

AUSTRALIA v. GERMANY

F. S. BURNELL

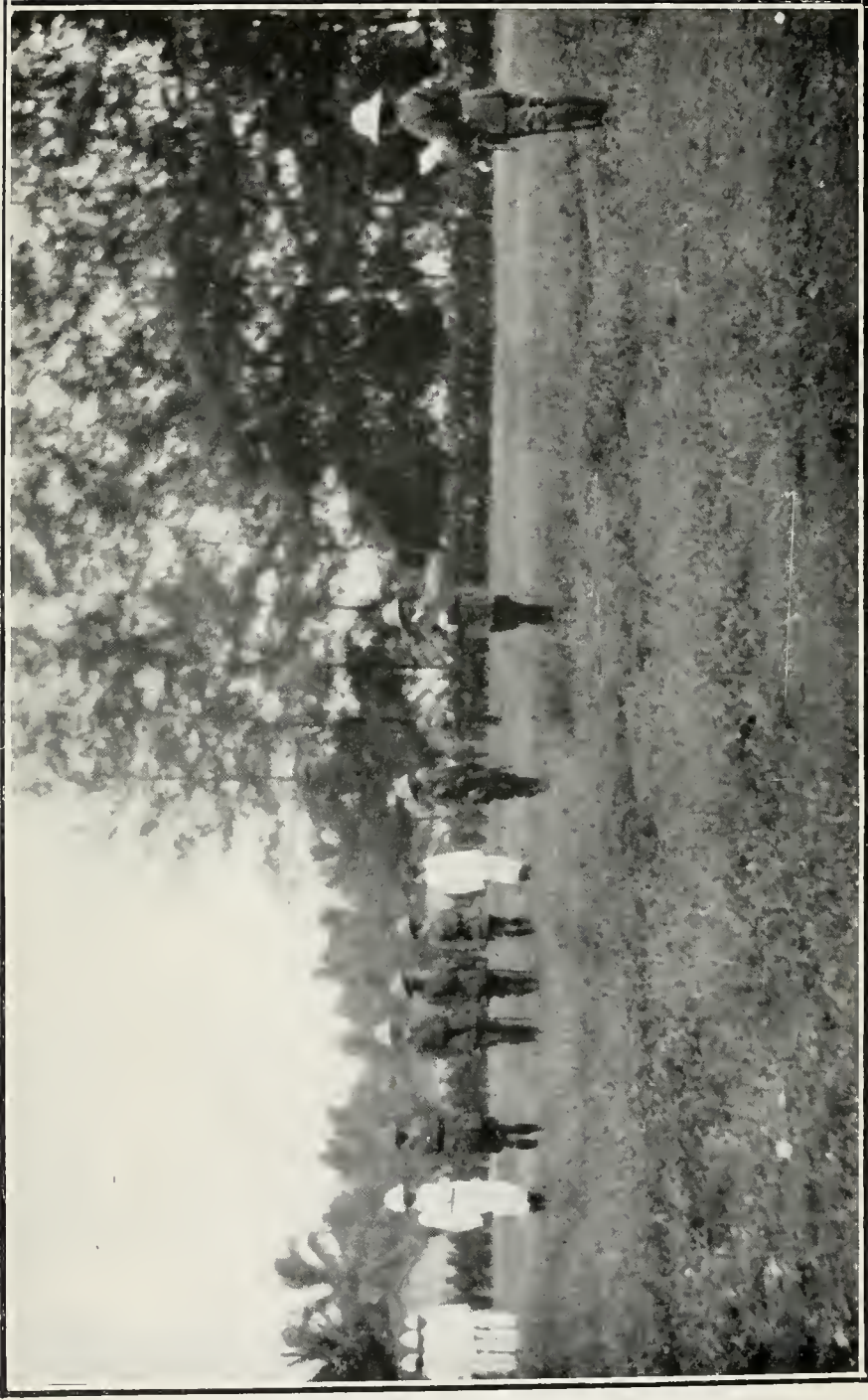




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AUSTRALIA
VERSUS
GERMANY





BRIGADE-MAJOR F. B. HERITAGE READING THE PROCLAMATION.

From left to right, Capt. Stevenson, R.A.N. (of the *Berrima*) ; Surgeon-Col. Howse, V.C., P.M.O. ; Capt. Travers, Intelligence Officer ; Lieut. Basil Holmes, A.D.C. ; Col. Paton, Commander at Rabaul ; Lieut. Whittle, R.A.N., Naval Intelligence Officer ; the trumpeter ; Col. William Holmes, D.S.O., V.D., Brigadier ; Brigade-Major F. B. Heritage.

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A U S T R A L I A

VERSUS

G E R M A N Y

THE STORY OF THE TAKING
OF GERMAN NEW GUINEA

By F. S. BURNELL

(Special Commissioner to "The Sydney Morning Herald"
with the Expedition)

ILLUSTRATED WITH PHOTOGRAPHS

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PREFATORY NOTE

FOR permission to reproduce the greater part of this book I desire to express my grateful acknowledgments to the courtesy of John Fairfax and Sons, Sydney. I would also take this opportunity of stating, by way of deprecation of possible criticism, that no one could be more fully aware of the faults of this brief record than myself, written as it was in great haste and under circumstances of no small difficulty.

But the first war waged single-handed by Australia, the youngest and most remote of the nations which compose the British Empire, seemed to me to merit a chronicler.

Hinc illae litterae.

F. S. B.

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CHAPTER I

WAR PROCLAIMED—INTERVIEW WITH COLONEL
FOSTER—GERMANY IN THE PACIFIC—THE
EXPEDITION ANNOUNCED—DETAILS OF THE
FORCE—THE *BERRIMA*—A RECORD WEEK

CHAPTER I

ON the 5th of August, 1914, the suspense which had hung like a cloud of darkness over Australia, as it had hung over the entire civilized world, was dissipated as by the breath of a great wind by the news that Great Britain and Germany were effectually and irrevocably at war. As one of the principal components of the British Empire, Australia found herself at war also, and a few days after the fateful cable had been published in the papers I had a conversation at the Australian Club, Sydney, with Colonel Foster, Instructor in Military Science to the University, who suggested that the Australian Commonwealth might perform

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a useful service by equipping an expedition against the German possessions in the Pacific. The Federal Government had already offered a contingent of twenty thousand men to the Imperial Government, and received a reply of thanks and acceptance. Colonel Foster's remarks were published the next day in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, and the example of New Zealand, whose Government had announced their intention of sending a force to seize the German Colony of Samoa, possibly had its effect upon the Commonwealth authorities. Nobody was surprised, at any rate, to learn, a few days afterwards, that volunteers were being invited for a force which, it was announced with an intriguing vagueness, was intended to serve "in the tropics."

The force consisted of six companies of the Royal Australian Naval Reserve, a complete battalion of infantry at war

The Expeditionary Force

strength, two sections of machine-guns, a signalling section, and a necessary complement of the Army Medical Corps. On August 10th the command was offered to and accepted by Colonel William Holmes, D.S.O., V.D., who, having previously distinguished himself in the South African War, was at this time commanding the Sixth Australian Infantry Brigade. His first act was to insist on the right to choose his own staff: men like the O.C. Infantry, Lieutenant-Colonel W. Russell Watson, who had ridden first and alone into Pretoria to demand its surrender; the P.M.O., Lieutenant-Colonel Neville R. Howse, the only man in Australia who had ever won the V.C., for first dressing a wounded man under fire and then carrying him into safety; and Lieutenant-Colonel Paton, whose services in South Africa had brought him the Victorian Decoration, as second in command. Major Francis B.

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Heritage, Commander of the Commonwealth School of Musketry, another distinguished soldier of the Boer War, also joyfully accepted the Brigadier's invitation to join the Brigade Staff as Brigade Major; and the staff was completed by Captain R. J. A. Travers as Intelligence Officer, and Lieutenant Basil Holmes as A.D.C. The remaining officers for the military side of the expedition were then selected as follows:—

ADJUTANT—Captain C. Lane.

QUARTERMASTER—Captain Goodsell.

TRANSPORT—Lieutenant K. Heritage.

MACHINE GUN SECTION—Captain Harens,
Lieutenant Marsden.

SIGNALLING SECTION—Lieutenant Sadler.

COMPANY OFFICERS:—

A Company—

Major H. Beardsmore.

Lieutenant C. E. Manning.

2nd Lieutenant W. A. Fry.

The Expeditionary Force

B Company—

Captain E. C. Norrie.

Lieutenant S. D. Fisher.

2nd Lieutenant R. H. Norman.

C Company—

Captain Thorold.

Lieutenant R. Partridge.

2nd Lieutenant Kirke.

D Company—

Captain Macpherson.

Lieutenant Ravenscroft.

2nd Lieutenant McDowell.

E Company—

Captain Morrison.

Lieutenant McLachlan.

2nd Lieutenant Manning.

F Company—

Captain Twynam.

Lieutenant J. E. Maughan.

2nd Lieutenant Cooper.

G Company—

Captain Ralston.

Lieutenant Westgarth.

2nd Lieutenant Quinn.

H Company—

Major Martin.

Lieutenant Sampson.

2nd Lieutenant Sherbon.

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Army Medical Corps—

Captain F. A. Maguire.
Captain G. E. Donaldson.
Captain B. C. A. Pockley.

Unattached—

2nd Lieutenant H. L. Bruce.
2nd Lieutenant L. K. Chambers.

The naval portion of the expeditionary force was recruited from the States of Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia. Officers and ratings of the naval force were as follows:—

BRIGADE STAFF—

Commander Stevenson.
Paymaster Livesay.
Petty Officer Blackmore.
Officers' Steward Gosling.

NAVAL STAFF—

Commander J. A. Beresford.
Lieutenant Bracegirdle.
Mr. Hunter, Signal Boatswain.
Mr. William, Midshipman.
Chief Petty Officer McDonough.
Petty Officer Dyer.
Petty Officer Instance.



MANŒUVRES AT PALM ISLAND : A COMPANY RETURNING TO THE BERRIMA.

The Expeditionary Force

BATTALION STAFF—

Lieutenant-Commander Browne.

Lieutenant-Commander Elwell.

COMPANY OFFICERS—

Lieutenant-Commander Lambton.

Lieutenant Bowen.

Lieutenant Read.

Lieutenant Gillam.

Lieutenant Cameron.

Lieutenant Bond.

Sub-Lieutenant Webbe.

Sub-Lieutenant Hext.

Midshipman Stirling.

Midshipman Sage.

Midshipman Hicks.

Midshipman Veale.

Midshipman Bullen.

Midshipman Cock.

GUNNERS AND PETTY OFFICERS—

Mr. Yeo.

Mr. Gordon.

Mr. Petterson.

Mr. Young.

It is difficult for the civilian, unversed in the complexities of military or naval

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affairs, to realize the task involved in organizing such an expedition within the space of a single week. Yet such was the case. The Peninsular and Oriental branch liner, s.s. *Berrima*, was chartered and ballasted, on the fourteenth, and taken to Cockatoo Island, where the work of fitting, arming, and storing proceeded with feverish rapidity. A camp had been formed at Marrickville, and the company officers, selecting their non-commissioned officers, worked night and day at getting their newly formed companies into shape. A heavy sprinkling of the force consisted of men who had served in South Africa or in China, but the majority were the rawest of recruits, and for a time the hapless officers were almost distracted by the multiplicity of the tasks that devolved upon them. But by August 17th the force had been organized, clothed, armed, equipped, and even to some extent trained,

A Record Week

and on the following day the men marched through the city amid cheering crowds to Fort Macquarie, there to be taken by ferry-boats to the *Berrima* at Cockatoo.

CHAPTER II

AT COCKATOO ISLAND—THE REAL THING—CHAOS
VERSUS COSMOS—GOOD-TEMPERED SOLDIERS
—THE RED CROSS LEAGUE—“READY”

CHAPTER II

“LAW, or-r-der, duty, and r-restraint, obedience, disci-pli-ne !”

The launch that had brought us to the island had puffed away again with fussy importance towards the city, a grotesque last link with “all that ever went with evening dress.” A blue-clad, tan-gaitered guard, with fixed bayonets and loaded rifles, watched us pass through the gates that led to the dock. Above the clamour of great machines in a score of sheds, the shrill dissonance of a steam-whistle, the ceaseless clanging of steel on iron, and the whine and rattle of Briareus-armed cranes, rose continually; the dry shuffle of hundreds on hundreds of feet, the abrupt shouting of orders, as the long,

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dust-coloured lines of men halted or moved forward by sections to the gangways of the big liner that gloomed beyond them out of the dock basin. A queer sense, half exhilaration, half sheer isolation and bewilderment, fell suddenly upon the soul. In Sydney, with its gay shop windows, its much-as-usual streets, and its flower-stalls in Martin Place, like a little archipelago of colour and perfume, it had been almost impossible to realize that Australia was engaged in what is probably the greatest war in history. But here at Cockatoo Island was a touch of the real thing, and for the first time the knowledge of it stared you visibly between the eyes.

One looked, and was silent. A troopship preparing for sea is a curious sight. The dust rose to an affronted heaven from a heaving litter of articles that resembled the debris of a universal em-

Chaos *v.* Cosmos

porium, and through its luminous cloud one saw everywhere a confused mass of men who, vainly as it seemed, strove to carry on a multiplicity of occupations amid hopelessly conflicting conditions. For here a squad was unhappily performing drill, doggedly endeavouring to keep formation, despite the incursions of a perspiring fatigue party; here, many who reared glittering edifices of biscuit-tins to be wafted skyward, like Aladdin palaces, to the deck of the troopship; here a multitude ran to and fro, pursued by expostulating authority; and here a motley band in mufti glumly awaited orders and uniforms. Everywhere was chaos, but chaos resolving itself into cosmos. And from all sides food, medicines, hammocks, water-proof sheeting, sewing-machines, motor-cycles, and a myriad other things were poured into the holds.

To the eye of the untutored non-com-

Australia v. Germany

batant there appeared to be sufficient stuff alongside to keep half the entire population of Sydney engaged in loading for the next forty-eight hours. But the authorities knew their business. When the navy showed signs of weariness, or was needed for something else, the army was turned loose, and by seven o'clock had gained a brilliant victory. Said Private Ortheris of an episode in his career, "An' we swep'—blimey, 'ow we did sweep 'em along!" The Australian Expeditionary Force also "swep' em along," and finally left the dockside as bare of cargo as though a cloud of beneficently industrious locusts had settled on it. And it was pleasant to observe the cheery good-humour with which the work was done. "What price the machine-guns?" chaffed one man as he assisted a comrade to carry a sewing-machine on board. Jokes flew like hail where a string of men tossed bundles of

Good-Tempered Soldiers

clothing from hand to hand with amazing sureness and rapidity. "This way to the glove counter!" cried one. "Lollies and choc'lates!" piped one in the singsong affected by theatre sweet-vendors. "Peanuts!" and then, all in one word, "apenny-abag!"

As one went from hospital to dispensary, from store-room to hold, one saw everywhere big boxes of clothing, bundles of mosquito-netting or cheese-cloth, medicines, surgical equipments, and innumerable other essentials marked with a large red cross, quite apart from the admirably comprehensive supplies issued by the Government. Not once, but many times during the course of the campaign, was I asked to make public acknowledgment through the columns of the *Herald* of the debt of gratitude which the force owes to the splendid generosity and self-sacrifice of the women of the Red Cross

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League, who worked untiringly night and day to provide a hundred adjuncts to the comfort and welfare of the troops. It is and was a debt which every one in the expedition likes to think can never wholly be repaid.

The sun sank in a splendour of old rose and gold. From the Balmain shore the lights, reflected in the dark motionless water, looked like inverted marks of exclamation. Along the decks of the troopship hammocks were slung and occupied by the navy with the dexterity and ease of ancient custom, with a certain awkwardness, born of novelty, on the part of the soldier-folk. The last bugles called for "Lights out!" Along the dock a sentry, rifle on shoulder, paced wearily, his measured footfalls echoing from the dark wall of rock behind him. The *Berrima* was ready.

CHAPTER III

LIFE ON A TROOPSHIP—EFFECT OF ROUGH
WEATHER—AN AMUSING INCIDENT—ANGLO-
GERMAN SAUSAGE—LADY ELLIOTT ISLAND—
FIRST GLIMPSE OF THE FLEET—A SUSPICIOUS
OCCURRENCE—“NO ADMITTANCE”

CHAPTER III

WHEN you have once become accustomed to the novelty of living in an atmosphere of uniforms and bugle-calls, you are apt to discover the life on a troopship is very much like life on any other ship, except that, owing to the monotony of the daily routine of parades, drills, rifle-instruction, and so on, it is rather more dull. Morning parade on the *Berrima* began at nine and continued till twelve, and afternoon parade continued from two to four; and during those five hours the traffic was obstructed by a large number of serious-minded people in khaki or navy-blue, who did the same things day after day with

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a spirit of apparently exhaustless enthusiasm. The enthusiasm was the more commendable because, since leaving Sydney on the 19th, the *Berrima* had been pursued by an unpleasantly cold and unnecessarily violent wind, and her equilibrium in consequence had been considerably upset. It is not easy for, say, fifty men, all hampered with overcoats and rifles, to stand in a beautifully unbroken line on a deck whose angle of incidence perpetually shifts and veers, and to those who have quitted the dry land for the first time the consequences are apt to be even painfully disastrous. During the first day of the *Berrima* at sea the most hard-hearted of Prussian generals must have melted at the sight of the sea-change suffered by the first expeditionary force, a large proportion of whose members cast their bread upon the waters with more than Christian liberality. The long line

An Amusing Incident

of seeming corpses stretched on the deck, impervious alike to threats or sarcasm, suggested the aftermath of an engagement. "Private Dessay!" yelled a sergeant in search of one of his flock. "Where's Private Dessay?" But Private Dessay was beyond the reach of sergeants. "Dessay he's dead by this time," grimly jested a fellow-sufferer, with a facial contortion between a smile and a grimace. Sometimes even for the men who were well drill was rendered practically impossible by the sea's antics, and it was a ludicrous spectacle to see a whole half-company, as a huge wave rolled the liner on her side, go sliding and staggering across the deck, wildly embracing each other or anything else, before fetching up with a bump against the bulwarks. But, indeed, the expedition found its sea-legs with astonishing celerity, and the routine of the following

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day proceeded with scarcely any further "casualties."

What with concerts, lectures, sparring contests, pistol practice, and endless speculations on our aim and destination, the expedition kept its spare time well occupied. The receipt of a large consignment of copies of the *Sydney Morning Herald* on the morning of departure was appreciated with very genuine gratitude by everybody on board. One little local incident also did much to relieve the tedium of the daily round and common task. A certain august personage told his orderly, or "batman," to come down to the officers' mess, meaning, of course, that the orderly was to supply his needs during the meal. The hour arrived, but not the man. The hungry, august personage fumed and fidgeted, but the orderly was nowhere to be seen. When the orderly, who had interpreted his orders

Anglo-German Sausage

as an informal invitation to lunch in the mess-room, was eventually discovered in a corner enjoying a hearty meal, waited on by two stewards, the entire mess dissolved in Homeric mirth, while the august personage explained the facts of the case to the crestfallen "batman" with an emphasis that left no further room for misapprehension. The perfervid patriotism of the ship's cook, who contributed his quota to the work of annexation by announcing, not German, but Anglo-German sausage on the daily menu, also added for a time to our appreciation of war's lighter side.

Leaving Moreton Bay on August 21st, it was about four o'clock on the following afternoon that we sighted, away to the north-east, a blur on the sea-line, which gradually revealed itself through the binoculars as a strip of sand crowned with a few palms and a white lighthouse. Here,

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at Lady Elliott Island, was our appointed rendezvous with H.M.A.S. *Sydney*, according to the instructions for which we had waited at Moreton Bay, and almost simultaneously with the appearance of the tiny island a grey plume of smoke lifted above the opposite horizon. It was the first sign of the Australian fleet that had been seen by any one on board since the beginning of the war, and it was with a thrill of interest that we watched the long grey shape develop from the void and steam swiftly in our direction. To those of the men who were not aware that we were expecting to meet her there, this formidable apparition was at first a source of even deeper curiosity, which was, in the case of those to whom the absence of a canteen on board was a weariness and vexation of the spirit, not unmingled, possibly, with hope. "Wot's that, Bill?" one man was overheard to

A Suspicious Occurrence

inquire. "That's an adjectival German cruiser," retorted Bill humorously. "Has she got a canteen aboard?" asked the other. "Yes? Well, then, I don't much care if we *are* captured!"

It was not till considerably later in the voyage that the facts of an incident which filled the ship next day with amazed hintings became known. Rumour had it that some of the parts of one of the machine-guns had been thrown overboard, that a mysterious figure had been seen during the night in the act of tampering with one of the 4.7's on the poop, but had escaped before the guard could seize him, and that a complete plan for flooding the magazines had been picked up in one of the latrines. As a matter of fact such a plan, necessary, of course, in the event of fire, was actually found, having dropped out of the pocket of one of the naval officers, and it was also

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true that some of the parts of a machine-gun were missing for a while, though they were afterwards found. But the story of the 4·7, though officially laughed down, received a strong *prima facie* confirmation by the fact that the guard on the poop was observed henceforward to have been doubled, with orders to allow nobody admittance. The rumour, which no official denial could dispel, and which, indeed, was eventually admitted to be in some degree true, cast for a time a shadow of gloom and suspicion over the ship, each man furtively eyeing his neighbour with the unspoken thought, "Perhaps you——." But not for long. No more such untoward incidents occurred, and the innate cheery good-humour of the Australian temperament soon reasserted itself, by no means retarded by an episode which gave rise to a good deal of sly mirth in the Army at the

“ No Admittance ”

expense of the older branch of the Service.

As already stated, a double guard had been placed on the poop to prevent anybody approaching the two guns there, an order which naturally was not intended to apply to the naval officers who were in command of the ship. Commander Browne, R.N.R., who was executive officer of the ship, was, to put it mildly, somewhat astonished, therefore, to find his passage blocked by a burly “swaddy,” bent on carrying out his orders to the letter, and apparently determined to enforce them if necessary with the point of the bayonet. In vain did the Commander expostulate, protest, plead his office and intentions; the sentry and his comrade bluntly informed him that the great Panjandrum himself couldn't come on to the poop without an order from the Adjutant. And the hapless Commander

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was forced to retire to the smoke-room and ask the Adjutant, much to that officer's surprise and amusement, for a permit to do his work unhindered by the incorruptible slaves of duty on the poop!

