

APPENDIX I

DESCRIPTION OF THE INDIAN ARMY

BEFORE this war Indian troops had proved their loyalty and worth in many other parts of the world where smaller issues were involved—in China, Egypt, the Sudan, Ashanti, Somaliland and the Aden Hinterland, as well as in numerous Indian Frontier operations—but never, since the Indian Mutiny, had their loyalty been put to such a test as in the crisis of 1914, which menaced the very existence of the Empire itself.

For the first time Indians were called upon to fight in Europe in a "White Man's War." The manner in which the call to arms from Britain was answered from India, disclosing a brotherhood which seemed not only strange but incomprehensible to the apostles of "Kultur," has been already described.

It will be as well to correct at once a misconception which arose at the commencement of the war as to the status of the Indian Army. It was evident from many remarks which appeared in English newspapers that the Indian Army was believed to consist of volunteers whose services for the war were placed at the disposal of the Empire by the Ruling Chiefs of India.

Certainly the Indian troops were and are volunteers, but in precisely the same way as the British Army, prior to the introduction of compulsory service, was composed of volunteers. They are, however, regular troops, bound by an oath of allegiance to serve their Sovereign under any circumstances and in any part of the world. With the exception of a small force of Imperial Service troops, the

482 DESCRIPTION OF THE INDIAN ARMY

Indian regiments which fought in Europe were as much soldiers of the King as any regiment of Guards, and equally bound to obey his orders. They were ordered to come to Europe, and they came. It is the spirit in which they came, not the fact of their coming, which compels our esteem and admiration.

The purpose of this Appendix is to give a brief and simple account of the various peoples from which the units of the Indian Army Corps were drawn and the different forces which they compose.

It has been well said that the natives of India are "Warriors by tradition and descent." The saying is on the whole, but not entirely, true. Certain classes and tribes appear to be quite without physical courage and unfit for any military service, and among them may be found some of the finest-looking people of India. This would naturally render any system of universal military service unsuitable to the country; but such a system would be as unnecessary as it is unsuitable, the bulk of the people of India being brave and warlike men to whom military service is a source of great honour and prestige, looked upon by them as affording the most fitting career open to a man, whatever his birth or rank.

A clear and accurate description of the various classes of Indian soldiers is a matter of some difficulty. It cannot be dealt with completely by reference to race, locality or regiment. There are other matters necessary to consider, such as caste, religion, custom, temperament, and tradition; and there is so much consequent overlapping of features and characteristics, that scientific or methodical treatment of the subject is scarcely possible. For the present purpose it may suffice to say that the organization of the Indian Army is based mainly on considerations of race, religion, and locality. Thus, we have soldiers of distinct races: the Rajputs, Pathans, Jats, and Gurkhas; of various religions: the Sikhs, Hindus, and Mahomedans; of different localities: the Mahrattas, Dogras, Madrasis, and Punjabis, although it can hardly be said that any of these should be

DESCRIPTION 'OF THE INDIAN ARMY 483

exclusively so classified. The matter may, perhaps, be made fairly clear by the following short account of some of the principal classes and types of fighting men found in the Indian Army.

The Sikhs may with justice be considered the most important class among our Indian soldiers. Not only are they the best known to Englishmen of all the fighting men of India, with the possible exception of the Gurkhas, but they bulk more largely than any other class in the Indian Army. The Sikhs are not, strictly speaking, a distinct race: they are really a community, bound together by a spiritual tie, the Sikh religion. Amongst them there are a variety of sub-divisions of widely divergent origin. Thus the Jats are descended from the Scythians, the Khattris from the Aryans, while the Mazbis, from whom the Pioneer Regiments are largely recruited, are of aboriginal ancestry.

The home of the Sikh is the Punjab. He is generally a fine tall man of strong physique and stately bearing, with the manly virtues inculcated by his religion strongly developed. Tobacco is forbidden to him. His hair is never cut, being worn coiled up on the top of the head, while his beard is drawn back over his ears and tucked under his turban; this is large and often surmounted by a steel quoit with a razor-like edge, which can be thrown with great force and accuracy.

The chief traits of the Sikhs are a love of military adventure and a desire to make money, a combination which has led them to accept military or police service in Burma, China, Africa and other countries beyond the seas.

