessary to state in detail the exact number of units of all kinds remaining in India, but the aggregate strength of the Army may be taken at about a quarter of a million men, of which nearly one-third are British. In addition to the above, there are about 11,000 Imperial Service troops and 46,000 Volunteers, including Volunteer Reserves. The strength of the Volunteer Force will doubtless be augmented under the recent enactment, but to what extent is not yet known. The question may arise in the course of the Conference whether the troops' in India are sufficient

to cope both with Frontier troubles and with the internal situation. A few remarks on that subject are therefore added.

The essential factor from a purely Indian point of view is the defence of the North-west Frontier, for on that largely depends the internal peace of India. On the whole, the position on the Frontier is at present reassuring, but there is undoubtedly a certain amount of unrest, more particularly on the Waziri and Mohmand borders. There are mutterings of "Jehad" all along the Afghan marches, and though the Amir is believed to be thoroughly loyal to us, that safeguard depends on his life. At any moment he may be assassinated or die a natural death, in which case we might expect an upheaval in Afghanistan. Should this occur the whole Frontier might possibly be in a blaze. The imperative necessity for a watchful policy and preparation for instant action is therefore obvious. From the commencement of the war this necessity has been fully recognised, and Lord Crewe in 1914 authorised the maintenance of three Divisions and a Cavalry Brigade on a mobilised footing in addition to the troops comprising the Independent Brigades at Kohat, Bannu and the Derajat.

If Afghanistan should proclaim war, all the tribes from the Black Mountain to the Takht-i-Suliman would be up, but they can be held and defied provided that the Landi Kotal position is occupied in sufficient force *in good time*.

As regards the other main lines of approach, the line through Bajaur and Swat is securely barred by the strong positions at Chakdara and the Malakand, while the hill country to east and west of the Malakand route can be effectively watched by small columns near Rustam and Shabkadr respectively. If the Afridis were to throw in their lot with the Afghans, and thus menace communications with Landi Kotal through the Khaibar, it would be necessary to occupy Bazaar. The other route from the Afridi country down the Bara Valley can be easily closed by a small column operating from Peshawar.

The next line of approach to India is the Kurram. This is effectually closed by snow at the Shutargardan from Christmas till the end of March or often much later. Small columns at Thal, Miran Shah, Bannu, and Tonk should be able to deal effectually with raiders from Khost or Waziristan. The Gomal Pass has in the past been frequently utilised as a line of invasion by various Asiatic conquerors, but modern conditions, coupled with our flanking position at Quetta, should preclude the use of this line by any Afghan army at the present time.

The next and most southerly line of invasion is that from Kandahar through Quetta. Our position at Quetta, if adequately defended, is one of the strongest imaginable, and a Division is ample to deal with any Afghan and tribal forces likely to attack in this direction, at all events under present conditions.

This brief survey of the frontier is incomplete without some remarks regarding Chitral. Chitral would be isolated; the troops there for six months are cut off by snow from both Kashmir and the direct route over the Lowari Pass through Dir. If the Chitralis were so ill-advised as to join in a "Jehad," the situation for the Chitral garrison would be one of extreme peril, but this is a risk that would have to be taken. It is improbable, however, that the Chitralis would join their hereditary enemies, the Afghans.

Apart from a possible Afghan invasion, the only storm centres are the Mohmand country and Waziristan. As regards the Mohmands, a blockade can always be easily established, and much further trouble need not be anticipated. Waziristan is always a sore spot and petty raids and ambushes are a constant source of annoyance, but the Waziris are incapable of taking any formidable offensive, though their hostility would doubtless result in locking up troops in the Derajat, Bannu, and Tochi areas. The Afridis have always hitherto been considered a danger, and as they, together with the Orakzais, include a considerable number of well-armed men trained as soldiers in the Indian Army, they doubtless are not to be despised as an enemy; but the very fact that they know our power

and their own inability to withstand it in the plains produce a restraining influence.

Even if a "Jehad" were proclaimed, and a wave of fanatical enthusiasm thereby created, it is doubtful if 100,000 troops and armed tribesmen could be brought into the field at any one time; and considering all the advantages that modern scientific equipment, such as aeroplanes, armoured cars, machine guns, and quick-firing artillery gives, the situation may be regarded with equanimity so long as the Indian Army remains loyal. The same remarks apply to the internal defence of India, unless the Nepalese should recede from their long standing alliance or serious trouble arise on the eastern frontier of Burma.

As regards the Thibet and Yunnan frontier, there is no reasonable probability of trouble. It is true that a very large proportion of the Yunnanese are Mahomedans, but they are ill-armed, unorganised, and have no leaders; and it is hardly conceivable that the Chinese Government, weak as it is, would permit incursions across the frontier.

The Indian Government can easily cope with internal disorder by itself, but if such should synchronise with Frontier disturbances on a large scale the situation would be serious, especially as it would be difficult to send reinforcements of British troops from home, while the Indian Government would no longer be able to continue to send Indian drafts to the army in the field. In any case the difficulty of supplying efficient and adequate drafts to the several Forces and the shortage of trained officers render the position one of some gravity.

This shortage of officers is unquestionably serious. Indian regiments are reduced to four or five regular officers each. The rest are either boys newly joined or Indian Army Reserve, by which term is meant not, as in England, a reserve of *ex* Army officers, but one of half trained planters, clerks, engineers, and other civilians. The difficulty of providing trained officers for drafts is therefore extreme. In fact, in the matter of officers we are now down to the bone, though India is doing its best to train young officers at Quetta and Wellington. Besides this about 250 young officers are being transferred from the British Army, mostly "Territorial," "Special Reserve," and "New Army" officers trained at home or in France.

The general conclusions which result from this survey are (1) that as regards the safety of India the military situation may be regarded with equanimity save in the case of an Afghan war coupled with a frontier rising on the 1897 scale. In either case it might be necessary to apply for reinforcements from England. (2) That as a base from which to maintain the troops in the field at their present strength, India is sorely strained. (3) That in spite of certain failures and deficiencies the Indian Army has been of great assistance to the Empire in this world war, and that in France, Mesopotamia, and elsewhere not only has its intervention been opportune, but under most trying conditions it has worthily upheld its fame and prestige. Occasional instances of disloyalty or desertion or faintheartedness have been immeasurably outweighed by the loyalty, devotion, and fortitude of the Indian troops as a whole. India may justly be proud of her contribution to the Empire, while England has every reason for grateful recognition of her services.

INDIA OFFICE,
11th March 1917.