CHAPTER IV

WHITSUNDAY PASSAGE — ARRIVAL AT PALM
ISLAND—H. M. A. S. *ENCOUNTER*—JUNGLE AND
SWAMP—LANDING THE TROOPS—MANŒUVRES
ASHORE—PROGRESS OF THE FORCE—WITH
THE MACHINE - GUNS — THE *AUSTRALIA* AT
RABAU — CAPTURE OF THE *ZAMBESI* — A
FALSE ALARM—OFF ONCE MORE

CHAPTER IV

PASSING through the Whitsunday Passage on Sunday, August 23rd, we found ourselves at Palm Island on the following morning, in an ideal anchorage, in which we floated like flies in a milk-bowl. A little way off on our port bow lay the *Encounter*, who had been waiting for our arrival: our previous escort, H.M.A.S. *Sydney*, having departed during the night for Townsville, about thirty miles to the south-east on the mainland, from which she returned the next afternoon.

Hurrah, hurrah, we're on the *Berrima*!

Hurrah, hurrah, we don't know where we are!

We're volunteers for service from our own

Austral-i-a,

When we set out to capture Pap-u-a!

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sang the expedition joyfully a few evenings previously at a concert on the after-deck. Our ultimate destination was still largely shrouded in mere conjecture, but our actual whereabouts at least were now, for the present, clear enough. Into the pale blue sky, misted over with heat like a mirror that some one had breathed upon, half a dozen islands climbed out of the peacock-coloured sea to eight or nine hundred feet, covered, for the most part, with dense forest from base to summit. They were deceptive places, these; islands of illusion, with little white beaches, like white-limbed sea-maidens, luring you to land; but as you came closer you perceived that, behind the little beaches lurked the grim black claws of evil-smelling mangrove swamps, and the slopes that seemed so easy to climb were seen to be of break-neck steepness, where the long, thick grass, waist-

Jungle and Swamp

high, only increased the slipperiness of the huge basalt boulders that towered above your head. At one point only the hills fell away, and left a small area comparatively level, though even here it was impossible to go far without either tumbling into a swamp or finding oneself confronted with a wall of jungle, impracticable to any but the most indomitable of pioneers.

Such as it was, however, in view of the fact that we were compelled to wait there for some time pending the arrival of the *Aorangi*, carrying stores, and of the two submarines, the island provided an excellent opportunity for exercising the troops on shore. The issue of helmets and wide straw hats to the navy and army respectively, by way of preliminary, was followed by dyeing them with Condy's Fluid, so as to exchange the too-conspicuous white for a more serviceable

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khaki, and it was not until the afternoon that a mixed force of two companies was finally shepherded into the boats and headed for the shore. A good-tempered, if keen, rivalry between the two branches of the Service was continually apparent throughout the voyage, but on the present occasion the victory was emphatically on the side of the military, who were actually half way to the land before their salt-water comrades in arms had pushed off from the ship. A fresh breeze, whose edge was tempered by a warm sun, pranked the surface of the blue sea with an ever-changing blazonry of white foam, and the two long strings of laden boats, each towed by a launch, made a picturesque spectacle as they left for the beach under a heavy fire of Kodaks. From the *Berrima* we could see them plainly through the binoculars, wading ashore as the boats grounded off the shallow beach, falling

Landing the Troops

in on the sand, the flanking parties marching along the beach, or disappearing into the bush. To watch the tiny khaki figures, like marvellous marionettes, extend, advance and deploy to right or left, or form into column of sections, with a spray of skirmishers in front and flanking parties on either side, was as amusing as the campaigns with toy soldiers that we have all waged in our youth.

Where the level ground, already referred to, came down to the sea, a line of coconut palms and pawpaw-trees, sheltering a whitewashed and leaf-thatched group of bungalows, awaited the holiday-making or honeymooning folk who come every year to avoid the heat and burden of the summer months; but never before had these islands seen so large a population on their shores, nor one with such a swashing and martial aspect. Every day,

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to the strains of a stirring war-song beginning—

Now, militiamen,
Row like fishermen ;
Pull, boys, pull !

a long string of boats headed for the shore, generally disgorging their burden at a rocky point which, in compliment to a leading member of the force, was christened after his name. An exceedingly toilsome "march," if a catch-as-catch-can sort of scuffle over an intolerably steep and rocky hillside may be so dignified, brought the perspiring warriors to a mangrove swamp, where ambiguous creatures crowded and clung to the malodorous slime, and legions of queer-shaped crabs in wonderful blue and scarlet armour scuttled away in awkward haste to miniature bomb-proof shelters before the advance of the invaders. An arduous

Manœuvres Ashore

passage through the swamp led the war-worn army to the Promised Land, that is to say, the bungalows, where the cows strayed under the pawpaws and coconuts. This peaceful scene was at once changed into an area where fire and sword raged unchecked until dinner-time, after which hostilities were resumed in full fury. At five o'clock orders were given for returning to the ship, and here the fun began. The tide by this time had retired for hundreds of yards, leaving a beautiful expanse of brown and buttery mud, with large and uninviting lumps of jagged coral sticking up here and there. It was not attractive to the eye as a spot for a promenade. But the boats were waiting in the offing, and puttees, boots, and socks being reluctantly hauled off, and trousers hoisted as high as possible, the invaders crossed the mud flats and waded splashing through the water, till the boats

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were reached. It was an exhilarating spectacle, and, as one might expect, gave rise to a rapid crossfire of good-natured chaff, followed by a hotly rowed race between boat and boat back to the ship.

Apart from the lighter side of the question, however, it was in the highest degree encouraging to observe how admirably the expedition was shaping into a fighting machine of first-rate efficiency. Considering the rapidity with which the force was got together, it is astonishing that in so short a time officers and men should have gained so complete an understanding of and confidence in each other, and the men who, a few weeks ago, possessed few military qualities other than a whole-souled enthusiasm, should already have attained a degree of competency and training of which any army in the world might feel proud. The very nature of the island precluded any very extended

Progress of the Force

manœuvres, and even within the area of operations, the country was not only exceedingly difficult, but utterly foreign to any country within the previous experience of the men; but without exception the troops succeeded in keeping touch, maintaining their communications, and carrying out every order with intelligence, precision, and without loss of time.

During the fortnight which we were compelled to spend at Great Palm Island I had every opportunity of watching the progress and behaviour of the men, who were daily taken ashore by companies for drill, exercises, and rifle practice, and I am merely echoing the expressed opinion of the pundits in saying that both were satisfactory to an almost unlooked-for degree. At the beginning of the cruise it may be doubted whether 20 per cent. of the force had ever seen a modern service rifle before, and it is even alleged

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by some ribald humorists that more than one man was caught in the act of trying to load his rifle by poking the cartridges down the barrel! Whatever the truth of this allegation, the rawest of the trainees was not long in learning to handle his rifle with ease and expertness. Firing practice on shore balanced dummy practice at sea; and by the time the expedition reached German territory it was fully prepared to put up as brisk and scientific a fight as any officer commanding could wish to see.

The Australian soldier will go anywhere and do anything if he has the right man to lead him, and he is quick to notice and resent any attempt to impose upon him, as he is equally ready to acknowledge and repay with interest qualities of sympathy and manliness in his superiors. "Waded through a swamp, did you?" said one to a returned member of

With the Machine Guns

a landing party. "Did the officers go in, too?" and the brief "Ah" of satisfaction which followed the affirmative reply was eloquent in its approval.

We had, of course, no artillery on board, but the machine-gun section, under the command of Captain Marcus and Lieutenant Marsden, rapidly attained a very high pitch of efficiency, both in accuracy of fire and in the rapidity with which the guns were put together or dismantled and packed up ready for removal. For the benefit of the many who have not seen a machine-gun in action, it may be briefly explained that the gun consists of a number of component parts, of which the gun itself and the carrying tripod are chief; though their united weight is considerable it was a delight to observe how quickly the gun teams learned to spring forward to the required position, unpack the parts from the poles on which they

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were carried, and within the space of a few seconds, have the heavy tripod adjusted, and the gun mounted, loaded, and aimed at the ordered number of yards with the deftness and swiftness of a conjurer producing rabbits from a top-hat. On one of these occasions the war correspondent was invited to try his hand at the target, which was attached to a tree about fifty yards away. For the accuracy of the scribe's aim it is to be feared that little can be said: but his performance had an unexpected deadliness in another respect. After an afternoon's steady practice, the core of the tree was practically a solid plug of lead and nickel, and the fifteen or twenty rounds contributed by the Knight of the Pen proved the final and intolerable onslaught on the tree's equilibrium. With a slow, dignified movement it came crashing to the earth amid a chorus of delighted cheers which covered

The *Australia* at Rabaul

the astonished marksman with modest blushes at his unlooked-for success!

We now learned for the first time, from the officers of the *Encounter* and the *Sydney*, of the capture of the *Zambesi* and the daring raid of the destroyers on Rabaul, the capital of New Britain, both of which had taken place some time before. The *Australia* and the destroyers had gone to Rabaul in the hope of destroying the wireless - station there. It was believed that the two big German cruisers, the *Gneisenau* and the *Scharnhorst*, had taken refuge in Rabaul harbour, and risking the chance of being sunk by their great guns, striking a rock—for they possessed no charts of the harbour—or being blown up by a mine, the two torpedo-boat destroyers, under cover of night, stole in the harbour in the hope of torpedoing the German cruisers. Finding to their disappointment that the two ships were not there, they landed a

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party next morning to find the station, an attempt in which they failed, as they had no idea of its whereabouts, and were naturally unable to proceed very far beyond the town itself, owing to the risk of being cut off.

Before retiring to the ships they proceeded to the post and telegraph office, and destroyed the telegraph instruments. The incident, as related, was not devoid of humour. Arriving at the building, the officer in charge of the party walked in and beheld a bland German postmaster in spotless ducks, who gazed at the intruder with an expression of innocent inquiry.

The postmaster looked at the lieutenant, and the lieutenant looked at the postmaster. Each appeared to experience a certain temporary embarrassment. Said the lieutenant—

“Er, good morning.”

Capture of the *Zambesi*

“ Good morning,” replied the official, in English.

“ You see, we’re here,” continued the lieutenant, with the banality of the entirely obvious.

“ I had already perceived the fact,” returned the other drily.

“ Well,” said the lieutenant, “ I’m sorry, but we’ll have to break your place up a little bit.”

“ Not at all,” magnanimously retorted the philosopher behind the counter. “ May I offer you a glass of lager?” And in effect, his fell work of destruction satisfactorily accomplished, the lieutenant accepted the gifts of the Danai with gratitude, and left the building amid an interchange of smiles and handshakes as though he had been paying a social call.

It was the *Encounter* which captured the *Zambesi*, with German dispatches and a large quantity of wireless equipment on

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board, and the first sight of her grey hull, rising dimly out of the mists on the horizon, gave rise to a belief that she was one of the long-looked-for German cruisers. The ship was immediately cleared for action, and gangways, deck fittings, even the coops containing the ship's poultry, followed one another overboard in rapid succession, before it was discovered that the supposed cruiser was merely a tramp.

Engineer-Lieutenant Ireland, who amused the *Berrima* mess by relating the story, considers himself the most ill-used man on the *Encounter*. "We sighted the *Zambesi*," said he, "in the morning, just about the usual time for 'Clear for action' drill. I didn't see the wretched boat at first, being on the wrong side of the ship, and when I heard the bo'sun blow his whistle I didn't pay much attention. I thought it was simply the usual call, until I suddenly saw a wild-eyed matlow trying

A False Alarm

to heave one of my oil barrels amidships over the side. I yelled at him to let go, but the chap seemed to be quite excited, and declared that they were highly inflammable and might blow up the ship. I stared at the fellow. It struck me, really, that he must be a bit off his head—touch of sun or something—and I rushed up and tried to pull the barrel away from him. He hung on like grim death, and there we were, like a bally tug-of-war, he on one side, and I on the other—yes, you can laugh, but I can tell you I was no end annoyed. Presently I saw the executive officer coming down the deck, and sent him an S.O.S. call for assistance, when, to my amazement, he called out to the matlow, ‘All right; you needn’t throw them over now. She’s only a tramp, not a cruiser, after all!’ And then I realized by degrees that everybody else on board had been having the thrill of

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their lives, thinking they were going into a real battle, and I had missed the whole thing ! ”

“ Well,” chimed in a brother officer, as the laughter died away, “ I can sympathize with your feelings on the subject. Those few minutes of expectation were worth all my previous existence put together ! ”

Training, bathing, boat-races—less remarkable for the form exhibited than for enthusiasm, not unmixed with wild hilarity at the peculiar rowing methods of the “ swaddies ”—and concerts on the after-deck at night, in which a “ brass band ” created by E Company, with the aid of mouth-organs and dinner utensils, and a really creditable glee club, organized by Sergeant Lawton, a musical enthusiast in B Company, helped to pass the time away pleasantly enough. The force chafed considerably at the delay, however, for

Off Once More

which, in the absence of any real knowledge, rumours of all kinds were continually circulated, and sarcastic inquiries were made regarding the distribution of long service medals for Palm Island! The arrival of the *Aorangi* on the 31st, followed by the other two submarines early on the morning of September 2nd, released the expedition from its enforced inactivity, and the same afternoon, with the *Sydney* and *Encounter* leading, flanked by the submarines, and the *Aorangi* bringing up the rear, the expedition had left the isles of idleness behind it, and was on its way northward, seeking to leave the Barrier for the more boisterous freedom of the open sea.

CHAPTER V

LEAVING THE BARRIER—"LIGHTS OUT"—PORT
MORESBY—FAIRFAX INLET—A FINE NAVAL
BASE—THE ARMED CONSTABULARY—ROSSEL
ISLAND—MEETING THE *AUSTRALIA*—“TO
RABAU!”

CHAPTER V

EXULTATION reigned on board the *Berrima*, as, threading in and out among the numerous islands of the Barrier, we realized that we were again on the way to our still unknown destination. Cairns was passed about three o'clock on the following morning, and Cooktown shortly after breakfast—an indistinguishable speck on a desolate coast that leered at our passing through driving mists of rain. By midday the rain had given place to a bright sun, across which heavy clouds drove continually, while a bitterly cold wind set the little submarines plunging like porpoises through blinding showers of spray. A strange discolouration of the

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water ahead late in the afternoon told us that we were approaching the exit from the reef, and as we approached we were able to observe the two great atolls, each a surf-encircled lake of tranquil jade-green, that formed a gateway scarcely a quarter of a mile in width.

Once in the open sea, and away from the shelter of the great barrier of the coral, it became necessary to take precautions against being sighted by the *Scharnhorst* and the *Gneisenau*, which, for all that we knew to the contrary, might at any moment loom menacingly over the horizon.

It was an impressive sight when the winking Morse signalled through the deepening twilight "All lights out." The moon was at the full, and its strange and livid brightness formed a weird contrast to the darkness that ruled within the unlit mess-room, deck, and alleyway on board the

“ Lights Out ”

ships, feeling their way blindly, as it were, across the shadowy sea, where they themselves were scarcely distinguishable, save as a slightly deeper shadow. Perhaps there was no danger; probably, though the exact whereabouts of the two big German cruisers could only be guessed at, none save that arising from the risk of collision; yet this ghostly shuffling, as of secret conspirators in a darkened room, across the wind-haunted vastness of the Pacific, could not help but leave an impression on all on board, which found vent in voices involuntarily lowered, and hands continually curved above the eyes to peer with vague expectation into the baffling darkness of the night.

We arrived at Port Moresby on the evening of Friday, September 4th, the *Sydney*, the *Encounter*, the *Berrima*, and the *Aorangi* in an imposing line, with two long grey shadows, the submarines, slip-

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ping stealthily, like pilot fish, through the darkening sea upon our flanks. Our entrance naturally created considerable interest on shore. The anchor had scarcely dropped when a busy flicker of Morse broke out from a hillside across the bay, demanding to know who we were, but as the operator was not able, apparently, to give the regular signal showing his good faith from a military point of view, we maintained an attitude of sphinx-like impenetrability. For something over an hour the inquisitive flashes continued to demand our name and business, at the end of which time, the operator's impatience and patience equally exhausted, he signalled with disgusted brevity, "Good-night, and d—— you!"

Those members of the expedition who had been able, despite the darkness, to recognize, with the pleasurable thrill of old acquaintance, various familiar land-

Fairfax Inlet

marks of the port, rubbed their eyes next morning on discovering themselves in a harbour totally strange to them, to which the *Berrima* had moved at daylight. This was Fairfax Inlet, the inner harbour of Port Moresby, distant about five miles by sea and eight by land from Moresby township. In this basin, which, completely sheltered from all winds, and invisible not only from the sea, but even from the outer harbour, makes a naval base of the greatest natural value, lay a regular fleet of vessels, including, besides those which had accompanied the *Berrima*, three destroyers, the *Parramatta*, the *Yarra*, and the *Warrego*, the A.U.S.N. Liner *Kanowna*, with five hundred Queensland troops on board, the *Murex*, an oil-ship belonging to the Pacific Trading Company, and a collier, the *Koolonga*. On every side, completely concealing the entrance to the harbour, rose marmalade-

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coloured hillsides, sprigged with trees whose slim, silvery-grey stems and leaves of pale green or faintest mauve lent them a fairy-like grace, and looking, with the dark green mangroves at their foot and the clear blue beyond them, like a painting by Jules Guerin. Across the blue waters of the bay a jut of grey marked the site of a native fishing village, and from all sides the spidery forms of Papuan catamarans were slowly creeping, with their strange occupants and cargoes of fruit and fowls, on their way to the daily barter with the white man's fire-ships.

The outbreak of the war had thrown Port Moresby into a state of no small apprehension of an attack. Besides the ordinary native constabulary, the main inhabitants immediately formed themselves into a defence force entitled the "Armed Constabulary," which, so report had it, numbered seventy-five in all, of which

The Armed Constabulary

thirty-five were officers. The vital point to defend was, of course, the wireless-station, which was at once fortified by erecting sandbag redoubts and barbed-wire entanglements, through which a current of 2,000 volts could be passed, clearing away the scrub in the vicinity, and constructing trenches, fronted by stone walls, on a low hill overlooking the station. Thorough as these defences undoubtedly were, they must have proved entirely useless. So long as an enemy warship could not be prevented from entering the harbour, any defences were necessarily ineffective, for the reason that the station was exposed to a direct bombardment from the harbour, while not possessing any guns more formidable than a Maxim with which to make reply. A proclamation issued by the Governor to the effect that it was not proposed to surrender the station even under threat

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of bombardment, and that non-combatants would be well advised to leave while it was still possible, did not soothe the nerves of the township. One morning early, a member of the Armed Constabulary, whose health, by no means impregnable, had been further impaired by overwork and loss of sleep, burst upon the settlement with the tidings that ten boatloads of Germans were at that very moment landing on the back beach. Alarms and excursions followed; for some reason no attempt was made to verify the facts of the case, which actually consisted of a family of Papuans landing from a canoe; and the canard was not discovered till the unfortunate Armed Constabulary, hastily assembled at the wireless-station, had waited for nearly three hours in fevered expectation of immediate assault. The wretched author of the scare, witless and starving, was found

Meeting the *Australia*

some days afterwards wandering helplessly in the bush.

Supplemented by the three destroyers, an oil-ship, and a coal steamer, the expedition proceeded to Rossel Island, the last of the Louisiade Group, at the extreme south-east of New Guinea. Here we met the *Australia*, her great bulk grimly impressive as she swept slowly past the fleet under the grey and windy sky. The Brigadier, with Captain Stevenson, R.N., Commander of the *Berrima*, and the Captains of the other units of the fleet, immediately went aboard the Flagship for a conference with the Admiral, and on their return we learned for the first time definitely whither we were bound, and that delays were at an end. With a feeling of exhilarated expectancy we swung round, our bows pointing nor'-nor'-west, and steamed straight towards Rabaul.

CHAPTER VI

FALSE PROPHETS — THE ADMIRAL'S PLANS —
HERBERTSHOHE AND RABAU — BLANCHE
BAY — SWEEPING FOR MINES — FIRST HINT
OF TROUBLE — THE *SUMATRA* CAPTURED —
RED CROSS FLAGS — LANDING AT KABA KAUL

CHAPTER VI

PRACTICALLY ever since leaving Sydney the pessimists had been prophesying that we should meet with no resistance in our occupation of New Britain. The prospect filled with gloom the hearts of almost all on board, especially as the caustic wit of some Tommy in the expedition had already christened the force "Cook's Tourist Soldiers," in allusion to the then Prime Minister of Australia. Yet, however unwelcome, the conviction grew, strengthened by the information said to be possessed by Admiral Patey, and the night before reaching New Britain a meeting of officers was summoned by the Brigadier, at which he explained his intention should the naval intelligence

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prove correct. So many men were to be sent here, so many there; the flag was to be hoisted at Rabaul on Saturday (curiously enough, the Brigadier's birthday). In the meanwhile, by the Admiral's instructions, the *Sydney*, the *Warrego*, and the *Yarra* were to proceed ahead of us to Kaba Kaul and Herbertshohe, and land twenty-five men at each to locate and capture the wireless-station, which was known to be somewhere in the locality; while the *Berrima*, under escort of the Flagship, would go direct to Blanche Bay and land the bulk of the force at Rabaul. The *Encounter*, with the *Parramatta* and the submarines, had been left far astern to escort the various supply ships, whose rate of steaming rendered them unable to keep pace with us.

Herbertshohe, the old capital, and Rabaul, the new capital, formerly known as Simpsonshafen, of New Pomerania, lie

Herbertshohe and Rabaul

only a comparatively few miles apart, and the coastline connecting the two may be compared in outline to a gigantic sickle. Herbertshohe is set, so to speak, in the centre of the handle, of which Kaba Kaul, a few miles to the south, forms the butt. In the opposite direction Rabaul, with its deep, well-sheltered harbour and its chain of huge volcanoes—one still active—lies within the inner tip of the sickle-blade. The next morning, accordingly, we awoke to find ourselves, about seven o'clock, at the entrance to Blanche Bay. The long curving line of coast astern was half-veiled in pale blue mists, and one could just make out the position of Herbertshohe by the dim bulk of the *Sydney* lying off the roadstead.