In the Sikh wars of 1846 and 1849 they fought the British in a manner which compelled admiration for their military genius and prowess, displaying soldierly qualities of the highest order. Since the annexation of the Punjab in the latter year, they have been our loyal adherents, and it speaks volumes for the personality of the British officer that within eight years after the war of 1849 the Sikhs were fighting by our side in the Indian Mutiny.

484 DESCRIPTION OF THE INDIAN ARMY

Three class regiments of Sikhs formed part of the Indian Corps in France, the 15th Ludhiana Sikhs, the 47th Sikhs, and the 34th Sikh Pioneers. The community was, however, largely represented also in the 27th, 33rd, 69th, and 89th Punjabis, and the 57th, 58th, and 59th Rifles, in which the Sikh companies varied from one to four.

The Jats mostly come from the Punjab, Rajputana, Agra, and Oudh. They are a thoroughbred race, generally considered to be of the same stock as, or closely allied to, the Rajputs. In one characteristic, however, they greatly differ from the latter. The Rajput disdains every employment or profession except that of bearing arms; the Jat is generally a landowner engaged chiefly in agriculture, a kind of manual labour especially despised by the haughty Rajput. By religion the Jats are Hindus. In appearance they are tall, large-limbed, and handsome, and they are usually remarkable for their toughness and capacity for enduring the greatest fatigue and privation. They are considered very fine horse-soldiers. In the Mutiny they distinguished themselves greatly against the rebels, and they have since served us well in Afghanistan and other places.

The only class regiment of Jats in the Indian Corps was the 6th Jats.

The inhabitants of the North-West Frontier of India are practically entirely and purely Musalman. From these parts come the Pathans, represented in the Indian Army Corps by a varying number of companies in the 40th Pathans and other units, such as the 27th and 33rd Punjabis, and the 57th, 58th, and 59th Rifles. The Pathans are divided into innumerable clans and are said to be of Semitic descent, even going so far as to call themselves "Beni Israel" (Children of Israel), and their claim is borne out by their features, which are distinctly of a Jewish type.

The Pathan is a tall handsome man, as a rule built in an athletic mould. His easy but swaggering gait speaks of an active life among the mountains, where he engages

in constant feud, frequently hereditary, which makes him what he is, an ideal raider or skirmisher, full of dash, but often wanting in cohesion and power of steady resistance, unless led by British officers.

The Afridis come from the Peshawar border, the Khyber Pass, and the surrounding district. They are members of a Pathan tribe, probably of Rajput origin. Intensely democratic and independent in their own home, they make splendid soldiers under good leadership, excelling, like other hillmen, as skirmishers. It has been said that the Afridi has the vices and virtues of all Pathans in an enhanced degree. Casual observers indeed have ascribed to him more vices than virtues, depicting him as ruthless, treacherous and avaricious; but Sir Robert Warburton, who, with his eighteen years' intimate acquaintance with this race, may be accepted as an authority on the matter, writes thus:—

“The Afridi lad from his earliest childhood is taught by the circumstances of his existence and life to distrust all mankind, and very often his near relations, heirs to his small plot of land by right of inheritance, are his deadliest enemies. Distrust of all mankind, and readiness to strike the first blow for the safety of his own life, have therefore become the maxims of the Afridi. If you can overcome this mistrust, and be kind in words to him, he will repay you by great devotion, and he will put up with any punishment you like to give him, except abuse.”*

The Dogras are Hindus from the district lying between the rivers Chenab and Sutlej on the slopes of the Western Himalayas. Their classification is rather geographical than racial. They are mostly men of high caste and of considerable strength of character. They are noted for their calm courage and obedience to orders, and, as a rule, are thoroughly reliable in moments of peril. In appearance they somewhat resemble the Sikhs, but are rather less in height, more sparsely built, and of fairer complexion than most Indians.

* “Eighteen Years in the Khyber,” pp. 342-3.

486 DESCRIPTION OF THE INDIAN ARMY

The only Dogra regiment with the Indian Corps was the 41st, but the class was represented by companies in other battalions.

Although the 129th Baluchis took a prominent part in much of the fighting, the name is a misnomer, as the genuine Baluchi is not now enlisted. The 129th consists of 2 companies of Punjabi Musalmans, 3 of Mahsuds, 3 of other Pathans.