All about us in a great green arc, with the open sea for the chord, swept lofty hills covered from base to skyline with the nodding plumes of coconut-

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palms. Rabaul itself was hidden by a shoulder of one of three great volcanoes that towered threateningly on our right, and directly before us lay a small palm-clad island and two strange masses of volcanic rock, rising, like termite nests in shape, from the dark blue water, the witnesses to a fiery upheaval in some dim period of the island's history. Half a mile ahead on our starboard bow, Matupi, yet another island, on which we could descry a few houses among the trees, with the Red Cross flag flying from a tall flagstaff overhead, nestled in the very shadow of the volcanoes. The interior of the nearest crater was plainly visible from the sea, and the crater walls, blasted and dentated, gave one the impression of some monstrous beast with wide, remorseless jaws, crouching sullenly above the little island. Behind Matupi lay Rabaul.



FRIEDRICH WILHELMSHAFEN FROM THE HOSPITAL.

The *Sumatra* Captured

Accompanied by the *Berrima's* motor-launch, the two steam pinnaces from the Flagship began a systematic sweeping for mines, scouring every nook and cranny with assiduous haste, under the direction of Warrant-officer Ince; a dangerous errand, from which they returned late in the afternoon with the news that the channel was entirely clear.

We were still watching the operations through binoculars, when it was suddenly observed that the *Sydney* was signalling rapidly. In immediate response the *Berrima* and her escort wheeled round and steamed quickly out of the bay; the *Australia*, as she emerged, surprising a small N.D.L. steamer, the *Sumatra*, making her way in. She was promptly captured, and estimated to be worth £15,000. It was soon whispered that there was trouble in the wind, and, as a matter of fact, we had been urgently requested to send

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reinforcements to Kaba Kaul, where fighting had now been in progress for some time.

As we steamed hurriedly past Herbertshohe, we were struck by the number of Red Cross flags flying conspicuously from every house along the shore and on the palm-clad ridges behind. Their object was, of course, to protect the houses from bombardment, and the appearance of the *Sydney*, with her long, evil-looking guns levelled ominously on the town, was certainly calculated to cause the most lively apprehension. Kaba Kaul, farther to the south, revealed itself as a mere village, a few houses, some sheds, and a tiny pier, near which a couple of motor-schooners lay deserted and at anchor in the roadstead.

Immediately on our arrival opposite Kaba Kaul, the boats were lowered and two companies of Naval Reservists, with

Landing at Kaba Kaul

a machine-gun section under Captain Marcus, were sent ashore under Commander Beresford, quickly disappearing amid the dense vegetation, which flourished at the edge of the beach. With them, too, went our Intelligence Officer, Captain Travers, pursued by the envy of every other man on the military side of the expedition.

CHAPTER VII

WHAT HAD HAPPENED—LIEUTENANT BOWEN'S
PARTY—IN AN AMBUSH—CAPTAIN POCKLEY
SHOT—GERMAN PRISONERS—TROOPS LANDED
AT HERBERTSHOHE — BOMBARDMENT
THREATENED

CHAPTER VII

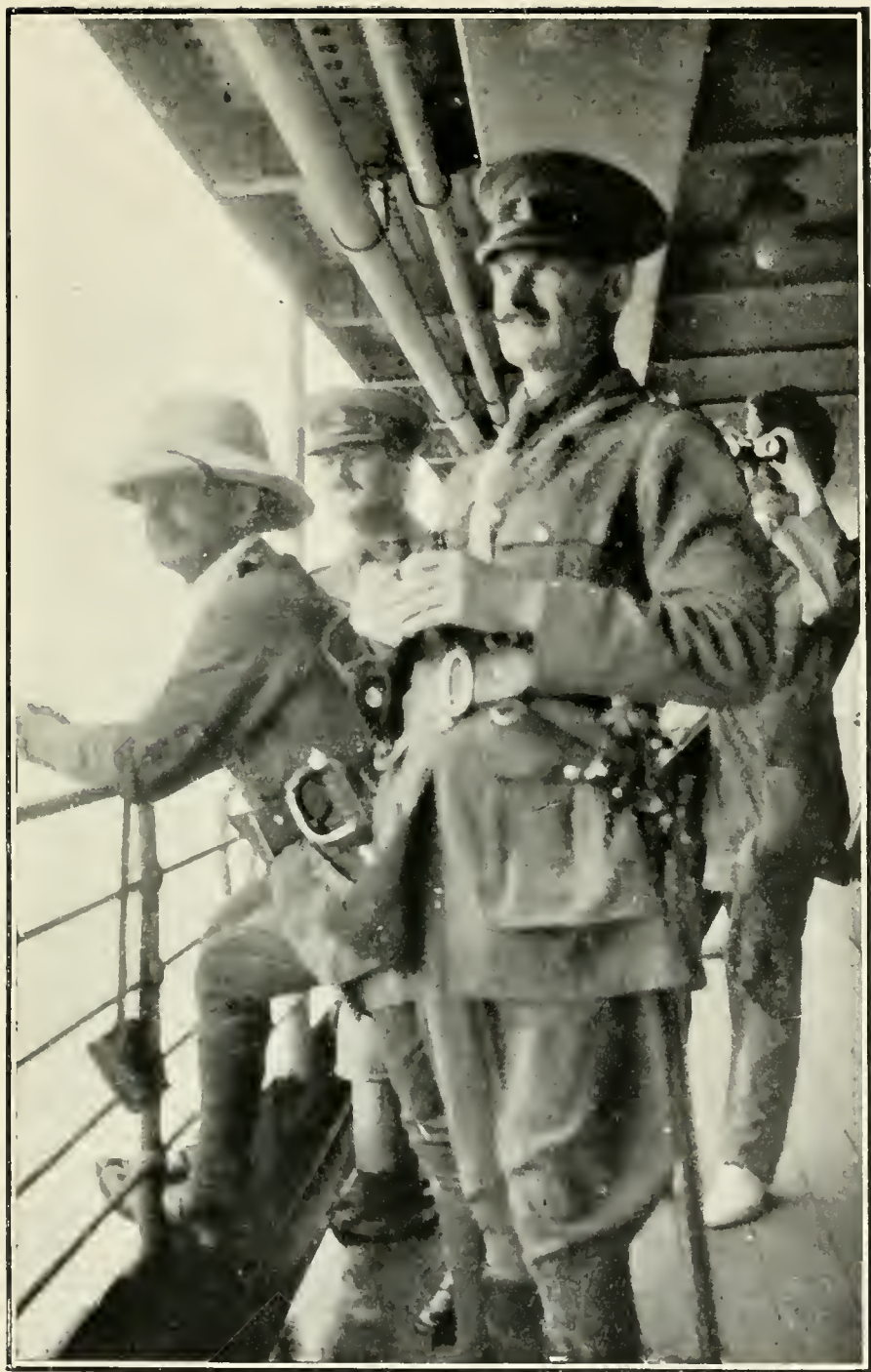
WHAT had happened? was the question on every tongue, but so numerous were the rumours and so preoccupied, naturally, was everybody who was really in a position to say, that it was some time before the excited *Berrima* was in possession of the facts.

Following the plan laid down on the previous evening, the *Sydney* and the two destroyers had proceeded straight to Herbertshohe and Kaba Kaul at an early hour that morning, and, lying in the open roadstead which fronts the two places, landed at each a party of twenty-five of the fifty Naval Reservists who had been transferred with Captain Pockley to the

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Sydney at Port Moresby, with instructions to search for the wireless-station, which was understood to exist somewhere in the locality. The party who were landed at Herbertshohe found their way unopposed; they hoisted the Union Jack on landing, and, proceeding for some distance inland, returned about four in the afternoon to say that no wireless-station near Herbertshohe had been found.

The other party, accompanied by Captain Pockley, of the Army Medical Corps, a quiet, unassuming officer, whose character had endeared him to all his associates, and whose professional qualities had earned the highest opinions from his superior officers in the Army Medical Corps, landed at Kaba Kaul. Lieutenant Bowen, who was in command, had advanced inland from Kaba Kaul, a distance of about two and a half miles, under an irritating fire from invisible



DURING THE ATTACK ON THE GERMAN WIRELESS STATION.

From left to right, Col. Holmes, Col. Watson (O. C. Infantry), Col. Paton (now Commandant at Rabaul), and Capt. Goodsell (Quarter-master), watching the landing operations at Kaba Kaul.

In an Ambush

snipers, who were posted in the tops of the palms, when a volley was suddenly poured into the party, as they turned round one of the numerous bends in the track, from a trench or series of trenches laid across the road.

Several men were hit. A bullet fired by a native concealed in a palm-tree smashed one man's arm. A moment later, shot through the heart, down crashed the native. Shot through the leg, another sailor asked his mate to drag him into shelter beside the road. "Arf a mo," said the preoccupied friend, "I've just got me sights on a nigger." Bang went the rifle, and down tumbled the enemy. The sailor contemplated his work with a beaming smile. "That makes the third!" he exclaimed with satisfaction. "Now then, sonny, I'll fix *you* up!"

Despite such little touches of humour, however, the position of the party was

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by no means to be envied. One of the men soon fell, fatally wounded, and, seeing his orderly, who was not a member of the Army Medical Corps, engaged in carrying him off, Pockley, unselfishly insisted on giving the orderly, for protection, his own brassard, or Red Cross armlet. A moment later he was himself struck down.

The remainder of the party succeeded in holding their ground, though sorely harassed by a galling fire. On either side of the road extended a mass of almost impenetrable scrub, and from the tops of the palms a continuous fire was poured in on the little force. Lieutenant Bowen immediately sent an appeal for reinforcements, which arrived a couple of hours afterwards, nearly every available man from the destroyers hurrying to the scene of action, armed, where possible, with rifles, and when the supply of rifles

Captain Pockley Shot

was exhausted, with axes, pistols, revolvers, or, in short, any weapon that could be commandeered for the occasion. Even the ship's butcher, his apron still tied to his waist and a formidable cleaver in his hand, marched off with the rest, grinning with delight at the prospect of "having a go" at the Germans. Still, however, the resistance at the trenches continued to be stubbornly maintained, and, accordingly, Commander Beresford was landed from the *Berrima* with a force of Naval Reserves, which he dispatched at once to the position.

The boats were hardly away when a motor launch, commandeered by one of the destroyers, came off to the *Berrima*, bearing the almost inanimate bodies of Dr. Pockley and the gallant reservist who had fallen with him. They were still living. The sailor, Petty-officer Williams, died almost immediately on

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reaching the ship, but Pockley lived till about midday, lapsing into unconsciousness towards the end. The bullet, one of the new needle-pointed Mauser pattern, had entered the stomach and turned, the soft butt spreading out mushroom-wise, tearing away part of the spine, and leaving a wound in his back as large as a man's clenched fist. A murmured reference to his mother in Sydney was his last coherent utterance.

The launch also conveyed to us two tall young German officers, a captain and a senior lieutenant in command of the native police, who was feeling particularly disgusted at having fallen into our hands while searching for his own men who had run away. As they refused to give their parole they were first searched, a proceeding which resulted in the discovery of letters regarding the previous visit to Rabaul by the *Australia*

German Prisoners

and the destroyers, and then placed under close arrest. A German sergeant, whose right hand, shot through with several bullets, had been amputated by Pockley on the field, was also brought on board and placed in the hospital. It was then about ten o'clock in the forenoon.

It was now decided, in view of the fact that the wireless station was still being vigorously defended, and reports of heavy losses on the Australian side, including two other naval officers, continued to arrive, to return at once to Herbertshohe and land a strong force to take the enemy in flank. Some anxiety also was felt regarding the twenty-five who had landed there from one of the cruisers early in the morning, and who, up to that moment, had not since been heard of. Accordingly four companies of infantry and one company of Naval Reserves, together with two machine-guns

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and a twelve-pounder field-gun, were landed under Colonel Watson at Herbertshohe, and marched rapidly along the road leading to Kaba Kaul.

A strong screen of skirmishers, linked by connecting files to the vanguard, preceded the main body to obviate any possibility of an ambush, and, despite the intense heat, the parching dust, and the crushing weight of the 83-lb. kit, together with two hundred rounds of ammunition per man, the troops swung down the road between the palm-tree stems with an elasticity and precision that did one good to behold, and kept the glasses fixed upon the long khaki column until the last man had vanished under the shadowy hypostyles of the jungle.

From then onwards there was nothing to do but wait and speculate, while stores and ammunition were hurried ashore, as to the trend of the battle raging un-

Bombardment Threatened

heard and unseen by us in the inscrutable interior. A message was sent at four o'clock by the Admiral to the Acting-Governor of Rabaul, threatening bombardment if the resistance were not ended immediately. The Acting-Governor returned an answer to say that as the Governor was absent in Europe it was not in his power to surrender Rabaul or Herbertshohe, adding, in deprecation of bombardment, that both were entirely unfortified, and that the harbour was quite clear of mines. Later on a message was received from Commander Beresford, informing the Brigadier that the first line of trenches had been captured; he added that he had sent in a flag of truce, demanding surrender.

Hopes rose high. But by eight o'clock at night the position was, apparently, still unchanged, and it was therefore decided that at daybreak the eight 12-inch guns

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of the *Australia* should scour the ridge with shrapnel, while, under cover of the guns, the entire strength of the expedition was to be hurled in a concentrated attack on the position, which, during the long day, had been so gallantly attacked and defended.

CHAPTER VIII

SURRENDER OF WIRELESS - STATION — LIEU-
TENANT BOWEN'S STORY—REINFORCEMENTS
TO THE RESCUE—A HOT FIRE—DEATH OF
ELWELL — ARRIVAL OF MACHINE - GUNS —
TRENCHES SURRENDER—A PLUCKY TRIO—
AN AMBUSH—A NARROW ESCAPE—BITA PAKA

CHAPTER VIII

THE news that the wireless-station had at length surrendered, and that it had, therefore, become unnecessary to shell the ridge as previously determined, was spread on board the *Berrima* in the small hours of the morning, and by nine o'clock the head of a dusty column, debouching from among the palm-trees and scrub, announced that Colonel Watson's force was already beginning to arrive on its return march to Herbertshohe. Orders had been given that, should the force not succeed before nightfall in establishing communications with Commander Beresford, it was to return immediately.

As a matter of fact, the vanguard did

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come into touch with the force under Commander Beresford just about dusk, and from them it was learned that the wireless-station was already in our hands. The story of how the wireless-station was taken is, in its own way, almost epic. It was not till three or four days later that we were able to hear it in all its abundance of detail.

“ We hadn’t advanced a mile,” so Bowen told me afterwards, “ before the natives were firing on us continually from the trees. It is devilish country to fight in—much worse than the South African guerilla warfare ; for, while the road is clear enough, on each side is a jungle of thorny palms, coconuts, long grass, and great hooked lawyer-vines, impossible to see through for a yard ahead and exceedingly difficult to penetrate. I ordered my men to advance by slipping in and out of the undergrowth beside the road

Lieutenant Bowen's Story

—a slow business. I suppose it took us about two hours to do a mile and a half. Well, my right flank got separated from me; they had reached a point where it was impossible to go farther, and they had to come back and round to the left to reach me. In this way I was really ahead of part of my own fire. They brought me a German whom they had wounded and captured. I put him in a pit in front of me, and ordered him to call out to the others ahead to surrender, and that we had a large force. Nothing like bluff! He hesitated for a moment, then, seeing that I was going to shoot him if he refused, he yelled out to his crowd to surrender, as it was hopeless to resist. The next moment out rushed, in surprise, two officers, followed by a native, from a trench only a little way ahead on the right, quite impossible to see for the undergrowth.

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“ We collared the nearest, a Captain Wuckert, but the other, as he came nearer, evidently realized that there were only a few of us there. He called out, ‘ I’ve been trapped ! ’ and started to bolt, but we fired at him, and he stopped. We sent the three back to the base under escort. All of a sudden one of my men caught sight of a fourth German, just to the left of me, in a trench, in the act of taking aim. He had him out of that with the bayonet, and was going to finish him, but I stopped him. I put the German in front of me and started to advance, but the niggers knew the difference between us by the green badge on his arm, and the next moment I felt as if a sledge-hammer had struck me on the head.

“ It was of the most vital importance,” he added, “ that we caught those officers as we did. If they had got away, know-

Reinforcements to the Rescue

ing how few we were, we would have been killed or captured first, and then the rest of us as we came up.

“Poor Pockley!” he went on. “He was a brave man. He dressed the arm of the German whose hand had been blown off, and then insisted upon going back to help one of our fellows who was badly hit. I could see that the natives were firing on the Red Cross, and I would not allow him to go back, but as he insisted I made him take three men. You know how he died.”

Bowen, indeed, had an extraordinary escape from death. The bullet pierced his helmet, striking him high above the temple, and tearing a furrow through the scalp right to the back of his head.

The first batch of reinforcements was placed by Commander Beresford, who himself remained at a base near the shore, in charge of Lieutenant-Commander

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Elwell, R.N., with Lieutenant Gilham, R.N.R., of Sydney, who had also seen service in China during the Boxer crisis, as second in command. They at first proceeded down the open road in column of fours, under the guidance of Chief Gunner Yeo; but in view of the fact that the troops were a conspicuous mark for the unseen snipers, who kept up a desultory fire almost from the outset, Gilham suggested to his senior officer that the men should be ordered to advance, taking cover in the bush on each side. Elwell, however, vetoed the suggestion: it would, he objected, retard their progress too much, and their object was to reach Lieutenant Bowen as quickly as possible.

To guard against the possibility of an ambush, scouts were now thrown out on each side of the road, but so dense was the vegetation that they were unable to

A Hot Fire

keep ahead of the column. A hasty consultation resulted in a scheme whereby six men, continually renewed from the head of the column, were sent in front as a patrol, throwing out scouts as they went, who, in turn, again fell in in the rear of the advancing main body.

The force thus proceeded for another half-hour or more. Meanwhile, the sniping was becoming more and more close and persistent, and several of the men had had very narrow escapes. Lieutenant Gilham was in the act of approaching Elwell to suggest that they now extend and advance under cover of the bush, when, with a sudden cry a private, by the name of Courteney, fell, shot dead, within a few feet of the two officers. The Australian soldier—or sailor—has, above every other quality, that of acting on his own initiative. Before either of the two officers could so much as turn

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round to give the order, every man in the column had disappeared into the shelter of the surrounding jungle.

It was now obviously necessary to advance in extended order. Gilham with the left half company, lost sight of Elwell and his men almost immediately, for the thick bush hid everything only a few feet away, but his communications were maintained by connecting links, nor were the two bodies so far apart that he was unable to hear distinctly the voices of the others, and the crashing of the vegetation as they advanced. That a more or less strong force of the enemy was between them and Bowen's party was clear, for the sniping had developed into a steady clamour of rifle fire, and on every side the invisible bullets "pinged" and plunged viciously through the leaves. Still, they advanced, swearing under their breath, and firing as best they could at an enemy

Surprising Serenity

that could not be seen. Moffatt, one of the men, dropped within a few minutes; another A.B., Skillen by name, followed shortly afterwards.

About one hundred yards farther on the advancing left half company received the surprise of their lives. A little clearing opened out before them, and in the open space they perceived, with an amazement too deep for words, about a dozen of the sailors from H.M.A.S. *Yarra*, in white duck uniforms, wandering serenely about and gazing vaguely at the tops of the trees to see where the firing was coming from. Except that they carried revolvers, which, by the way, they had not used, they might, for all the perturbation they displayed, have been entomologists searching for butterflies. Why none of them had been so much as wounded, considering the mark they presented to the enemy, is a problem which

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suggests that the age of miracles is still with us.

Suddenly, to his surprise, for he could see no sign of the enemy, Gilham heard Elwell call out, "Fix bayonets!" The next moment a hearty cheer told Gilham that the right half of the company had charged. Of Gilham's men only seven were to be seen, the rest being hidden by the jungle. He was, however, about to give the order to charge, when he came unexpectedly upon the men they had set out to relieve. The first thing he saw was a German soldier guarded by two Australians; Bowen himself was lying almost insensible, his head roughly bandaged and his face covered with flies and blood, under cover of a fallen tree. Lieutenant Hill, with Midshipman Buller, a sturdy young officer, whose courage and energy were to meet with many demands during the long day, were directing the

Death of Elwell

attack, or, rather, the defence, for so few were their numbers that it was all they could do to hold their position in face of the fire directed upon them literally from every side at once.

The fate of Lieutenant-Commander Elwell became known shortly afterwards. Springing out into the open road, within about sixty yards of the German trenches, he waved his sword and called upon his men to charge. At such close range, and so entirely exposed, he presented a target not to be missed, and he fell dead instantly, hit in several places. It was now about three o'clock in the afternoon, and the three officers, Gilham, Hill, and Bullen, were debating as to their next move, when the arrival on the scene of Lieutenant Bond with the second batch of reinforcements dispatched by Commander Beresford, including Captain Travers, Intelligence Officer to the Staff, and Cap-

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tain Marcus with the machine-guns, produced an unexpected change in the position of affairs.

As was afterwards learned, the native troops, by which the enemy's trenches were mostly manned, had been steadily losing heart. Many of them had already been killed or wounded, and their commanding officer was experiencing greater and greater difficulty in inducing his men to expose themselves above the level of the trenches. The arrival of the machine-guns acted as the deciding factor. The enemy's fire first slackened, and then stopped entirely, and suddenly a white flag was hoisted, and a German officer emerged, who was met by Captain Travers and Lieutenant Bond. The officer explained that his name was Lieutenant Kempf, that he was in command of the line of trenches immediately in front, and that he desired to surrender. Travers and

Surrender of the Trenches

Bond, accompanied by Lieutenant Kempf, accordingly went forward with an interpreter, and took possession of the trenches, making prisoners of all their occupants, with their weapons, all of whom were at once dispatched to the base.

This done, the two officers, accompanied by Lieutenant Kempf, the interpreter, half a company of Naval Reserves, and Captain Marcus with the machine-guns, advanced along the road with a white flag, until they met the second line of trenches, about six and a half miles inland. Their position, meanwhile, was of some danger, for the Germans in the neighbourhood were in considerable force, and it is a matter for wonder that the little party was not encountered and attacked by superior numbers before they had gone very far. Good fortune, however, favoured them, and they met nothing more formidable than various dispatch-

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bearers coming down the road with dispatches for their prisoner, all of whom were quietly disarmed and their missives pocketed by Captain Travers.

The second line of trenches, at the order of Lieutenant Kempf, likewise surrendered, and all appeared to be progressing smoothly, when suddenly one of the Germans was seen to spring to his feet and make a dash for the bend in the road leading to the wireless-station. As he paid no attention to commands to halt, he was fired at, when immediately a scattered fire was opened from the trees ahead, despite the white flag, whose meaning the natives apparently did not understand. One of the men was shot in the leg, and at the same moment the newly made prisoners bolted for the bush in a wild effort to escape. About eighteen, including a German officer, were shot in the attempt, but the remainder escaped,

A Narrow Escape

including the German who had primarily caused the trouble. In the midst of the excitement Travers had as narrow an escape from death as a man can well experience. A German non-commissioned officer, who afterwards surrendered, was concealed in the bushes about five yards from him. A first-class shot, he took careful aim at him, and was about to pull the trigger when the red gorgets, actually denoting a member of the staff, raised a doubt in his mind as to whether the captain were a medical officer. He gave Travers the benefit of the doubt, and fired instead at a sailor some distance away. It was not till nearly a week later that Captain Travers learned of the accident to which he owes his life.

The German lieutenant, however, at the pressing invitation of Captain Travers and an automatic pistol, shouted to the unseen sharpshooters to cease fire at once, an

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order which had the desired effect. All rifles found in the trenches being effectively destroyed, the Naval Reserves and machine-gun section were left to hold the position, while Travers and Bond, with only their prisoner and the interpreter, Private Eitel, a well-known Sydney journalist, who has temporarily forsaken the pen for the bayonet, decided, after deliberation, to push on alone under the white flag, capturing on the way a non-commissioned officer on horseback, and a cyclist with dispatches for Lieutenant Kempf. The latter was placed on his parole, and went ahead on his bicycle to instruct the German sentries not to fire on the party. On his return, they moved on another two miles, and accepted the surrender of a German patrol of nineteen natives, commanded by a non-commissioned officer, who were then left to enjoy their evening meal in peace, promising

A Plucky Trio

to follow the party to the wireless-station at Bita Paka afterwards, and give themselves up. The dauntless trio, still with their prisoner, then marched on once more through the rapidly gathering darkness—it was nearly six in the evening—and finally came out on to a tongue of land, approachable from one side only. On three sides the position fell away in sheer cliffs, unscalably high, while well-placed trenches commanded the sole approach, the ground in front of which had been carefully divested of cover. At the end of the ridge was the famous station itself, its two huge poles towering into the night. The trenches, however, were unoccupied, and going boldly forward the three proceeded to seize the station and its astonished occupants. Besides about twenty-six natives, seven German wireless officials were found, quietly seated at dinner in complete ignor-

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ance of the turn events had taken. With a philosophic shrug, they all surrendered without resistance, giving their word of honour not to escape.

In relating his experiences afterwards, Travers could not sufficiently express his admiration of the coolness with which Lieutenant Bond behaved throughout. "He strolled along the road," said Travers, "as though we were out for a picnic, talking about the various plants we were passing at the side of the road. He's an enthusiastic botanist. There he was, discoursing on lepidoptera and such, with the imminent risk at every moment of being picked off by some nigger up a tree. 'Splendid' is the only word I can imagine for his coolness. I don't mind telling you I quite expected never to come back. I wasn't afraid, somehow—not till it was all over; the reaction came next day. At the time I just felt that if I

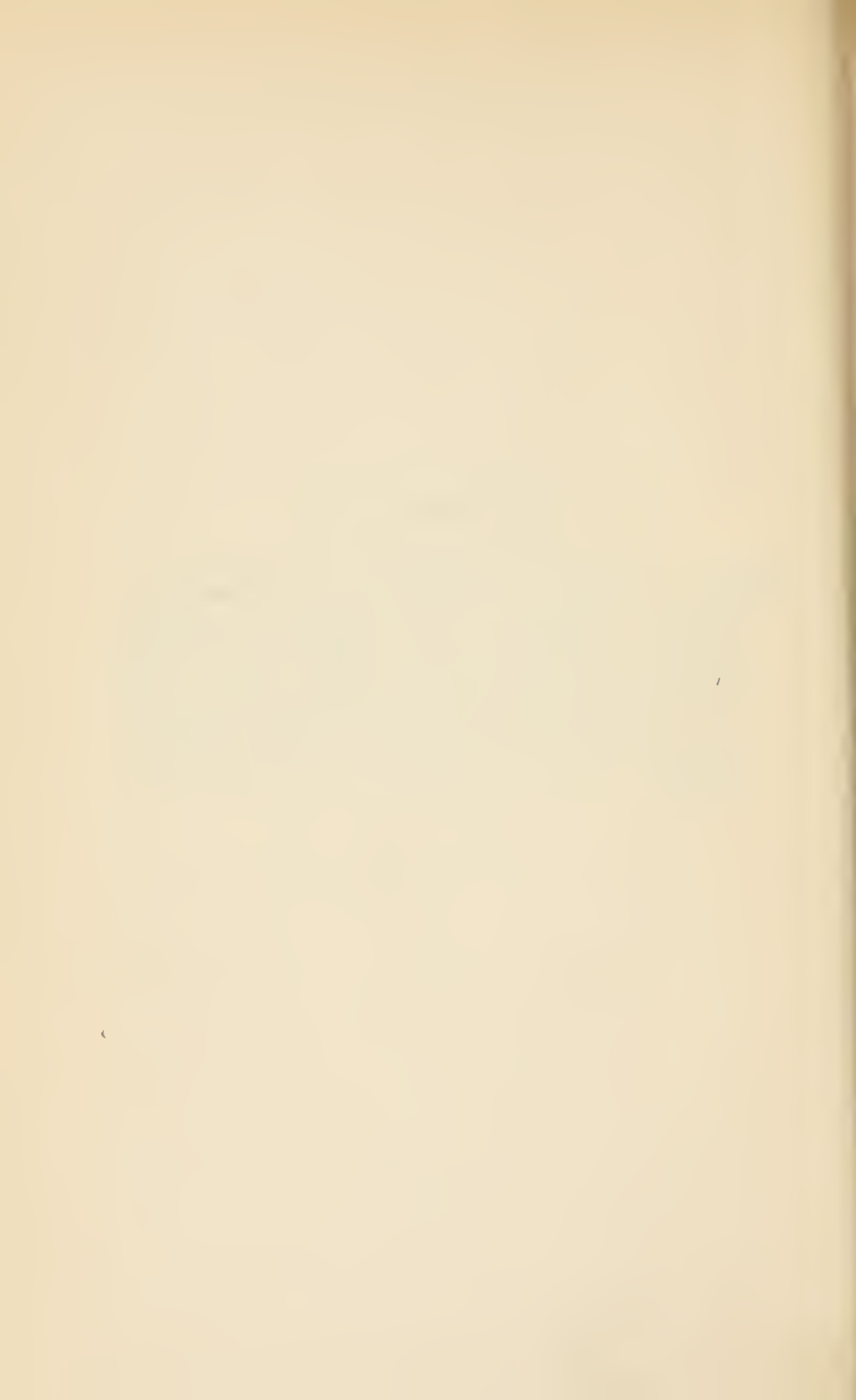
Stoical Calmness

was going to pass out, well, I'd pass out, and there wasn't any use in worrying about it."

As a matter of fact, Bond told me confidentially afterwards that he considered Travers "the pluckiest chap I've ever met."

CHAPTER IX

ENEMY AT TOMA—GARRISON AT HERBERTS-
HOHE — LANDING AT RABAU — GERMAN
FLAGS — HOISTING THE UNION JACK — THE
PROCLAMATION—PIDGIN ENGLISH—ADDRESS
TO THE NATIVES—MARTIAL LAW—GENERAL
WYLDE



CHAPTER IX

THE capture of the wireless-station and the dismantling of the elaborate plant had by no means ended the struggle for supremacy in New Britain. The seat of Government had some time before been transferred from Rabaul to a health resort named Toma, inland from Herbertshohe, and a strong force of the enemy were now understood to be falling back in that direction. We postponed our dealings with them till later, and leaving a strong garrison at Herbertshohe, in charge of Commander Beresford, we steamed up to Rabaul late in the afternoon of September 11th, and were confronted by the curious spectacle of a number of English ships, including

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ships of war, lying at anchor in the harbour, and on the other hand, no fewer than three German flags flying under the very noses of the fleet. Four companies of infantry were landed under Colonel Paton, and the occupation of the town effected without any resistance more serious than a certain amount of sniping, both real and imagined, on the outposts. As for the flags, they were promptly hauled down by the Provost-Marshal, Lieutenant, now Captain Ravenscroft.

On the following Sunday afternoon the ceremony of hoisting the flag was performed with all due solemnity. At a quarter to three the troops formed in hollow square on the parade-ground, surrounding the flagstaff.

The population had been previously warned of the ceremony about to take place, and, whether reluctantly or not, every one was present, from the Burgo-

Hoisting the Union Jack

master and other notables in spotless ducks, down to the natives, looking highly picturesque with their red loin-cloths and rich black skins. Chinese smirked amiably in the crowd, urbane Japanese rubbed their hands with evident satisfaction, while not a few Japanese women were to be seen in full array of kimonos, bright obis, and butterfly-tinted paper parasols. Even a sprinkling of Malays, heavy-lipped and lustrous-eyed, watched with keen curiosity the progress of events.

At ten minutes to three a general salute announced the arrival of the Brigadier and staff, a similar salute, a few minutes later, greeting the entry of Admiral Patey and his officers on the scene. The A.D.C., Lieutenant Holmes, stepped forward to the flagstaff, and laid his hand upon the halliards; then, at a word from the Brigadier, the little knot of bunting ran briskly up the staff and broke into a

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triumphant flood of colour, the red, white, and blue of the Union Jack, at the summit, amid a thunder of guns from the ships firing the royal salute. The singing of the National Anthem by the whole of the troops present, led by the Brigadier, followed. One has heard the old, familiar, hackneyed tune vulgarized by the reek of public dinners, and rendered momentarily even petty in one's estimation by its obtrusion at petty affairs; but until one has heard it echoing from the lips of a body of men, unconquerable in death, as at the sinking of the *Birkenhead*, or triumphant upon an enemy's soil, even in so comparatively small an instance as here at Rabaul, one may safely be said never truly to have heard it at all. It is indescribable; let that suffice.

The proclamation, subjoined, was read by Major Heritage as the last cheers for the King died away.

The Proclamation

G. R.

PROCLAMATION.

PROCLAMATION on behalf of his Majesty George the Fifth, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and of the Dominions Overseas, King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India,

By Colonel William Holmes, D.S.O., V.D., Brigadier Commanding his Majesty's Naval and Military Expeditionary Force.

WHEREAS the forces under my command have occupied the Island of New Britain; and whereas upon such occupation the authority of the German Government has ceased to exist therein; and whereas it has become essential to provide for proper government of the said colony, and for the protection of the lives and property of the peaceful inhabitants thereof,

Now I, William Holmes, Companion of the Distinguished Service Order, Colonel in his Majesty's Forces, Brigadier Commanding the aforesaid Expeditionary Force, do hereby declare and proclaim as follows:—

I. From and after the date of these presents

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the Island of New Britain and its dependencies are held by me in military occupation in the name of his Majesty the King.

2. War will be waged only against the armed forces of the German Empire and its allies in the present war.

3. The lives and private property of peaceful inhabitants will be protected, and the laws and customs of the colony will remain in force so far as is consistent with the military situation.

4. If the needs of the troops demand it, private property may be requisitioned. Such property will be paid for at its fair value.

5. Certain officials of the late Government may be retained, if they so desire, at their usual salaries.

6. In return for such protection it is the duty of all inhabitants to behave in an absolutely peaceful manner, to carry on their ordinary pursuits so far as is possible, to take no part directly or indirectly in any hostilities, to abstain from communication with his Majesty's enemies, and to render obedience to such orders as may be promulgated.

7. All male inhabitants of European origin are required to take the oath of neutrality prescribed, at the garrison headquarters, and all firearms, ammunition, and war material in the possession or

Pidgin English

control of inhabitants are to be surrendered forthwith, as is also all public property of the late Government.

8. Non-compliance with the terms of this Proclamation, and disobedience of such orders as from time to time may be promulgated, will be dealt with according to military law.

9. It is hereby notified that this Proclamation takes effect in the whole Island of New Britain and its dependencies from this date.

Given at Government House, Rabaul, this twelfth day of September, 1914.

(Sgd.) WILLIAM HOLMES,
Brigadier Commanding.

Witness (Sgd.) FRANCIS HERITAGE, MAJOR,
Brigade Major.

GOD SAVE THE KING !

Afterwards a separate proclamation was read to the natives. This remarkable document is well worth recording in full, if only for the curious fact which it reveals that in a German colony pidgin English is the only medium of communi-

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cation between the Germans and their subjects :—

All Boys belongina all place, you savvy big feller Master he come now ; he new feller Master, he strong feller too much, you look him all ship stop place ; he small feller ship belongina him ; plenty more big feller he stop place belongina him, now he come here he take him all place ; he look out good you feller, now he like you feller, look out good along him. Supposing other feller, Master he been speak you, "You no work along new feller Master," he gammon. Supposing you work good with this new feller Master, he look out good along with you, he look out you get plenty good feller kaikai [food] ; he no fighting black feller boy along nothing.

You look him new feller flag ; you savvy him, he belong British, English ; he more better than other feller ; supposing you been making paper before this new feller Master come, you finish time belongina him first, finish time belongina him you like make him new feller paper long man belongina new feller Master he look out good along with you, he give you more money and more good feller kaikai. Supposing you no look out good along him, he cross too much.

Address to the Natives

British, English, new feller Master he like him black feller man too much, he like you all the same you picanin along him. You got black feller Master belongina you, you look out along with him, he all the same Police Master, he look out place along with you, you no fight other feller black man other feller place, you no kaikai man, you no steal Mary belongina other feller man. Me finish talk along with you now; by-an-bye ship belongina new feller Master he come and look out place along with you; you look him man belongina place belongina you, you speak him all the same. Me been talk along with you now, now you give three feller cheers belongina new feller Master.

It may be added that the cheers were given with surprising vigour.

The following order was also issued, both in English and in German, by Colonel Holmes, subsequent to the ceremony, and posted conspicuously throughout the town :—

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THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT OF NEW BRITAIN.

ADMINISTRATION ORDER NO. 1

BY

COLONEL W. HOLMES, D.S.O., V.D.,
BRIGADIER COMMANDING,

11th September, 1914.

1. All inhabitants are to submit to the directions of the officers of the occupying force.

2. Inhabitants are forbidden to be out of doors any night between the hours of 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. without special permits.

3. Inhabitants are forbidden to hold or attend meetings.

4. No newspaper, circular, or printed matter is to be printed, published, or issued without permission.

5. No spirituous or intoxicating liquor shall be manufactured or sold without permission.

6. Descriptions of all privately owned boats and vehicles are to be handed in at once to the provost-marshal of the occupying force.

7. It is forbidden to injure or cut the telegraph

Martial Law

or telephone lines. If the telegraph or telephone lines are injured, and the offender cannot be discovered, a fine will be imposed on the inhabitants of the neighbourhood where the damage was inflicted.

(Sgd.) FRANCIS HERITAGE, MAJOR,
Brigade Major.

A march of the troops through the streets of Rabaul followed the ceremonies, and conspicuous in the procession were the native police, a fine body of men, armed with obsolete Mausers, who had been found at Rabaul on our arrival. They offered no resistance, and were placed under the command of Captain Twynam and Lieutenant G. Manning. This formal parade, an impressive spectacle, I was watching with much interest from a dog-cart, which, in company with the official photographer, Private John P. Davis, in normal circumstances a black-and-white artist on the staff of the *Sydney*

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Bulletin, when I was accosted by an elderly gentleman, whom one would have recognized as an English officer had one encountered him in Central Thibet. Learning that I was a war correspondent for the *Herald*, he said: "I should be glad if you could send a cable to the *Times* for me to let my friends in England know that I am safe. People in England will be anxious about me, knowing that I am here." He proved to be Lieutenant-General Wylde, R.M.L.I., who, together with his wife, was detained here at the outbreak of the war, while paying a visit to his daughter, who is married to Captain Moeller, commanding the Governor's yacht, the *Komet*.

CHAPTER X

ALARM AT HERBERTSHOHE — A LUDICROUS
INCIDENT — COLONEL WATSON'S MARCH —
PARLEY WITH THE ENVOY—TOMA CAPTURED
—NEGOTIATIONS BEGUN—ARRIVAL OF THE
MONTCALM — SURRENDER SIGNED — THE *AEI*

CHAPTER X

SCARCELY had the troops returned to the *Berrima* after the ceremony on Sunday, when an urgent message was received from Commander Beresford at Herbertshohe, informing the Brigadier that reinforcements were needed immediately. The boats were in the water in four minutes, and in twenty-six minutes two companies of infantry, under Colonel Watson, had been hurried on board H.M.A.S. *Encounter*, and were on their way to Herbertshohe.

The speculation at Rabaul as to what was happening at Herbertshohe was only equalled by the amusement which resulted on learning the facts. During the

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afternoon a party of twenty men had been dispatched to bring in a broken-down motor-wagon, which had been left about a mile and a half out along the Toma road. About an hour after their departure some scouts burst in upon headquarters with the terrible tidings that they had heard heavy firing in the direction which the party had taken, and had plainly sighted a strong force of native troops, commanded by Germans, advancing upon Herbertshohe. In the face of this information it is not surprising that Commander Beresford asked for assistance, but the troops on the *'Encounter'* were somewhat disgusted on their arrival to find that the "heavy firing" had been already discovered to be the crackling of some burning bamboos—a sound which actually resembles rifle fire very strongly—while the "strong force" consisted of a gang of native coolies being led to

A Ludicrous Incident

their work by a couple of priests from the Catholic Mission.

From this amusing episode arose one of the most brilliant feats of the campaign. The troops were landed from the *Encounter*, together with a 12-pounder field - gun, and Colonel Watson was instructed by the Brigadier to seize the opportunity for striking a decisive blow.

It was decided to march to Toma, whither the Acting-Governor had shifted the seat of control previous to the expedition's arrival. Fortunately a map of the country inland from Herbertshohe had been discovered in the Government offices, and it was arranged that the *Encounter* should shell a series of positions ahead of the troops, so as to clear the way. The bombardment accordingly began at daylight, and there can be no doubt that the moral effect was tremendous. " They

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dropped their shells right into the back yards of the positions we marked out," said Colonel Watson, enthusiastically, afterwards, in describing the aim of the gunners on the cruiser.

At intervals along the line of march the advancing column came upon traces of the work done by the warship—great gashes torn in the ground, palms cut down and levelled as though a small tornado had passed over the place. Shell-fire to cover the advance of troops has a value entirely apart from and superior to the number of casualties inflicted. The roar of the guns and the succeeding concussion, deafening, heart-shaking, filling the air with destruction and terror, as the lyddite bursts close at hand, spreading its poisonous yellow fumes for thirty yards in all directions, has a demoralizing effect which is quite immeasurable in terms of actual dead or wounded. In

Colonel Watson's March

the present instance the enemy retreated without even attempting to offer resistance, destroying the mines that they had planted along the road.

Toma, a little sanatorium, pleasantly situated among the hills, consisted of a couple of accommodation houses about nine and three-quarter miles inland from Herbertshohe. The troops left Herbertshohe early in the morning, while it was yet fairly cool, but as the day wore on the full rays of a tropical sun poured down upon the column, which was burdened with supplies for three days, together with two hundred rounds of ammunition per man, with relentless ferocity.

Occasionally the route lay through a plantation, generally of coconuts, on one occasion of rubber-trees, the shade of whose broad, dark green leaves afforded a welcome relief. The long, winding road was

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graded so gently that at times it was only possible to realize that an ascent was being made when one came out on to some point commanding a backward view of the valley below, where the troops had passed half an hour before, and was covered, like every road in the island, nearly ankle-deep with heavy, white dust that rose in a blinding, choking cloud from the tramping feet, and soon emptied the water-bottles lifted continually to moisten the dry lips. On either side of the road gloomed the shadowy, green depths of bamboo and palm and vine, cruelly fanged, forming an impenetrable screen from which at every moment a tempest of bullets might be hurled upon the wearied ranks.

Suddenly, about half-way to Toma, the vanguard halted. A wave of excitement shuddered its way to calm down the snake-like length of the column. An

Parley with the Envoy

envoy with a white flag had appeared in front of the advancing spray of scouts. He bore a message from the Acting-Governor to Colonel Watson, to the effect that his Excellency could not recognize the occupation of the capital in the fact that the flag had been hoisted at Rabaul, since the seat of Government had been transferred a month previously to Toma. Colonel Watson replied, with the brevity of an epigram, that he intended to sleep at Toma that night.

The envoy shrugged his shoulders.

"What good will that do you?" he inquired. "We will move the Government to Baining," a place considerably farther inland.

"Very good," retorted Colonel Watson, "we'll follow you to Baining."

"It is of no consequence," replied the envoy, looking nevertheless somewhat nonplussed; "we can go to Pondo."

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Pondo is on the opposite side of the island.

“Then we’ll chase you to Pondo,” answered the Colonel, who was growing tired of a discussion carried on under a blazing sun.

The envoy this time was obviously embarrassed. “But you cannot,” he stammered; “you cannot do that. It is impossible. You have not supplies.”

“Oh, yes, we have,” replied the Colonel grimly; “we have plenty with us, and we can get lots more if necessary. Tell his Excellency that he had better meet me at once and surrender. It will save both time and trouble.”

After some demur the envoy, one at least of whose objects was, it would appear, to gain time, proposed that Colonel Watson should wait where he was while he conveyed the Colonel’s message to his master and returned with his

A Tropical Downpour

reply. To this proposition, which would have entailed a four hours' delay, while the enemy possibly were digging trenches, the Colonel returned an unhesitating refusal, and the envoy accordingly departed.

Again the march was resumed, with parched throats and blistering feet. But the force had scarcely started when the clouds, which had meantime been sullenly gathering, suddenly poured down a perfect deluge of rain. The dusty, sun-baked men turned their faces to the sky, and felt a new life course through their veins as the water poured in streams down their bodies.