The Gurkhas are the sturdy hillmen of Nepal, probably better known, by name at least, to the average Englishman than any other class of Indian soldier. They are a mixture of Mongol and Rajput, the former, as can easily be perceived from their features, predominating. Their appearance is so distinctive and so uniform that it has been said that they look as if they had been issued from the quartermaster's stores. In many ways they resemble the Japanese, being usually little more than five feet in height, but they are of much sturdier build and differ from the Japanese in expression.

There is much about the Gurkha which especially appeals to the British soldier; his friendliness, cheeriness, and adaptability make him easier to get on with than other classes. The present trench warfare is the very antithesis of the Gurkha's idea of fighting. A born shikari, he is in his glory in hill or jungle operations where his sporting instincts can have full play and he has plenty of elbow room. His native weapon is the kukri, a long curved knife with a keen cutting edge and a heavy back. With this he can cut down a tree or a man, or sharpen a pencil with equal skill.

A number of Gurkha battalions served with the Corps in France, namely, the 1st Battalion 1st King George's Own Gurkha Rifles, the 2nd Battalion 2nd King Edward's Own, the 2nd Battalion 3rd Queen Alexandra's Own, the 1st Battalion 4th, the 2nd Battalion 8th, and the 1st Battalion 9th Gurkha Rifles.

The Garhwalis are inhabitants of Garhwal, in the Himalayas, to the west of Nepal. They so closely resemble

their neighbours, the Gurkhas, that they have frequently been confused with them. Although they are not generally so thick-set and muscular as the Gurkhas, their resemblance is emphasized by their similar uniforms and weapons, including the kukri. It is said they sometimes complain that their heroic deeds go to swell the credit of the Gurkhas, in consequence of the confusion between the two races and the common ignorance of their separate identity. They are capable of great endurance and can exist for long periods without food or drink.

The Garhwalis were represented in France by the 1st and 2nd Battalions 39th Garhwal Rifles.

The Mahrattas come from the Central Provinces, the Deccan, and the Konkan. They are comparatively small men, without the elegant proportions and strength of the Sikh and Pathan or the sturdiness of the Gurkha, but with very fine constitutions and a tremendous capacity of endurance, which keep them fit for service under conditions which would disable most men. The 3rd Sappers and Miners, the 107th Pioneers, and the 125th Rifles each contained a small element of this class.

The Musalmans, or soldiers of the Mahomedan faith, come from various districts of India, their different classes being distinguished generally by reference to their respective localities. Thus, we have the Punjabi Musalmans, Madrasi Musalmans, Hindustani Musalmans, Deccani Musalmans, and others. Of these the Punjabi Musalmans may be considered the most important, at least as regards numbers. Coming, as the Musalmans do, from various races, their quality is not uniform, but they are good all-round soldiers with an attachment to their officers which is proverbial. They may, on the whole, be said to be steady and reliable rather than brilliant in any particular respect.

From such men as those described above, and a few other classes of less importance numerically, the Indian Forces have been raised. Passing over the irregular forces of the great Indian Chiefs, with which we need not concern ourselves for the present purpose, we have the Regular

488 DESCRIPTION OF THE INDIAN ARMY

Indian Army and the Imperial Service Troops, composed of natives of India. The former are directly employed by the Government of India; the latter are specially raised and maintained by Indian rulers themselves and are kept distinct from their ordinary troops, in order that they may be placed at the disposal of the Government when occasion requires.

The French appear to have been the first Europeans to raise Indian regiments during their short period of ascendancy in the middle of the eighteenth century. The English East India Company soon followed their example, and by 1759, two years after the battle of Plassey, had about six regular Indian battalions in Madras, and a few years later, similar corps in Bombay and Bengal. These "Presidency Armies" grew and developed during the wars of the later part of the century, and by 1795, when a general reconstruction of the Indian forces took place, we find about 24,000 such troops in Bengal, a similar number in Madras, and 9000 in Bombay, including infantry, cavalry, and artillery. A further reorganization and renumbering took place in 1824. During this period and up to the Mutiny of 1857 these forces again and again rendered us good service, not only in India itself, but in many places overseas, especially during the Napoleonic Wars. As early as 1762, Indian troops from Madras assisted in the capture of Manila; in 1797, forces from Madras and Bengal helped at the capture of Ceylon; and in 1801 Bombay infantry were with us in Egypt. For nearly a century prior to the Mutiny, Indian soldiers had served us so well and had shown such loyalty and attachment to their English officers, that it was difficult to credit the news of their revolt in 1857. On the whole, in fact, the Indian armies remained loyal, the Mutiny being practically confined to the soldiers of Bengal. The armies of Madras and Bombay generally stood by us; so did the Sikhs and Gurkhas; whilst Pathans and Punjabis came freely to our assistance. It may indeed be doubted whether the bulk of the Bengal soldiery were themselves essentially disloyal. They appear rather

to have been misled and seduced from their loyalty by a few unprincipled leaders.