In a few moments every one was not merely wet, but literally soaked to the skin. Men filled their empty bottles in ten seconds; they caught the rain in helmets or banana leaves, and drank in great gulps. Their boots squelched water at every step, as though they had been

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fording a stream. So thick and heavy was the downpour that the entire horizon was blotted out as though by a curtain of steel. This truly tropical rain-storm continued for two hours with practically unabated violence, and the rain was still falling in torrential masses when, about three o'clock, a vague blur through the mists on the summit of a low hill told the men that the object of the march was at length within their reach.

Up to this point, save for a few shots fired at some small parties of armed natives sighted on two occasions at some distance ahead, the march had been entirely unopposed. But now, as the column wound its way round the hill, and while Colonel Watson was already reassuring the alarmed proprietor of the sanatorium above, what appeared to be a fairly considerable body of troops showed itself indistinctly on an opposite



AFter THE CAPTURE OF TOMA.

Dr. Haber, Acting Governor (in front), and Rittmeister Von Klewitz, Commander of the German Forces (behind), arriving at Garrison Headquarters, Herbertshohe, to confer with Col. Holmes regarding surrender.

Negotiations Begun

ridge through the vertical masses of the rain.

At the word of command the men who had hauled the 12-pounder field-gun up the long slope from Herbertshohe swung her smartly into position, and with a flash and a roar two charges of shrapnel were launched against the ridge. The enemy, if enemy they were, made no reply, disappearing as swiftly as they had come, and after waiting till four o'clock on the chance of a message from the Governor, and to give the troops a much-needed rest, the force began its return to Herbertshohe. At about half-past five an envoy galloped up to the rearguard, with a message for Colonel Watson, to say that the Acting-Governor would come into Herbertshohe at eleven o'clock on the following morning to confer with the Brigadier.

It was not until late in the evening

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that the column filed back into Herbertshohe, weary with their march of nineteen and a half miles, but triumphant and jubilant at the success of their mission and the consciousness of work well done.

On the following morning the Brigadier and the brigade staff departed for Herbertshohe. A conference of three and a half hours ended in a suspension of hostilities being agreed upon until noon on Thursday, pending a second consultation. An unexpected touch of drama was lent to the negotiations by the arrival of the French flagship, *Montcalm*, with Admiral Hugent on board.

At about half-past eleven on Thursday a scout rode in on a bicycle and announced that the Acting-Governor had reached the outposts. A swift order, and the guard of honour drawn up outside headquarters, once the Herbertshohe post-office, sprang to attention.

Surrender Signed

Down the dusty road, fringed with the lithe, feathery palms, through which gleamed panels of amethyst-coloured sea, appeared a little cloud of dust, a group of horses, a white flag.

“Steady there!” hissed the sergeant; “eyes front! Don’t lean forward!” as the guard turned instinctively, like every one else, to catch a glimpse of the man who had opposed to us, unseen, the armed authority of the Emperor.

The long line of rifles leapt to the “Present!” the officers flashed their swords from the scabbards, held them for a moment before their faces, and dropped the points to earth in a general salute, as, accompanied by the commandant, Captain von Klewitz, a tall, soldierly officer, with the blue-and-white shoulder-straps and gold “O” of Queen Olga’s Regiment, the Acting-Governor, a short, closely knit figure, whose black moustache

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and gold-rimmed glasses scarcely veiled the somewhat wistful mouth and eyes of a thinker rather than a man of action, swung off his horse and disappeared among the little group of officers on the veranda. There was, I fancied, more than a hint of melancholy, half-ironical, half-bewildered, in the expression of those dark, introspective eyes, as he emerged at the end of an hour, the capitulation signed, and noted again the general salute that signalled his departure.

The exultation shared by every one in the expedition at the successful termination to the Brigadier's negotiations was clouded by a rumour regarding the *AEI*, which, at first made light of, darkened within the next forty-eight hours into the blackness of certainty. On the afternoon of September 15th, the same afternoon on which Colonel Holmes held his first conference with Dr. Haber, the sub-

The Tragedy of the *AE I*

marine, which had been dispatched by Admiral Patey for patrol duty on the previous evening, was sighted off Gazelle Point, south of Kaba Kaul, heading in the direction of Rabaul. She was never seen again.

The tragedy of the *AE I* is the first loss that the Australian Navy has sustained, and its magnitude seems all the grimmer for the atmosphere of mystery which surrounds it.

A strange patch of oil floating on the quiet surface of the water, a nameless schooner, with a gun-mounting from which the gun was missing, discovered on the coast in flames and sinking—these are the only clues we possess to the manner in which the *AE I* came to her end, and they are by no means conclusive.

Whether she was actually sunk by a shot from the enemy, whether an unseen pinnacle of coral ripped open her plates,

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or the pumps refused to do their work in bringing the vessel again to the surface after a dive, will probably remain for ever unknown.

There are those who, unable to believe that the *AE1* was destroyed by hostile agency, feel that the bitterest circumstance in the disaster lies in the thought that those on board of her died before they had been able to strike a single blow against the enemy. They have, no doubt, some reason on their side.

But though Lieutenant Besant, her commander, and his companions perished without the firing of a single shot, the fact that their death lacked the qualities of the spectacular detracts no whit from its nobility or its example. They obeyed their orders, and they died in that obedience.

They gave their lives for their King and for the Empire as surely and as un-

The Tragedy of the *AE 1*

hesitatingly as though the *AE 1* had sunk, bows toward the enemy, rent and shattered from stem to stern beneath a crashing rain of shells.

CHAPTER XI

SURRENDER OF GERMAN TROOPS — THEIR APPEARANCE — NATIVE SOLDIERY — RESERVISTS FROM NEW GUINEA — TERMS OF SURRENDER — FEELING AGAINST RESISTANCE — ARREST OF GERMAN OFFICIALS — DIFFICULTIES OF ADMINISTRATION — WHAT WE LEARNED FROM THE GERMANS — OVER-ZEALOUS SENTRIES

CHAPTER XI

A GROUP of officers, gathered around Commander Beresford and Brigade - Major Heritage, consulted their watches from time to time, upon the veranda of headquarters at Herbertshohe. The guard of honour opposite, commanded by Major Martin, blinked their eyes in the glare, turning every now and then to cast an expectant glance down the road to Toma.

An orderly pedalled in on a bicycle, with a message for the garrison commander. The officer, waiting patiently in the dust, gave a brief command, and the line of men behind him stiffened abruptly to attention. Down the road the head of a marching column swung into sight,

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rifle on shoulder, the red lava-lavas of the black troops gleaming through the white dust-clouds in picturesque contrast to the khaki of the thirty-five Germans who came first.

As they halted, turned, and fell into two lines, directly opposite the guard of soldiers and naval reserves presenting arms on the other side of the road, it was hard, indeed, to realize that these men were now prisoners of war, and still harder to comprehend exactly why. One looked in vain for signs of defeat. Neat, well-armed, jaunty of bearing, they might, to all appearance, have just marched in as victors, instead of for the purpose of giving themselves up. And the perfection of the drill displayed, not only by the whites, but by the black soldiery, one hundred and twenty strong, was a thing to make seasoned soldiers open their eyes with admiration and amazement.

Native Soldiery

“ Never saw anything to surpass it,” murmured one officer to me, “ and I’ve seen the Hausa troops, and the Somalilanders, and even native regiments in India.” That native troops, according to the statements of the Germans themselves, have no stomach for fighting, doubtless had a good deal to do with it, but still, why the defence put up at Kaba Kaul and on the road to Toma was not more strenuous, especially in view of the natural strength of both positions, is difficult in the extreme to understand. It is, of course, true that the opposing forces were enormously superior in numbers, but with reasonable supplies even a small force, such as this, which consisted of five officers, thirty-five white troops, twelve native constabulary, and about a hundred and twenty armed natives, might have held out, one would think, for a very long time in such difficult country.

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The occupation of Rabaul, Herbertshohe, Toma, or Pondo, would not have been of any very grave significance, so long as the officials comprising the administration remained uncaptured. President Kruger, in South Africa, it will be remembered, for a while made a railway-carriage his seat of Government, and, as a matter of fact, Dr. Haber's last communication was actually headed, "Capital in the field, No. 1."

Dr. Haber himself came into Herbertshohe about two hours after the surrender had taken place, and the rifles and ammunition removed and stored. He was again accompanied by Captain von Klewitz, his commandant, who had superintended the entry and subsequent operations in the morning, so far as the German troops were concerned. On the following morning he arrived in Rabaul, prior to his departure for Sydney. A number of

Reservists from New Guinea

officers and officials were also taken to Rabaul in charge of Brigade - Major Heritage.

By an ironic stroke of fate a batch of German reservists from Friedrich Wilhelmshafen, reinforcements for the ex-Acting - Governor's troops, had landed on the opposite side of the island, almost precisely at the moment when the formal surrender was taking place. They advanced in the direction of Toma. A force was immediately dispatched to meet them, under Lieutenant Samson, bearing a white flag, to inform them of the situation.

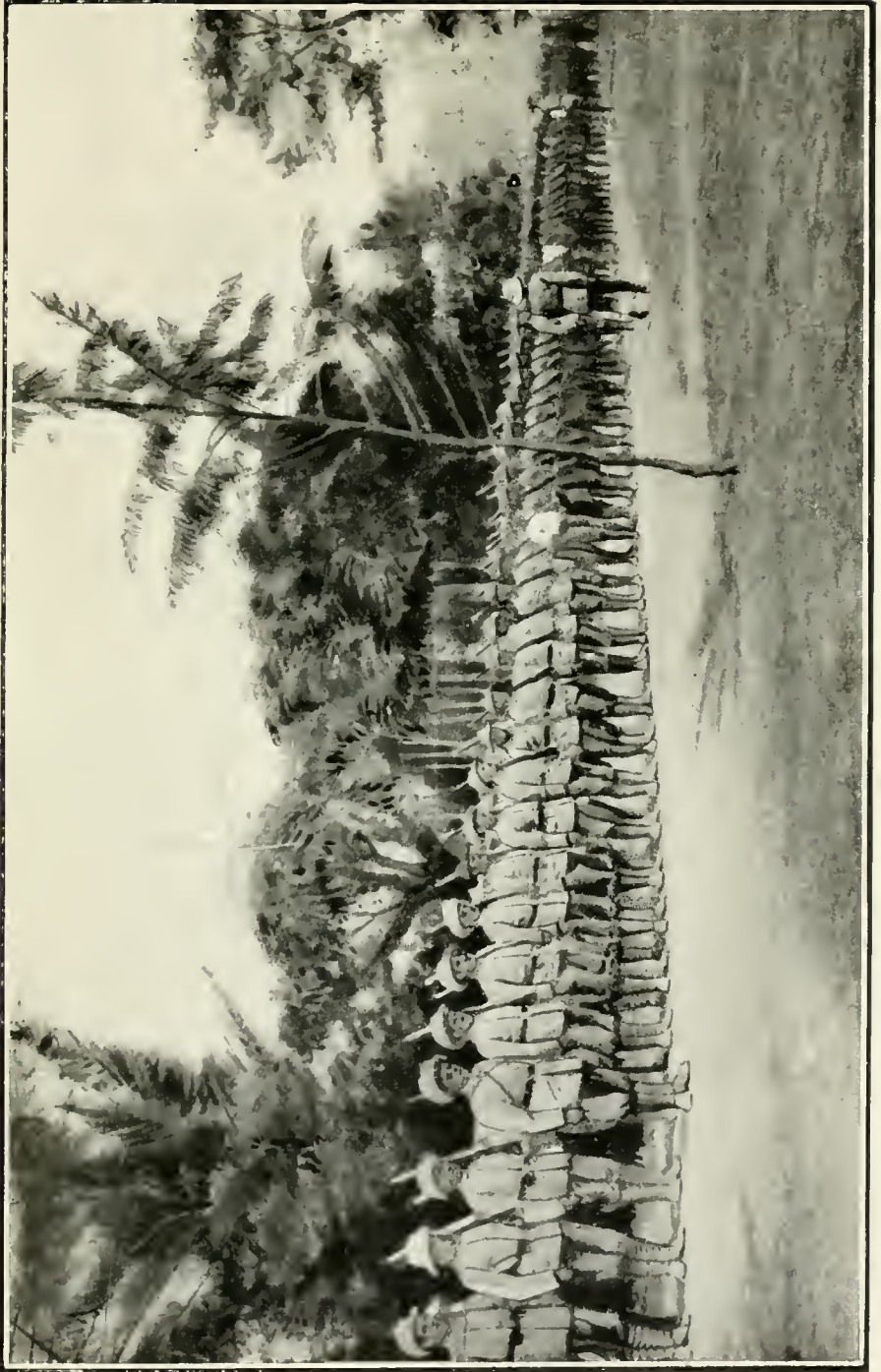
The principal terms of capitulation, briefly, were the permanent cessation of all resistance, the surrender of the administration, the handing over of all arms and ammunition, and the liberation of any English residents still under duress. In return, the enemy's troops were to be

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allowed to surrender, with full military honours, and Dr. Haber himself to be sent to Sydney on his own parole.

Most of the combatants were planters, whose estates were already beginning to suffer from neglect, combined with the inroads of irresponsible natives, stirred up particularly by the scarcity of food, which had been growing steadily more pressing. For days past the feeling among the inhabitants, both of Herbertshohe and Rabaul, had been strongly in favour of the Acting-Governor's surrender. There were now scarcely any who had not taken the oath of neutrality, and it was highly probable that all those who formally laid down their arms would recognize the wisdom of following suit. The arrest and deportation of all the leading officials at Rabaul had furthermore produced a considerable effect upon the remainder.

Their attitude was now entirely changed



THE GERMAN FORCES IN NEW BRITAIN : SURRENDERED SOLDIERS OF THE KAISER AT HERBERTSHOHE.

Arrest of German Officials

since when, on the night of the troops landing at Rabaul, they confronted Colonel Paton with expressions of simulated ignorance, and a veiled determination to refuse, as far as possible, their assistance in the work of administration. It was in vain that Colonel Paton warned the Burgomaster that he would be held responsible for untoward acts on the part of the German residents. Our sentries were fired on, signalling was continued night and day from the hills surrounding the town.

A refusal to remove their hats by way of acknowledgment at the hoisting of the Union Jack completed the strain upon the Brigadier's endurance, and on their appearing at headquarters in response to a curt demand for their presence, they found themselves promptly placed under arrest, and transferred to the *Berrima*.

The realization that the new regime means the respecting of private persons

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and private property, the serving of the best interests of the country, and the prompt punishment of any attempts at unlawful behaviour by any of the troops, also helped enormously to gain the sympathetic assistance of all the German residents. For a time the water-supply was something of a thorn in the administrative flesh. The spring from which supplies are usually obtained had dried up, owing to a four-months' drought, and a second spring, since discovered, was insufficient for the demands upon it. A condensing plant, however, was soon being set up, and it was expected that, even before the arrival of the wet season, which was anticipated early the following month, the water supply in Rabaul would be again amply provided for. As for food supplies, messages were at once sent to Sydney and Hongkong to meet the increasing requirements as early as possible.

The Germans' Lack of Information

Several things now began to stand out clearly. In the first place, the Germans at Rabaul and Herbertshohe had no information regarding the coming or the strength of the expedition. Captain von Klewitz, who was on an expedition in New Guinea when war broke out, was actually in British territory when the news reached him. He returned to Friedrich Wilhelmshafen as rapidly as the nature of the country would allow, and reached Rabaul during the night. "I saw your men land the first time, when the destroyers came," he said, "but I did not think they would come back again." Captain von Klewitz and Lieutenant Mayer are the two men who have brought the black troops in New Britain to their present perfection of discipline, but they are far from satisfied with their fighting qualities. "They have no heart to fight," they declare. "They want to run away as soon

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as the first shot is fired." "I have no faith in them," said a non-commissioned officer, adding that they were in especial fear of machine-gun fire. Others assert that the shooting of the natives in action was hopelessly wild. "They fire off their rifles everywhere," said one prisoner to me, "except at the enemy."

There are manifold signs, on the other hand, that the natives did not want to fight for the Germans, though their plausible accounts of cruelty on the part of their Teuton masters must be taken with very large pinches of salt. "No likee German feller," protested some black soldiers from Bougainville, surrendering to Lieutenant Bond. "Want to be all same English." "You'd need a lot of soap to do that," murmured the lieutenant, as he gazed at the countenances before him, black as pieces of polished ebony.

But as a matter of fact, it is plain that

Dissension as to Resistance

among the Germans themselves there was a good deal of dissension as to whether resistance should be made when the strength of the invading force became apparent. According to some statements, Dr. Haber himself was in favour of peacefully handing over the administration, but was overruled by the more hot-headed of those surrounding him. "Never would I have thought that people would be of such foolishness," exclaimed one stout German prisoner to me, with almost laughable indignation. "To resist so many. Ach! was Dummheit! One ordered this, another ordered that. What we should do, nobody knew. Forty-four kilometres were we made to march in one day, in a tropical heat, and for nothing. I cannot do these things nowadays." And he gazed pathetically at the area of his long-departed waist.

Another and very different episode is

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recalled to my memory. On the Monday afternoon, after the formal surrender, I had been conversing on quite general topics with one of the prisoners, a tall, lean man, with a pointed, yellow beard, and blue eyes in which brooded a sombre fire. The conversation languished. Suddenly, after a silence of several minutes, he raised his head, and, almost glaring at me, muttered as though issuing a challenge: "It was not I who wished to give myself up. No! I would have fought on to the end. To be sent as a prisoner——" His voice died in his throat, and rising abruptly to his feet, he stalked hastily away.

After the rush and turmoil of conflict it takes some time before the machinery of administration, badly strained, if not actually broken, can be repaired and again set working with its customary smoothness. At Rabaul the friction en-

Difficult as to Administration

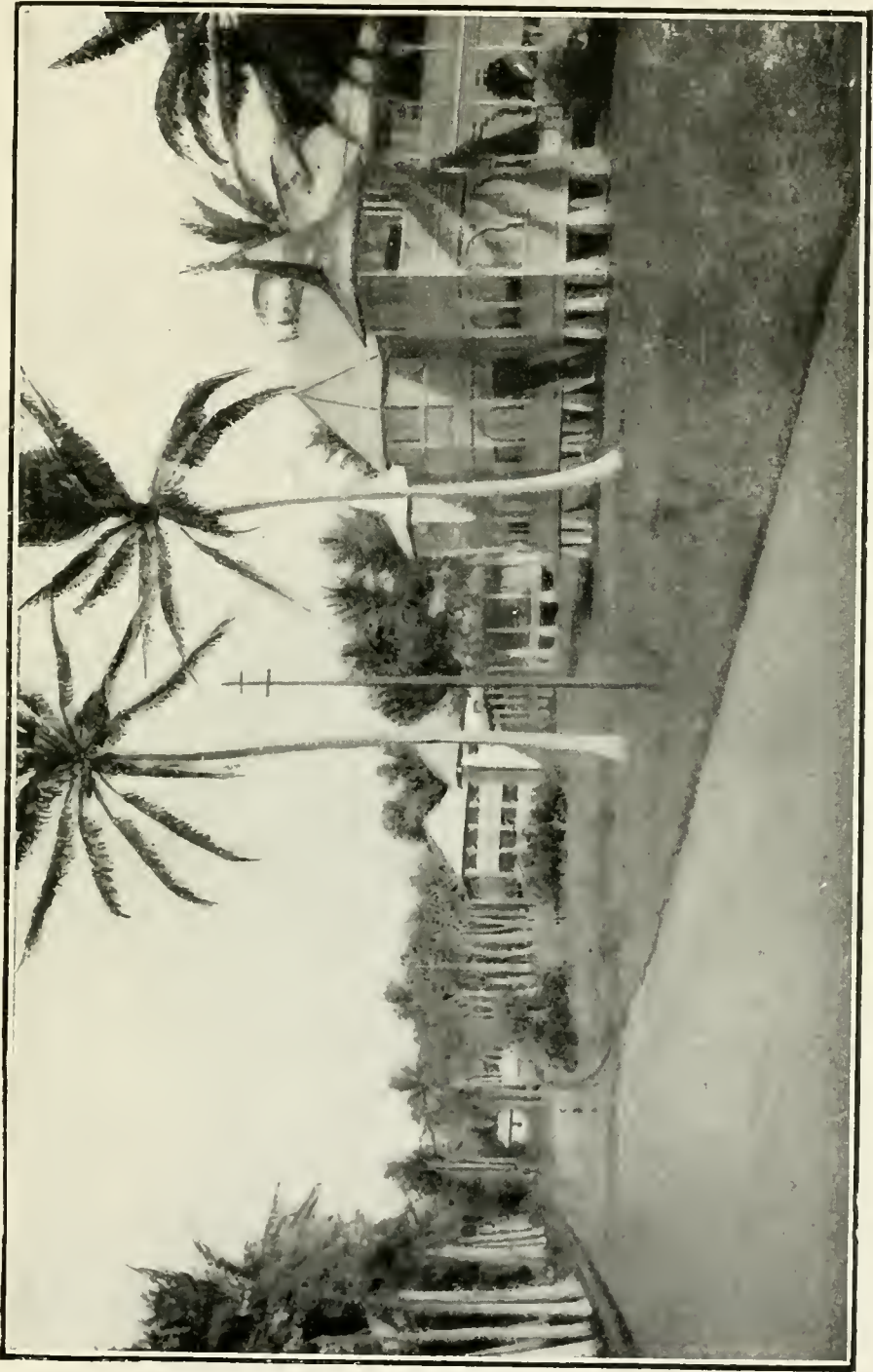
countered was, comparatively speaking, slight, and the actual resistance which elsewhere opposed our occupation was brief in duration, so that it was found more easy than might have been anticipated to make the wheels go round as usual.

As might have been expected, a vast quantity of work devolved after the arrival of the expedition upon the shoulders of all those officers who were sufficiently fortunate—or unfortunate—to be selected for administrative positions. It might, perhaps, be accepted as an axiom that the smaller the place the more numerous in proportion are the officials. Proportionately to the lay population, German officialdom in New Britain seems almost to have resembled the constitution of Republican armies of little South American States, where there are ten colonels to every private. Of these gentlemen,

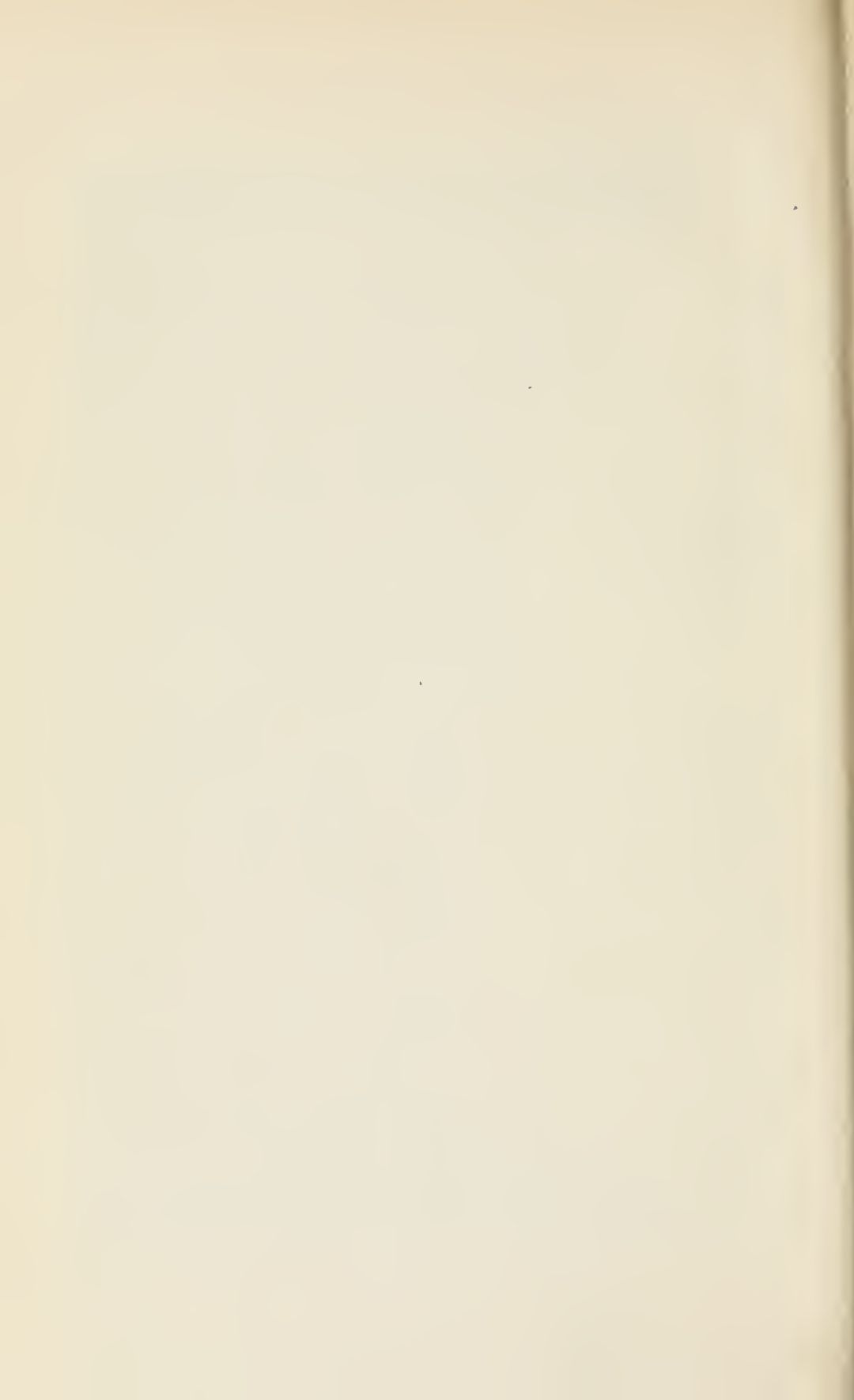
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most of whom declined to take the oath of neutrality, there was, after our arrival, a considerable exodus southward to Sydney. They naturally left, like the absent-minded Tommy of Kipling's poem, a lot of little things behind them, in the shape of a tangled and to some extent disrupted public business, which it was the dreary labour of a little group of overworked Australian officers, from the new Administrator downwards, to straighten out with as little delay as possible.

Colonel Paton was appointed commander of the garrison, and Lieutenant Kirke adjutant, and a steady stream of work flowed in night and day upon the entire headquarters staff. The majesty of the law was centred in Captain C. Manning, the newly appointed Judge Advocate-General, and Captain Twynam and Lieutenant G. Manning, at the head of the native constabulary, unceasingly per-



THE MILITARY HOSPITAL AT HERBERTSBOHE.



Broken Paroles

formed with admirable efficiency and untiring enthusiasm a thousand and one duties from Rabaul to Gazelle Point and from Herbertshohe to Pondo. A post of great responsibility was filled by Captain Ravenscroft, the Provost - Marshal, the red "M.P." arm-badges of whose military police suggested to the startled spectator wild visions of a General Election.

It must be admitted that some of the German officials in Rabaul have behaved, in contrast to the majority of the population, in a manner which, to say the least, does small credit to their honour. Released on parole, they apparently forthwith incited the natives in and around Rabaul to run away.

Already the interruption caused by the fighting to work on the plantations had given the new Government much trouble, as the natives had seized the opportunity

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to loot, burn, and pillage the estates and homesteads in many districts with joyous abandon; and the further defection of a number of the native police, as well as of natives employed as storemen, sailors, servants, and so on, was a serious matter. The vigorous policy of the authorities, carried out by Captain Twynam, has, however, practically put an end to the trouble, while the guilt of the officials concerned being once assured of, they were immediately placed under close arrest prior to their deportation to Sydney.

On another occasion a native was stopped and searched by the sentries on his way with a basket of pawpaws to a house in Rabaul, upon which suspicion had already fallen. He protested his innocence with much volubility till silenced by the dragging to light of a quantity of ammunition concealed under the fruit. He was at once arrested. The house

Persistent Signalling Reports

was searched, and a number of automatic pistols were discovered. Needless to say, the *Berrima* was not long in receiving another batch of unwilling guests.

It is curious how persistent were the reports brought in by sentries that signalling had been observed during the night on this or that hill. Apparently these reports had their cause, sometimes in the bush fires that were nightly visible among the surrounding hills, continually springing up in an unexpected quarter, sometimes in the habit of carrying lanterns always adopted by the natives when walking at night, whose imaginations people the darkness with every kind of bugbear and hobgoblin. A lantern alternately gleaming and disappearing between the trees bears no little resemblance to the "dot and carry one" of a Morse flashlight. A report of this kind, several times repeated, regarding a certain house

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along the shore of the harbour, was regarded by some of the officers as of sufficient importance to warrant an investigation, which, beyond certain elements of comedy, had no result.

Viewed all in all, the new Government has progressed most satisfactorily. There were no fires, but little violation of private property, and no serious outbreaks of any kind; and, though the stillness of the night was yet not seldom shattered by rifle-shots at the outposts, it may safely be asserted that in few cases did the alarm turn out to be anything more terrible on investigation than another of the "bamboo-scares"—so named after the famous alarm at Herbertshohe—which have thrown so new and interesting a light upon the etymology of the word "bamboozle."

An amusing incident occurred at Rabaul. Prior to the signing of the conditions

Over-zealous Sentries

of surrender it was difficult and even dangerous to attempt to wander about the town after nightfall, sentries guarding every approach to the main pier, while the sudden "Halt! Who goes there?" met one at every crossing. A visit, however, was expected from Admiral Hugent, of the *Montcalm*, and instructions were accordingly given the sentries to pass him through. Unhappily the sentries, with a deplorable excess of zeal, understood the order in a too literal sense, and the indignant Admiral arrived at Rabaul garrison headquarters with a bayonet on either side.

Apologies and explanations followed, and the incident ended in laughter, in which the august victim, a thorough sportsman, was not the last to join.

During the first few days of our occupation of Herbertshohe, a large quantity of stores and valuables were discovered,

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including a considerable sum of money. Uniforms, rifles, automatic pistols, ammunition, maps, binoculars, and even a jewelled sword were found in the various buildings. Most of the inhabitants had left their houses, but, in the course of the search a woman was found sick and in bed.

To make quite sure, the bed was searched also, with the result that the mattress was found to be stuffed with rifles. The lady's convalescence is not thought to have suffered any serious retardation by her disturbance.

CHAPTER XII

OFF TO FRIEDRICH WILHELMSHAFEN—A MYSTERIOUS PORT—ALLEGED DEFENCES—A DREARY COAST—THE MYTH EXPLODED—A TROPICAL FAIRYLAND—OUR GERMAN GUESTS

CHAPTER XII

NEW BRITAIN was ours ; Yap had been taken by the North China Squadron ; the Japanese were reported to have seized Jaluit. Samoa, of course, had already been occupied by the New Zealanders. But though those islands in the Pacific which came under the title of "German New Guinea" had been already surrendered on paper by Dr. Haber, it was by no means certain that in actual fact they would submit to our occupation without at least some show of resistance. Of these by far the most important was Friedrich Wilhelmshafen, on the mainland of the great island of New Guinea, and for that mysterious port the *Australia*, the *Montcalm*, the *Encounter*, and the

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Berrima—a formidable *partie carrée*—accordingly left Rabaul on September 22nd.

Now that the situation was quiet again in New Britain, and Lieutenant Sampson, with about seventy men from H Company, was hourly expected to loom over the Herbertshohe horizon with a huge train of wagons, laden with captured ammunition, stores, and wireless plant, and a number of ill-starred German reservists from Friedrich Wilhelmshafen, one began to have leisure to look about one, and note details which were overwhelmed by the rush and clamour of recent events. The situation was conducive to reminiscence; back on board the *Berrima* after a week ashore, Rabaul fading into the rain-mists behind us, the first evidence of the beginning of the wet season, and Friedrich Wilhelmshafen about forty-eight hours' steam ahead under the grey and windy sky.

A Mysterious Port

Ever since leaving Sydney our imaginations had been fed by continual reports regarding Friedrich Wilhelmshafen. To begin with, whenever a discussion began, as it did twenty times a day, as to our probable destination, Friedrich Wilhelmshafen was inevitably the port finally decided on. Various self-constituted authorities concerning every port they had never visited throughout the Pacific, hinted darkly at a huge wireless-station, floating docks, elaborate fortifications, including 9.2 guns, and all the accessories to an important naval base. When, therefore, shortly before breakfast, on the morning of September 24th, an irregular line of low, unhealthy-looking coast, bristling with palms, began steadily to take shape on our bow horizon, it may well be imagined that our curiosity was intense.

As a matter of fact, the reality proved disappointingly devoid of the romantic

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features which the wiseacres had thrillingly described. Friedrich Wilhelmshafen possesses no wireless-station. There are no fortifications, and no 9'2 guns, not even a solitary toy cannon for saluting purposes. The floating docks resolved themselves into a few small jetties and a private boatshed.

Captain Travers, with a white flag and a copy of the articles of surrender, went ashore in a steam pinnace to demand possession, while the *Berrima* and her three companions remained outside the mouth of the harbour, which Warrant-officer Ince and a trio of launches were industriously sweeping for mines.

But resistance, even passive resistance, there was none, and could be none. The landing of Captain Travers let loose merely a storm of argument and expostulation, which seemed likely to continue all day, till he quietly remarked that unless his

“ Don't Shoot ! ”

demands were acceded to within five minutes he would return to the ship, and could no longer guarantee that the town would not be bombarded. This argument proved effective.

The Treasurer, the one supreme authority, was absent on a punitive expedition in the interior, and the remaining residents in the town, metaphorically speaking, put up their hands at once, and exclaimed with one voice, “ Don't shoot ! ” The first boat ashore contained the Brigadier, Brigade-Major Heritage, Surgeon-Colonel Howse, and Lieutenant Holmes, A.D.C.

In front of the landing stage stood a tall flagstaff, bearing the Imperial flag. Lieutenant Holmes seized the halliards, the big black double-eagle slid down with a run, and a moment later the Union Jack, floating proudly in its place, proclaimed that the British occupation was accomplished.

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Major Martin was left at Friedrich Wilhelmshafen in command of the garrison. Upon and around the jetty a heterogeneous population watched the landing of the troops and the supplies—mop-headed savages, probably cannibals, from the interior, gesticulating Chinese from Canton or the Straits, little Javanese women, demure in sarong and white kabaya, Amboynese, with mournful eyes and moustaches, and natives from Buka or Bougainville, like moving statues of coal, with flowers thrust in their woolly hair. It was excessively hot, and the men, who were not looking forward with eagerness to carrying the heavy boxes of stores to their destination, were suddenly seized with the idea, brilliant in its simplicity, of enlisting the services of the natives.

“ Plenty good feller kaikai ” (food), suggestively exclaimed the linguists of the

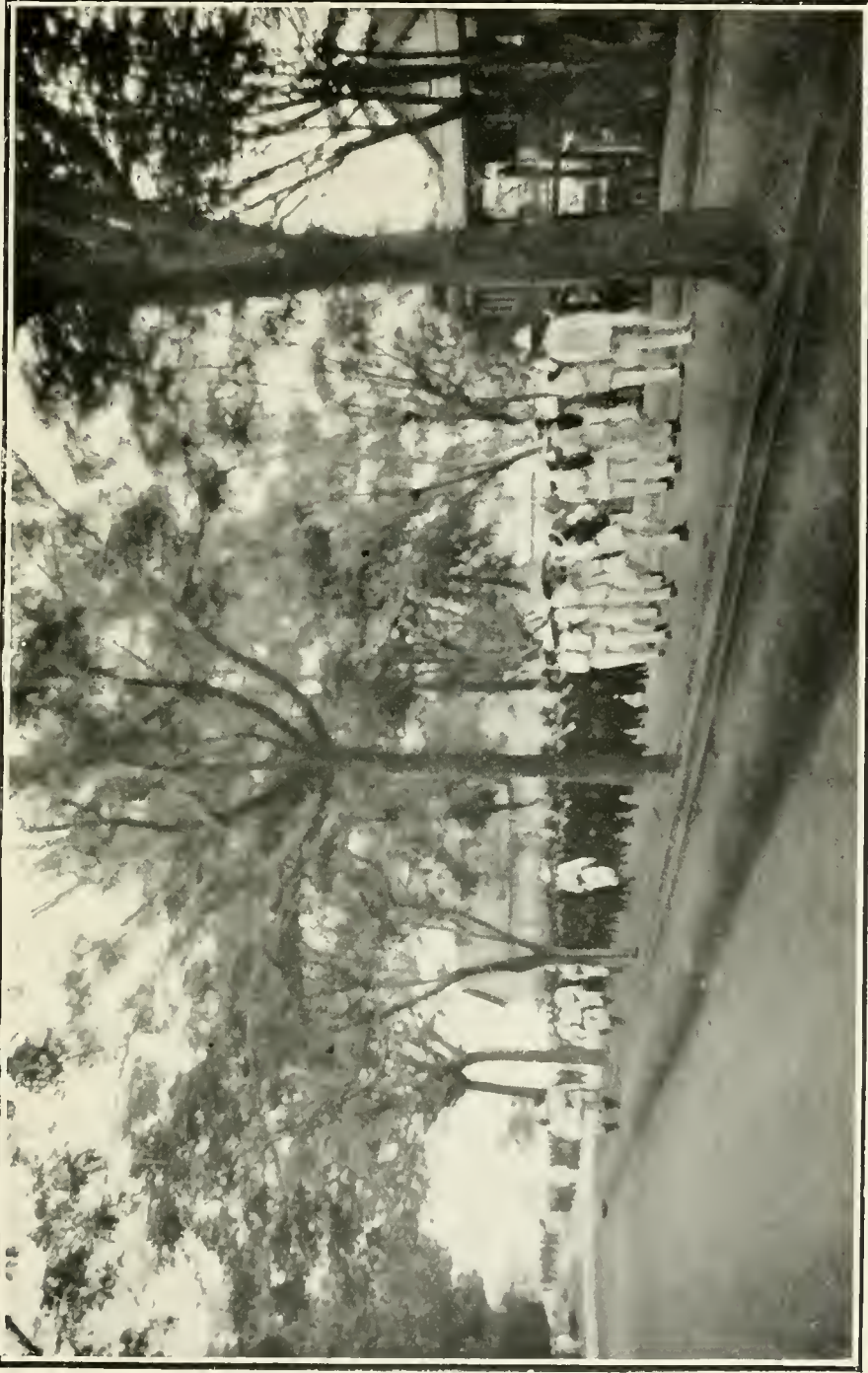
The Myth Exploded

garrison. "You carry him, you get plenty." This incantation met with immediate success; a wild-eyed rush was made to carry the stores, and for the remainder of the day the Tommies' work was light. My last impression of Friedrich Wilhelms-hafen as I left in the *Berrima's* motor-launch, was of a perspiring corporal on the jetty, surrounded by a dusky mob, frenziedly clamouring for the two ration biscuits which inexorable authority had assigned the labourer for his day's hire.

The real interest of Friedrich Wilhelms-hafen lies, not in the exploded myth of its defences, but in the extraordinary contrast between the place itself and its approaches from the sea. From a ship nearing the entrance to the port, one perceives only a flat and unprepossessing coastline, whose black miasmatic soil crumbles abruptly as a river bank to the low surf.

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Through a narrow entrance, three hundred feet wide, between an island, like a breakwater, and the mainland, are seen the vague outlines of two or three buildings, an irregular ridge of hills, palely discernible amid the mists of the interior. A more uninviting spot would be difficult to imagine. But the ship has no sooner passed the narrow channel and entered the harbour than one seems to have arrived, as though by enchantment, in a sort of Armida-garden, a miniature Venice of smooth, translucent waterways, of little islands where pretty villas, with their wide verandas and cool, striped blinds, peep through a tangle of flowers and creepers, and gently sloping green lawns, alternated with strips of shadowy forest, with the mouse-coloured native huts and the blue gleam of sunlit lagoons showing unexpectedly under the waving plumage of the palms.



THE TROOPS MARCHING UP FROM THE WHARF AT RABAU.

A Tropical Fairyland

After the dust and aridity of New Britain this unlooked-for vision of beauty and verdure was as grateful as an oasis in the desert. Nevertheless, the beauty of Friedrich Wilhelmshafen is, in some respects, a morbid beauty. The whole place is too flat, too closely surrounded by swamps and the sea, to be a wholly ideal tropical residence. Out of the hot, still sunlight that beats upon the little town, the shadow of malaria, cold and forbidding, seems ever threatening to fall.

In its incongruities, how absurd is war! One tries all day to kill an enemy, and the very next day, it may be, one is shaking him by the hand with all the cordiality of old-established friendship. On board the *Berrima* were two German officers of the regular army, who came out to New Britain in April, and were now on parole as prisoners of war. Prob-

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ably there were not two more popular officers in the mess than these two—Mayer, the pleasant-faced lieutenant of Bavarian cavalry, with his brown skin and irresistible laugh, and the quiet, almost shy Von Klewitz, blue-eyed and aristocratic captain of the 1st Wurtembergers (25th Dragoons), and late commandant of the German forces in New Britain.

“No,” said Lieutenant Mayer, as he lighted a fresh cigar, “when your fleet came the first time, I did not think they would come back. We thought it would not be worth while to Australia to send a large force to take these islands, and that it would all be settled in Europe. Yes, a small force from the warships to try and destroy the wireless-station—that, perhaps. But not more.

“Yes, of course,” he continued, with a shrug of the shoulders, “resistance was hopeless. But Dr. Haber had orders

Our German Guests

from the Imperial Government to defend the wireless-station if he could. For me, I did not want those people brought down from Friedrich Wilhelmshafen. What could they do? They are not trained for a rough life in the bush," the last word pronounced as though to rhyme with "rush."

"It was very funny," said Lieutenant Mayer, "the way I was captured. When your men landed I had a sergeant-major and about twenty-eight black soldiers with me, scouting in the bush. Presently I heard firing in the direction of my sergeant-major, and found him with his hand shot through. I said to him that he had better stay there till the enemy came up, because they would be sure to have a doctor and I had none. Our doctor was at Toma. That is comic, is it not, to make war without a doctor? Then I looked round, and all the natives

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had run away. After much search I found five. I went back towards the road and suddenly I heard a voice. It was Captain Wuckert. He had sent two native patrols down the road, who had been captured, and was coming down to see what had become of them when he was captured by your sailors. I heard his voice through the bushes, and I said to myself, 'That is Wuckert's voice.' When I came nearer, I saw him talking to an officer, who had his back to me. I thought the officer was a German, and went up to him with my hand outstretched to ask how he was getting on, when suddenly he turned round, and said, 'Put up your hands!' I was very astonished and tried to escape, but from all sides—sailors with fixed bayonets! That is how I was captured!"

The lieutenant laughed. The man to whom he was speaking smiled in sympathy,

Our German Guests

evidently searching for some appropriate reply.

“By Jove!” he said at last, “that was bad luck. Er, what’ll you have to drink?”

CHAPTER XIII

RETURN TO RABAU—H COMPANY—THE GERMAN
BASES—PICTURESQUE COUNTRY—THE WIRE-
LESS - STATION — BURIED TREASURE — DIFFI-
CULTIES OF TRANSPORT—HARDSHIPS OF THE
TROOPS — SURRENDER OF GERMAN REIN-
FORCEMENTS — EXHAUSTED NATIVES — BACK
AT HERBERTSHOHE

CHAPTER XIII

ON the return of the *Berrima* from Friedrich Wilhelmshafen on September 26th we learned, not without surprise, that Lieutenant Sampson and Lieutenant Sherbon, who had left Herbertshohe on the 17th with seventy men of H Company, to clean up everything that remained of the ex-Acting-Governor's stores and supplies, as well as to intercept the German reservists who had landed as reinforcements, had only that morning returned to Herbertshohe.

They turned up next morning at Rabaul, a weary, grimy, unshaven crew, but with a light in their eyes that told, in Gilbert's words, of the "satisfying

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feeling that their duty has been done." Well might it shine there, for their nine days in the interior were crowded with as excellent a record of good work well accomplished as any officer commanding could cheer the cockles of his heart withal.

The German stores were at a series of bases, known as Place A, B, and C respectively, the last being about thirty miles inland from Herbertshohe. Lieutenant Sampson and his expedition left Herbertshohe at five o'clock on the afternoon of the 17th, and reached Toma on the following morning. From now onwards for the rest of the way the road became steadily more difficult, winding up and down lofty hills of great steepness, sometimes surrounded by impenetrable jungle, sometimes leading through coconut plantations, and not seldom a mere ledge, as it were, on the mountain-side,

Picturesque Scenery

with a sheer wall of earth and rock on the one side and a sheer drop of hundreds of feet into the valley, beneath on the other.

The grandeur of the scenery at such times was remarkable, which, save for the extravagantly tropical nature of the vegetation, was not unlike that of the Blue Mountains in New South Wales. They had left Toma some distance behind, when a party of twenty-six Germans and seventy-nine natives, armed and in uniform, were encountered marching down the road. They were, however, quite peaceably inclined, and were, indeed, on their way to give up their arms and surrender, as was shown by a letter from Brigade-Major Heritage, which was produced by the officer in charge.

The expedition passed Tauleil, the camp lately abandoned by the Germans, some distance farther on, and about three

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in the afternoon arrived at Place A, some thirteen miles from Toma. It was in charge of fifty native police, who, of course, offered no resistance, as Dr. Haber had already signed the articles of surrender. An hour's rest, and the troops pushed on to Place B, five miles farther on along a road, or rather path, so narrow that for a greater part of the route the men were compelled to march in Indian file. The buffaloes and carts which had been found at place A were unavoidably left at that base.

Lieutenant Sherbon, with two men, had gone on ahead to make arrangements for the camp. It was at this Place B that the Germans had their field wireless-station, which they used after the capture of the main station at Bita Paka: it was situated on the summit of a hill, with a powerful dynamo, and bamboo poles for the aerials, but so dense was

The Wireless-station

the surrounding jungle that nothing was to be seen of the station till actually within fifteen paces.

Early on the following morning the two officers, with a sergeant and six men, moved off on the trail once more in the direction of Place C, which they reached just in time for breakfast with the quondam Acting-Governor, together with a number of the leading officials of the island. "Very nice it was, too," remarked Lieutenant Sherbon, in relating the incident. "They had tents, and also shelters made of four posts and a tin roof, with walls of woven palm leaves half-way up from the ground." Breakfast over, business began. Ten cases of gold and notes, together with some silver, were handed over by Dr. Haber, and gravely sealed—*faute de mieux*—with an ordinary English penny by Lieutenant Sherbon.

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To the surprise of the Australians, Dr. Haber informed them that forty more cases of bullion were buried at Place B, beneath the very tent where the men had slept. It is not often that one has the experience of sleeping above a real hoard of buried treasure, and the faces of the men, as they listened to this communication, were a study in emotions.

Up to this point everything practically had proved plain sailing. Now, however, the real work of the expedition began. A number of natives were commandeered to carry the treasure chests, and back to Place B they went to collect the rest, which were dug up and sealed with a two-shilling piece by Lieutenant Sampson. The wireless plant, the dynamo, twenty-two cases of ammunition, and a quantity of picks, shovels, tents, cooking-stoves, cases of benzine, boxes of bully-beef,

Difficulties of Transport

and other impedimenta, were also carried down to Place A, and loaded on to the wagons.

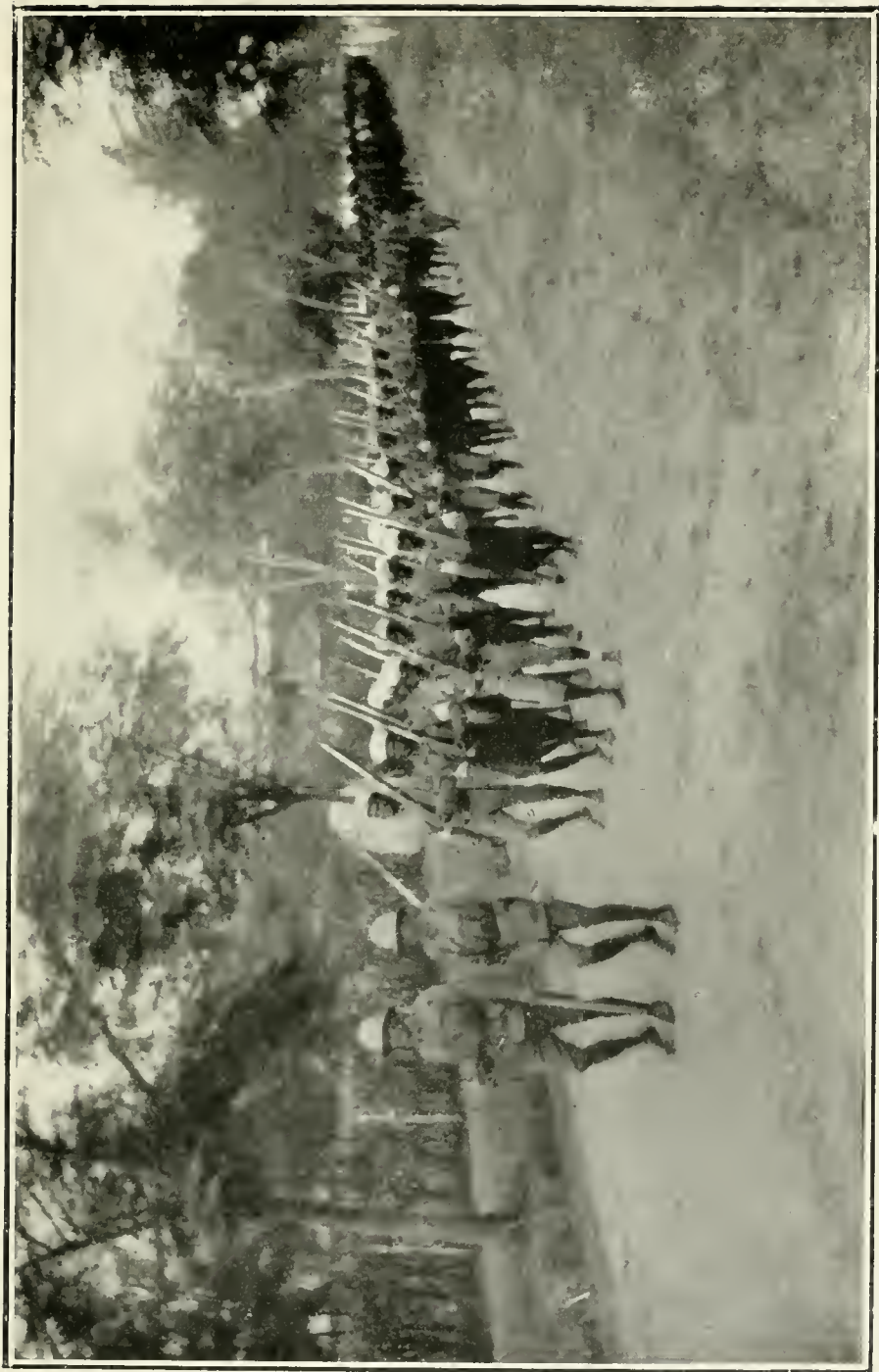
A tropical rainstorm which fell upon the column on their way back to Place A had made the roads, already difficult in the extreme, almost entirely impassable. Along the levels they degenerated into ditches, where the heavy wagons sank to the axles, and the bullocks tugged despairingly at their nose-rings, while the steep hills became mere inclines of slippery mud of the consistency of butter, in which it was almost impossible to find a foothold. At every halt the buffaloes, their nostrils torn and shoulders galled and raw under the yokes, fought and butted across the yoke-pole with the fury born of exhaustion and pain, till they were forcibly separated.

Trudging through the mud and the jungle, staggering under the weight of

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the treasure, 480,000 marks in all, unloading the wagons at the foot of the hills, hauling up the wagons and loading them again at the top, it is not surprising that at times the utmost distance covered by the column was two miles a day. Usually a few hours' sleep was snatched between eleven at night and four or five on the following morning; once at least even that was impossible.

On one occasion the provisions, never over-plentiful, ran out, and from seven-thirty at night till eleven on the night following the expedition had to go without food. One officer puffed gratefully at a huge pipe which he was glad to procure from a coolie; some of the men smoked cigarettes which they had made of pipe tobacco rolled in dried banana-leaves. Crushed against trees in the darkness or trampled by the struggling buffaloes, cuts and bruises were rife, and



CAPT. TWYNAM AND LIEUT. MANNING WITH NATIVE CONSTABULARY.

Hardships of the Troops

unhappily pure methylated spirits and a little iodoform were the only drugs available. One man had two ribs broken by a kick from a horse; another's foot was crushed under a wagon; but nobody complained, nobody ceased for a moment to do the very best that was expected from him. Cold, heat, wet, hunger, fatigue, pain—nothing could subdue those amazing Australians.

A string of broken-down wagons marked the line of march, but as fresh wagons were able to be requisitioned in their place, sixteen out of the twenty that had started from Place C reached the mission station, three miles out of Toma, on the afternoon of the 20th.

It was here for the first time that Lieutenant Sampson learned that a German force, said to be forty strong, had landed from Friedrich Wilhelmshafen. Camping at Toma for the night, he intended to

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return the next morning along the road to pick up the stranded wagons, and bring in a quantity of supplies which had been unavoidably left at Place C. A message from Brigade-Major Heritage, saying that the whereabouts of the German reinforcements were yet unknown, that they were supposed to be advancing on Toma, and that he was to remain there till the enemy were located, necessitated a delay.

Lieutenant Sherbon, with about 120 natives carrying the treasure, and a guard of 12 men, marched down to Herbertshohe on the following day, deposited the treasure there in charge of the guard, and returned to Toma late the same night with some medical stores. The next day the patrols came into touch with the Germans, fourteen, and not forty, in number, who, having been warned by a messenger from Dr. Haber that they

Surrender of Reinforcements

must surrender, were carrying a white flag. They were accordingly allowed to proceed to Herbertshohe, preceded by an orderly on a bicycle, and lay down their arms—a strange collection, ranging from Winchester repeaters to Mauser rifles, dated, curiously enough, 1870.

Once again the now rested column set out for Place C. In these hill districts "the rain, it raineth every day." From Place C to Place A the loads had to be carried by hand, and with wet and overwork the natives were overtaken in large numbers by fever. Day after day the weary work of transportation went on, backwards and forwards over the heart-breaking roads between Place C and Toma, a touch of comedy being lent by the natives' umbrellas, hastily extemporized by weaving together half a dozen banana-leaves.

Exhausted with fever and fatigue, and

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less physically inured than the Australians to hard work and exposure, the wretched natives literally dropped by scores under the weight of the loads, unable to drag themselves out of the way of the column. At every available opportunity, they would escape under cover of the darkness, necessitating next morning a fresh round-up from the neighbouring villages. "Me die finish," moaned one, as he lay apparently inanimate in the mud during an hour's halt. A friendly Tommy handed him a patent pill, guaranteed to cure every known or unknown ailment, and was considerably amused when the order, "Pick 'em up and walk, walk," told the carriers to resume the march, to see the alleged corpse spring to its feet, exclaiming briskly, "Me no dead now!"

By the 26th the last load had been successfully brought in to Toma. On the following morning early, in a long proces-

Back at Herbertshohe

sion of wagons, bearers, and infantry, with a little troop in front, mounted on horses requisitioned for the new Government, the column marched into Herbertshohe. Its work was done.

CHAPTER XIV

LOOKING BACK—SOME MEN AND THEIR WORK
— THE BRIGADIER — HIS VIEWS — LIFE AT
RABAU—FOOTBALL MATCHES—A GARRISON
CONCERT—“MY OWN NEW GUINEA GIRL”

CHAPTER XIV.

IN reviewing the late campaign in New Britain, it must not be forgotten how many there are, both officers and men, who did excellent work quietly and thoroughly under trying conditions. Such are the men of the Army Medical Corps, whose courage and energy are exemplified not only by the death of Captain Pockley, but by the untiring services of the remainder of the corps; Sergeant Shaw, who at considerable risk carried dispatches on a motor-cycle backwards and forwards between Herbertshohe and the German headquarters; Lieutenant Marsden, who succeeded in destroying a German signal-station after a march which left two-

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thirds of his men exhausted by the way ; and Lieutenant M'Dowell, who, on September 14th, scaled the precipitous slopes of the Mother under a blazing sun, and after climbing steadily for an entire afternoon, captured a number of natives who were in possession of a signal-station. One fact with which he appeared to be chiefly delighted was that the Australians under his command had completely beaten the native police in the long climb up the mountain. "There were our chaps," he repeated, "fresh from a long sea-voyage, and they went up the mountains as fresh as daisies. The natives simply couldn't keep pace with them. 'White feller go too quick,' they kept saying. 'Me die.' To beat these blacks on their native heath, so to speak, strikes me as jolly good work."

There is, however, one man who, above all others, has earned himself, in the

Colonel William Holmes

opinion of those who, from their experience, rank, and impartiality, are best qualified to judge, a crown of unfading bays. The man is the Brigadier, Colonel William Holmes, now Administrator of our new possessions. Merit, except in novels, is not inevitably the precursor to reward or even acknowledgment by the mass. There is but one test: a man must be tried by his peers. A soldier should be judged by soldiers; and whatever may or may not be comfortably argued by arm-chair Napoleons and Bismarcks from Billabong, who discuss with the easy wisdom of ignorance matters of which they understand nothing, and places which a careful regard for their own safety has prevented them from ever seeing, in the eyes of the men who have worked with and under him, Colonel Holmes has, from beginning to end, done his duty conscientiously, courageously, and with ability.

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The success which attended Colonel Watson's march on Toma, under cover of the bombardment, proves with sufficient obviousness the value of tactics recommended by the Brigadier before the first party of twenty-five men were landed at Kaba Kaul. There can be no doubt that the capture of Toma actually decided the Acting-Governor to surrender. A little more delay, and—as Colonel Holmes well knew—the German troops in New Britain would have been reinforced by contingents from various neighbouring islands, a guerilla war would have begun which would have cost us a much greater expenditure of money and lives before it could be ended, and the progress and prosperity of the island would have been indefinitely retarded.

“ I have continually borne in mind,” said Colonel Holmes to me in conversation on the subject, “ that this is not

The Brigadier's Views

a filibustering expedition. We have not come to these islands to burn and destroy and levy an indemnity before sailing away. We have come here to occupy, to hold the country for Great Britain, and to keep its value as little impaired as possible. We must never forget the dangers attendant upon a small white community in the midst of a large native population, most of it with cannibalistic tendencies. Only a few months ago a party of seven was attacked and eaten by cannibals in New Britain, not twenty miles from the coast. Imagine what would be the result if we took away as prisoners all these planters who have been fighting against us, leaving their plantations, their wives and families behind—women outraged, killed, and eaten, houses burnt, plantations laid waste, taking years to recover, if they ever recovered. Imagine the work which the removal of the male white

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population would entail on us, work of police protection, administration, ceaseless labour, and expense. I do not want all that. What my aim has always been is to carry things on here with as little disruption as possible, to maintain prevailing laws, customs, and routine as much as is consistent with the change of government, and do everything that can be done for the advancement and prosperity of our new possessions."

There was not much to do when work was finished for the day in the capital of New Britain. In Rabaul, to employ a French phrase, one amused oneself badly under war conditions. A drive up to the cool, breeze-haunted heights of Namanula, a dusty scramble over the low volcanic hills close to the town, a long walk to the pretty little island of Matupi, or an exploration of the crater that gapes like a decayed tooth near the entrance

Life at Rabaul

to the harbour, and whose grim and fire-blasted walls look down upon a sulphur lake that rises and falls as continually and evenly as the breast of a sleeper—these practically exhausted the possibilities.

Sometimes a football match was organized by the garrison, and, as the respective teams included some of the best players in New South Wales, it may be imagined that the game was worth watching. Sometimes the veranda of the headquarters office was turned into an impromptu stage, and, with the aid of a piano borrowed from the officers' mess—formerly the Rabaul Club—a concert was held, the audience, wanting seats, strewn like leaves in Vallombrosa upon the grass of the parade ground in front of the steps.

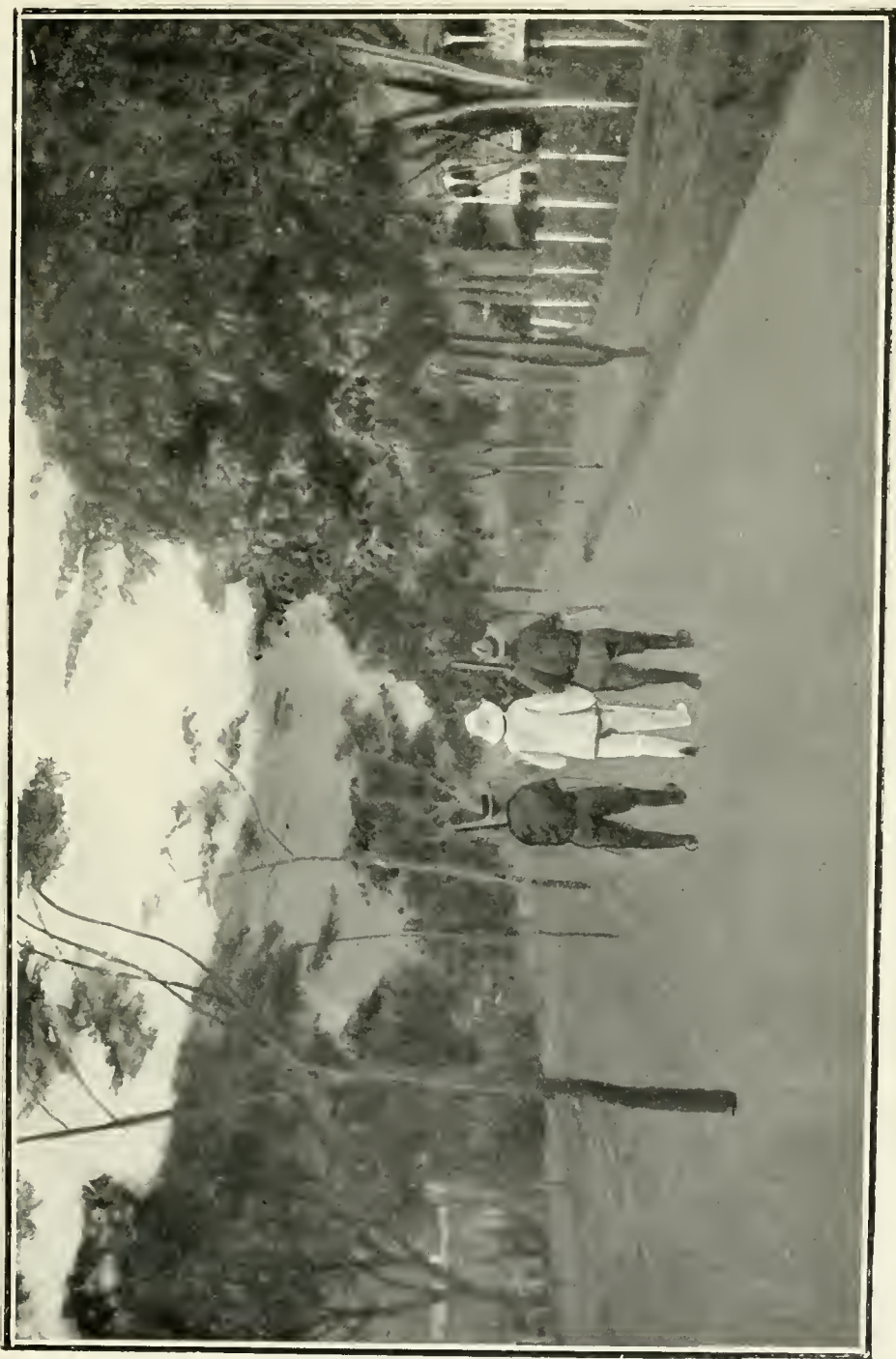
Then it was that the *Berrima* band, now the Rabaul garrison band, made a dramatic and much-applauded entry from the darkness, evoking, in perfect time, the

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familiar strains of "On the Mississippi" and "Alexander's Ragtime Band" from mouth-organs and tin-dishes. One missed the two bluejackets who delighted us so often on the *Berrima* with "rags" and cakewalks—two really gifted performers, now absorbed in the naval garrison at Herbertshohe. But their place was taken by many other vocalists, some of them displaying unexpected qualities of voice and delivery, and ranging freely in point of repertoire from comic songs of the blatant variety to "The Bandolero," "Killarney," and even that still-unrivalled tenor masterpiece, "I'll Sing Thee Songs of Araby."

The garrison bard even seized the opportunity to turn out a ditty or canzonetta glowing with local colour, and which, beginning—

Where the palm-trees bend and rustle,
And the sea for ever smiles,



MARTIAL LAW IN RABAU: A GERMAN PRISONER UNDER ESCORT.

A Garrison Concert

concluded with the following impassioned chorus :—

All night long, while the moon is shining
Like a lamp of gold and pearl,
On my picket I am dreaming
Of her eyes with love-light beaming,
My own New Guinea girl.

It is to be hoped that the amorous hero did not dream so soundly on picket duty that the officer on rounds was able to notice it!

CHAPTER XV

HEALTH IN THE TROPICS--DANGER OF MALARIA
— WHAT GERMANY HAS DONE — NATIVE
STUDENTS — NATIVE HOSPITALS — A KINDLY
GERMAN — HOW THE TROOPS ARE LOOKED
AFTER

CHAPTER XV

THE fact that the Australian troops were quartered in the erstwhile German possessions, to remain there possibly for the next six months, gave rise to a good deal of anxiety among the good people of Sydney and elsewhere how far health would be affected by residence in the tropics. As a matter of fact, the conditions at Rabaul, Herbertshohe, and Friedrich Wilhelmshafen, particularly the means taken to frustrate the possibilities of illness, are such that the members of their respective garrisons are probably quite as safe as, if not safer than, if they remained at home. One is not, of course, including bullet wounds in this estimate, of which

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there is now practically no further likelihood.

The low elevation of Friedrich Wilhelmshafen, together with the appearance of the soil and the country adjoining, gives one the impression that malaria would, especially in the wet season, which was now approaching, be particularly rife. As a matter of fact, this is said formerly to have been the case, but the draining of all swamps in the immediate vicinity, and a course of steady precautions in the matter of drainage and waste water have wrought a change, and, according to the German doctors there, the place is now fairly free from malaria, while blackwater has entirely disappeared, so far as white men are concerned.

Rabaul, and still more especially Herbertshohe, where the very air, impregnated with ozone, speaks of health, not only appear, but are actually as healthy resi-

Danger of Malaria

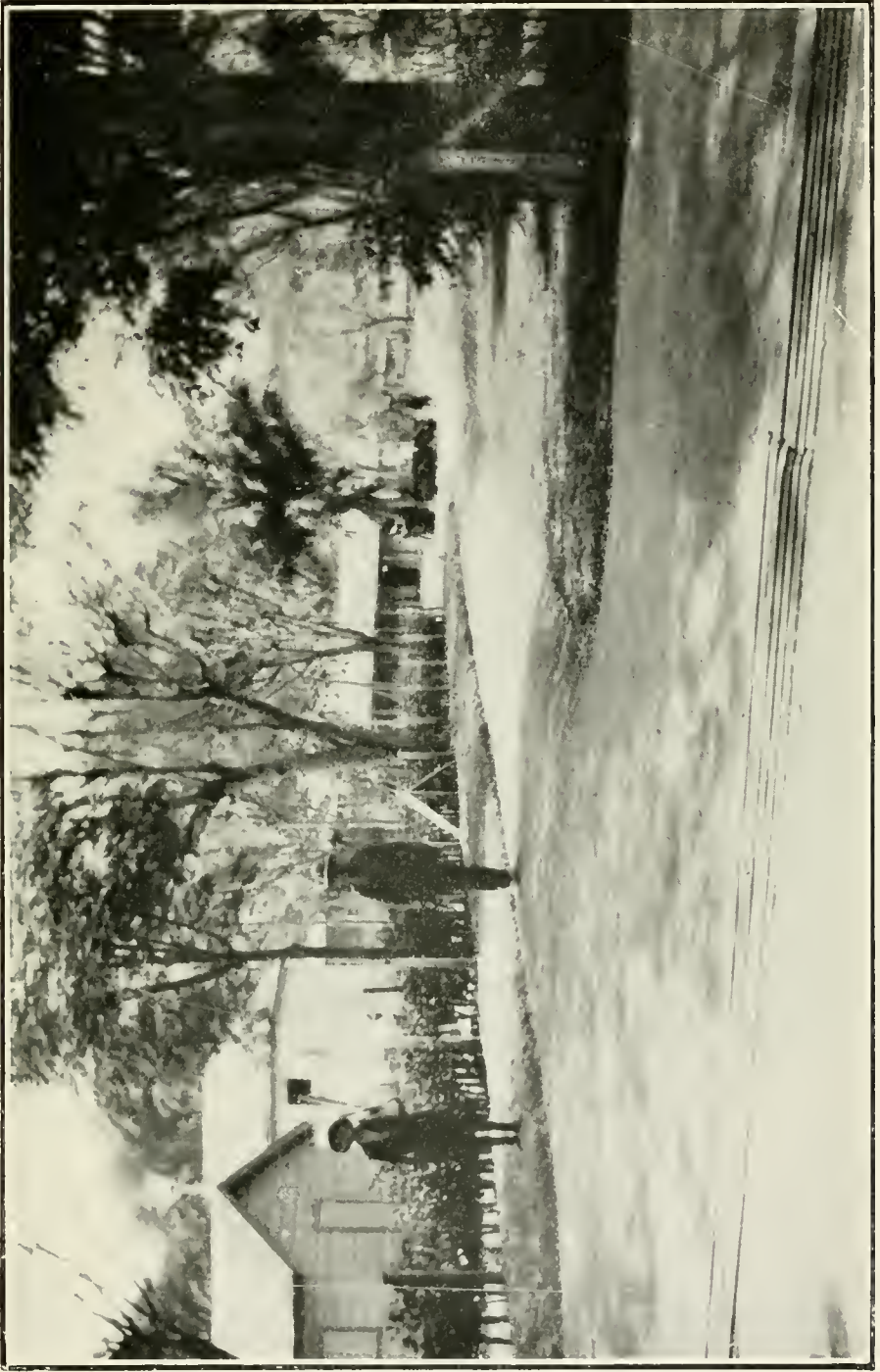
dences for Europeans as anywhere in the Pacific Islands. Blackwater, which only occurs after severe and repeated attacks of malaria, is now unknown among Europeans. Malaria itself makes its presence felt comparatively little. Cholera, dysentery, and typhoid are conspicuously absent. An outbreak of smallpox some two months before the Australian occupation of New Britain was confined entirely to the native population, and was quickly stamped out. The numerous marks of vaccination among the natives were among the first things to be noticed by our troops on their arrival, whose own arms were still bearing witness to the attentions on voyage of the ever-thoughtful Army Medical Corps.

The hygienic provisions made by the German Government in Rabaul and elsewhere have been continued by the present authorities, and are characteristic of the

Australia v. Germany

“grundlichkeit,” for which Germans, and especially German science, are justly famous. The European hospital at Rabaul is situated upon the cool and breeze-swept heights of Namanula, not far from Government House, and contains ample accommodation for a large number of patients.

There are two well-trained nurses, supplied by the Red Cross Society in Berlin, under a three-years' contract, and besides these the staff includes a Chinese cook, ten native boys, and two native women. One of the boys has had a thorough training in instrument and operation theatre work, and speaks German fluently. The two German doctors in Rabaul, both men of high capability, attend not only the European hospital, but a comfortable and well-equipped native hospital outside the town on the Herbertshohe road. They are also responsible



VIEW IN RABAUL : A TYPICAL STREET.

What Germany Has Done

for the natives generally who live in the vicinity of Rabaul, and visit various centres for the purposes of vaccination, treatment, inoculation, and inspection. Eight German sailors from the Government yacht, *Komet*, convalescent after enteric, were found by the Army Medical Corps on taking possession of the hospital at Namanula. It was interesting to learn that five native students had been assiduously pursuing the lore of Aesculapius at Namanula previous to our arrival. Our advent struck terror to the hearts of four, who incontinently fled to the bush; the fifth, an intelligent young man, who employs an extraordinary jargon of pidgin English, the *lingua franca* of the islands, and the most erudite medical terms, is still assimilating wisdom from the present P.M.O.

Similar provisions, though naturally on a smaller scale, had been established by the Germans at Herbertshohe and Fried-

Australia v. Germany

rich Wilhelmshafen, and one of my most agreeable reminiscences is the interesting morning which I spent in an inspection of the native hospital at Herbertshohe, under the courteous guidance of the kindly and genial German doctor, who took a pride in showing and explaining all that was done for the health and comfort of his patients. It was wonderful to see how these primitive savages, many of them probably still addicted to cannibalism, and all nurtured from their infancy in a belief in magic, sorcery, and the existence of ten thousand ever-present and very personal devils, came, nevertheless, for many leagues to entrust themselves and their ills to the care of the white man. It was evident that the doctor was eminently popular with his patients. Smiles appeared wherever he moved, though the New Britain native usually impressed me as the most stolid

Native Hospitals

biped I had ever encountered, and the women rolled their eyes and grinned with pleasure when he patted the staring babies on the head or concluded his inquiries with a few words of valedictory chaff.

The two nurses at Rabaul receive a salary of 135 marks monthly, of which 100 marks are held in Berlin as deferred pay till the expiration of their contract. The Chinese cook is paid 90 marks per month, and the specially trained native revels in the princely salary of 10 marks per month, or £6 per year. Of this sum 8 marks is treated as deferred pay. The other natives employed at the hospital are paid from 6 to 12 marks a month.

So much for the German health arrangements, which, as already stated, have been in the main continued by the new administration, though naturally under the supervision of the P.M.O., and supple-

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mented by the work of the Army Medical Corps. A thorough inoculation against typhoid and smallpox was carried out among the troops on the *Berrima* during the voyage, and lectures by the P.M.O., Colonel Howse, V.C., on the treatment of malaria, heatstroke, and dysentery were typewritten and distributed among the men.

The garrison at Rabaul, which is typical of the remainder, is entirely quartered in private houses, each man sleeping protected by a close-meshed mosquito net, supplied, be it noted, not by the Government, but by the unselfish labour and expenditure of the ladies of the Red Cross Society in Sydney, at the special request of the officers of the Army Medical Corps. Curiously enough, not a single house in New Britain or New Guinea is fitted with mosquito-proof doors or windows. The reason given by the

How the Troops are Looked After

residents is that these restrict the passage of fresh air—doubtless a sound reason enough 4° south of the Equator, though, as a matter of fact, the climate seemed to me seldom more trying than that of an average summer's day in Sydney.

But resistance to malaria is not passive only, but active, and, besides affording means of not being stung by mosquitoes, a steady dosing with quinine is employed to combat the spirilla if they should succeed in making their way into the blood. Every precaution, indeed, has been taken against disease.

From the canteen a daily allowance of two drinks only per man is served. No water is allowed to lie about the camp or its neighbourhood as a nursery for the larvæ of the anopheles. Incinerators have been constructed for the purpose of destroying all kitchen refuse. All sanitary work in the different towns has

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been placed in the responsibility of the doctors, whose war against sickness is largely assisted by the vigorous exercise to which the men are daily subjected.

The fact that at the time of the *Berrima's* departure for Sydney, on the 4th of October, not a single patient was to be found in any of the European hospitals, is an encouraging tribute to a system the continued success of which there is every reason to anticipate.

CHAPTER XVI

THE NEW POSSESSIONS—AREA AND POPULATION
—CORAL AND PALM—SUPREMACY OF COPRA—
OTHER INDUSTRIES ATTEMPTED—RUBBER—
HOW COPRA IS GROWN—EXPENSES OF
PLANTING—THE LABOURER AND HIS HIRE—
VALUE OF COPRA EXPORTS—LAND TENURE
—MINERAL POSSIBILITIES OF NEW BRITAIN

CHAPTER XVI

Strayed among lonely islets,
Mazed amid outer keys,
I waked the palms to laughter,
I tossed the scud in the breeze.
Never was isle so little,
Never was sea so lone;
But over the scud and the palm-trees
The English flag has flown.

WITH the signing of the articles of surrender at Herbertshohe, the administration of all German New Guinea passed into the hands of Great Britain, ultimately, perhaps, to be resigned into the keeping of Australia. Not for a long period has so vast an area been added to the British Empire as this huge tract of isle and ocean that stretches for many thousands

Australia *v.* Germany

of miles from the Marianne Group, 20° north of the Equator, to Hercules Bay, 80° south, and westward from Tasman Island to Bougainville Bay, near the frontier of Dutch New Guinea. It is worth while to obtain some idea as to the value of a possession, which, in its extent of something like two thousand square miles, embraces a total area almost as large as the continent of Australia. Its population, though less large, is, considering the actual amount of territory included, proportionately very much larger. German New Guinea, a title which embraces Kaiser Wilhelmsland, or German New Guinea proper, New Britain, New Ireland, the German Solomons, and the Marianne, Ladrones, and Caroline groups of islands, has a total population of 107,399, of which 103,909 are natives. The remainder is almost equally divided between the whites and Chinese, of which the

Coral and Palm

former number about 1,223, and the latter 1,337. These Chinese are mostly employed as coolies, carpenters, tailors, plumbers, and engineers. Scattered through the islands are also about 163 Malays, mostly from Ambon, and usually clerks in private and Government offices.

One's first impression of New Britain, as the vessel steams into Blanche Bay, is that the island must consist entirely of coconut-palms, with a certain amount of earth sticking to the roots. Later on, one realizes that the palms are perhaps less numerous, and the island itself decidedly more solid. But just at first one perceives nothing whatever but a swaying sea of green, feathery leaves, and tall, slender stems, with here and there the red roof of a house peeping out from the surrounding vegetation. This impression is significant, for it is the coconuts and their derivative, copra, by which

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the German possessions in the Pacific have commercially lived and had their being.

It is not for want of a trial that other industries have failed to gain the supremacy which copra holds in these islands. No less than three varieties of rubber have been planted, 787 hectares of *Ficus elastica*—a hectare equals two and a half acres—in the Bismarck Archipelago alone, representing 124,696 trees. Of these, 461 hectares, containing 73,028 trees, have reached the tapping stage. Of *Hevea brasiliensis*, the variety chiefly employed in Java, the Malay Peninsula, and Ceylon, there are 365 hectares, or 142,946 trees. In comparison with the *Ficus elastica*, which was introduced many years back, the *Hevea* entered German New Guinea only five or six years ago, and at the present day only thirty hectares, containing 8,710 trees, are ready for tapping. A third variety is the *Kastilloa*,

Supremacy of Copra

whose tall, straight stems, like flagpoles, cover 167 hectares to the number of 42,503 trees. This, like the *Ficus elastica*, has proved fairly satisfactory, and 40,633 trees in 154 hectares were ready for tapping at the beginning of 1914.

But the collapse of the rubber boom was already beginning to make its influence felt. All these rubber plantations are simply side-lines of big firms, whose real business is copra: and the expense of labour, the fall in prices, and the large profits to be gained from coconuts have caused a large proportion of the plantations to be abandoned, if not to be cut down to make room for their more paying rivals. It may be added that native tappers were always employed; in no case have Javanese, Malay, or Chinese tappers been imported. Rubber has been the sole rival to copra that has been tried to

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any considerable extent. Cocoa is grown to the tune of 384 hectares, and about 60 hectares are planted with coffee, as a catch crop between the coconuts. Taro, arrowroot, bananas, pineapples, and other fruits are, of course, freely cultivated everywhere, frequently as catch crops for coconuts.

The method of planting coconuts is beautifully simple. After the bush has been cleared, the big logs being usually left lying to save trouble and time, the trees are inset in triangles of nine metres (thirty feet) aside, an arrangement which works out at about 126 trees to the hectare. The best soil is that with a coral foundation, such as the flat country near the sea, or small islands, through whose loose supersoil the great matted roots of the trees work their way down to the salt-water beneath. Hill-land is not so good, besides being more difficult to work. All

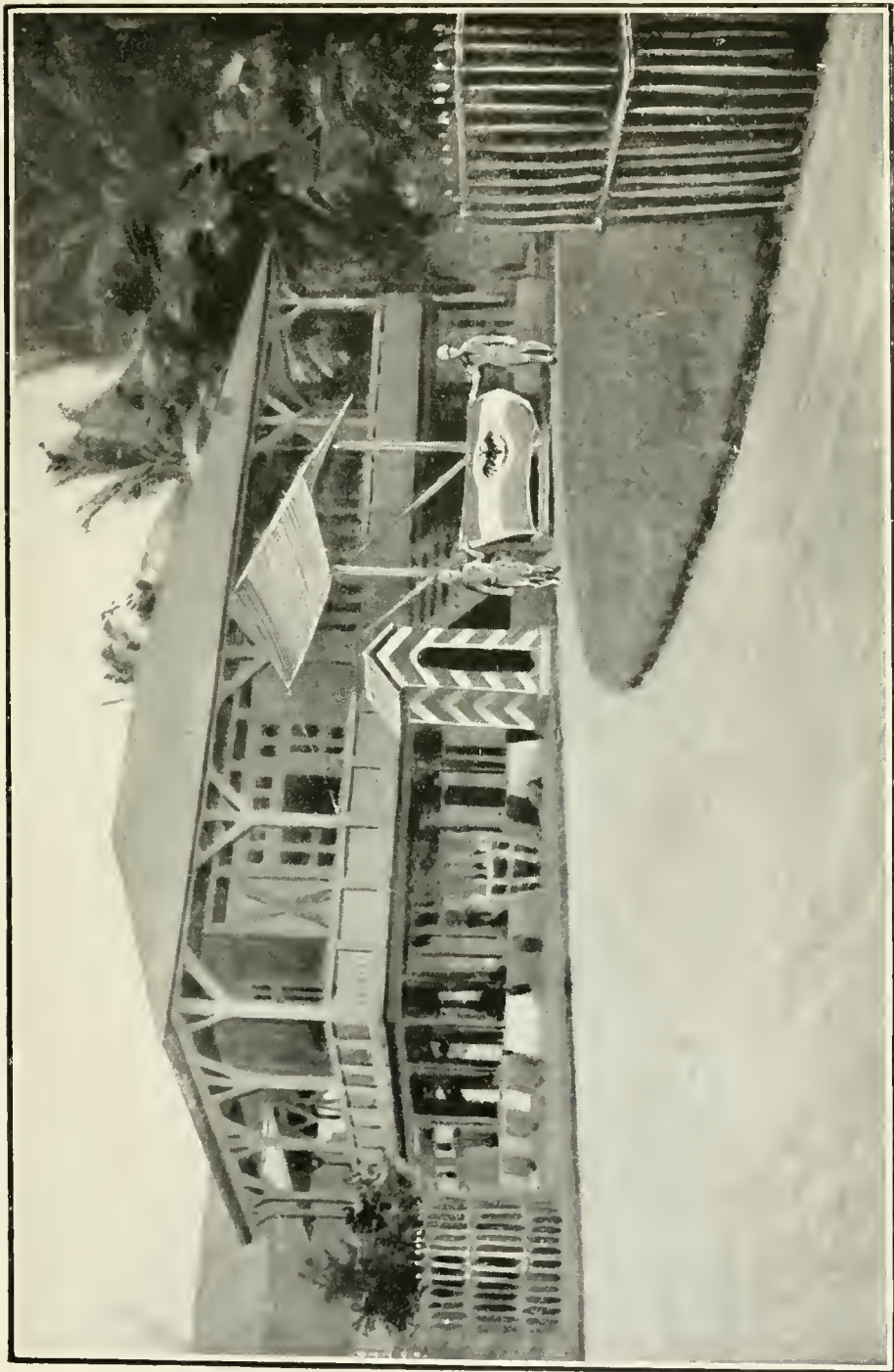
How Copra is Grown

land, however, is by law supposed to belong to the natives, and the would-be planter is therefore obliged, before starting a plantation, to obtain permission to buy land from the Government, from which he afterwards buys as much as he needs at from twenty to thirty marks per hectare. For every hundred hectares which he takes up he must show security to the value of twenty thousand marks, and has furthermore to be able to prove that from a third to a quarter of his land has been planted within the first five years, and at least one-half within the first fifteen. Speculation is thus supposed to be obviated.

The land once acquired, the planter's expenses are comparatively small, especially when one remembers that copra is worth, on an average, from £25 to £27 a ton, and even rose for a time to £38. Labour is plentiful enough; one simply charters

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a schooner and recruits as much as one wants at £5 a head on a three years' contract. As soon as the boys arrive in port, they undergo a medical inspection, and are then enrolled in the Government books. Each native receives a number, by which means the authorities keep track of his whereabouts, his length of service, wages, and so on, and are able to see to it that he is not detained beyond the expiration of his contract. A tax of 5 marks a head must be paid for each boy on the signing of the contract. The contract may be renewed if the native consents to stay, and the employer desires it; otherwise, the boy must be sent back to his own place at the expense of the employer. His wages are not high, though representing comparative affluence to his untutored standards. He is paid from 5s. to 6s. a month, one-third being deducted for tobacco; he gets from two to



THE TREASURER'S RESIDENCE, NOW CONVERTED INTO A MILITARY HOSPITAL, AT FRIEDRICH WILHELMSHAFEN,
WITH CAPTURED GERMAN IMPERIAL FLAG.

The Labourer and his Hire

three good meals a day, and every Saturday he is presented with a stick of "trade" tobacco, value one halfpenny sterling, a tin of meat, and some soap and matches. Every month he is the recipient of a new lava-lava, the simple and solitary garment, consisting of a length of gaily coloured print, with which he veils his primitive nudity. A blanket to sleep in, a bowl for his rice, are also his as soon as his contract is made. Christmas is a joyous time on a plantation. In addition to his wages, each boy becomes the delighted possessor of a variety of presents—trousers, belts, pipes, new and particularly gorgeous lava-lavas. For days beforehand the plantation re-echoes to the dying yells of pigs being butchered to make a Kanaka holiday; and between the barbecues dances of every kind, in carven masks and grotesque head-dresses, carry the spectator's mind back

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to the days, yet in the memory of the present generation, when the war-dance represented a savage reality, and the roast pigs would probably have been substituted by the bodies of enemies, murdered after every variety of unnameable torture.

The average yield of dry copra per hectare varies largely with the quality of the soil. In poor soil it may be taken as about three-quarters of a ton, but up to a ton and a quarter or a ton and a half is frequently obtained from good coral soil. As 126 trees are planted in each hectare, and six thousand nuts usually go to make a single ton of copra, it will be seen that a coconut palm is fairly prolific. The nuts are not plucked. As soon as they are thoroughly ripe they fall to the ground, are collected in carts, generally drawn by water-buffaloes of the type commonly employed for heavy traction in the East, and taken to the factory.

The Drying of Copra

Here they are split open by natives armed with heavy chopping knives, and the white inner rind, extracted with a few deft cuts, deposited in the drying-house. The old method of drying was by the natural heat of the sun; the copra was laid upon long shelves, running upon light rails, and arranged one above the other, which could be run back into the shelter of the drying shed in case of rain, somewhat like drawers in a huge cabinet. Of recent years, however, a system of drying by means of steam or hot air, which is both quicker and more thorough in its results, and produces a whiter and better quality in copra, has been widely adopted. In this case the copra is completely dried in twenty-four hours, and only the cost—about £750—in building the kilns has saved the sun-method from disappearing entirely in favour of the newer process. In 1913, 13,789 tons of copra were ex-

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ported to Germany alone, representing a total value of 5,864,045 marks, while, in strong contrast, only 728½ tons, valued at 309,635 marks, were delivered to Australia and other islands in the South Seas. An export tax of 10s. a ton added a considerable tribute to Government revenues.

It has been no longer possible, of late, to buy land outright from the Government, as was once the case. All land, according to the latest law, is tenable only on a leasehold term, the leases extending usually up to ninety-nine years, and the rent being fixed by a commission every five years, in proportion to the increased value of the property. For town lots, in Rabaul, an average rental for unimproved lands is £15 per annum. The bulk of the land is in the hands of big companies like the Hamburgische Sud-see Gesellschaft, and, in view of the fact that

Mineral Possibilities

a huge proportion of this land is still quite undeveloped, an unimproved land-tax might be useful, both as an aid to settlement and as a supplement to the revenues.

It is quite possible that New Britain in particular may yet become the home of a great gold-mining industry. Gold the island undoubtedly contains, and from time to time prospecting parties have visited the island from British New Guinea, only to be met with persistent and prohibitive discouragement from the German Government, which has itself done little to discover and nothing to develop its mineral resources. Coal, too, is to be found, as the excellent specimens in the Rabaul Lands Office sufficiently attest. But for the most part the mineralogy of German New Guinea in general, and of New Britain in particular, remains as yet an unknown factor. The secrets of

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an island three hundred miles long, into whose savage interior no white man has yet penetrated for more than sixty miles, await the solutions of the new masters of its destinies.

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