The Mutiny, with its consequent transfer of India to the Crown, resulted in a remodelling of the Indian forces, or rather, in the formation of a new Royal Army in place of the Company's Army. The part taken in the Mutiny by the native artillery of Bengal determined the Government to restrict the employment of Indians as artillerymen in the future to a very few light mountain batteries. The cavalry, with some exceptions in Madras, was organized on the "Silladar" system, the main principle of which is that the trooper provides his own horse, uniform, and equipment, with the exception of firearms, and receives considerably higher pay than a soldier of the Non-Silladar Cavalry. This system has been found to appeal to the best classes of horsemen and to produce splendid cavalry.

As regards the Army generally one of the most important questions to be settled was whether there should be "class regiments," or "class companies" and "class squadrons," that is, whether a regiment should consist solely of one race, or members of one religion, or whether the different companies only of a regiment should be so uniformly constituted. In the old army, men of various races or creeds were mixed in a manner which was not, at this later time, considered advisable. Ultimately, most of the regiments became class-company regiments, the Gurkha, Brahman, Rajput, Dogra, Jat, and some of the Sikh regiments remaining entirely homogeneous. So we find, in several of the Punjabi and Sikh regiments, distinct companies of Punjabi Musalmans, Pathans, Sikhs, Dogras, and Afridis; in Mahratta regiments, distinct companies of Mahrattas and Musalmans; in Baluchi regiments, distinct companies of Mahsuds and other Pathans, and Punjabi Musalmans; and other similar combinations.

Since the Mutiny, many changes and reforms in the administration of the Army have been carried out. In 1895 the three Presidency Armies, *i.e.* those of Bengal,

490 DESCRIPTION OF THE INDIAN ARMY

Madras, and Bombay, each with separate administration and Commander-in-Chief, were abolished, being replaced by four Lieutenant-Generals' commands with a Commander-in-Chief of the whole. These reforms were carried on and developed by Lord Kitchener during his term as Commander-in-Chief in India from 1902 to 1909. He abolished the old system of five commands, and at the present day there are two Armies, the Northern and the Southern, each commanded by a Lieutenant-General with his own staff, the supreme command of the whole Indian forces being vested, under the Governor-General in Council, in the Commander-in-Chief, assisted by the Head Quarters Staff.

The Regular Indian Army is now composed of 39 regiments of Cavalry and 139 battalions of Infantry, besides Mountain Artillery and Sappers and Miners, numbering in all about 160,000 Indian ranks. The system of enlistment is entirely voluntary, recruits being admitted between the ages of 16 and 25, their height and measurements varying for different services. The number of applicants for service is frequently in excess of the vacancies, especially in the Silladar Cavalry.

The superior officers in every Indian regiment are British. The highest rank of the Indian officers in Cavalry regiments is the Risaldar-Major, who is the confidential adviser of the British Commandant in matters relating to the Indian ranks. He may be likened to our rank of Major. Next come the Risaldars and Ressaidars, of whom there are seven in a regiment, answering roughly to our Captains. Each half squadron has its Jemadar, who may be described as the Indian Lieutenant, an officer of this rank also acting as Woordie-Major, or Indian Adjutant. Immediately below these come the Kot Daffadar, or Quartermaster-Sergeant, who is the senior noncommissioned officer, and other Daffadars or Sergeants.

In the Infantry and other branches the corresponding officers are the Subadar-Major, Subadars, the Jemadars, of whom one is the Indian Adjutant, the Havildar-Major,

DESCRIPTION OF THE INDIAN ARMY 491

the Quartermaster-Havildar, Havildars or Sergeants, and the Naiks or Corporals.

A private in the Cavalry is called a Sowar and in the Infantry a Sepoy.

The other great force of Indian troops upon which we can rely in our hour of need consists of soldiers of the great Feudatory Chiefs of India, specially designed for Imperial purposes, and known as the Imperial Service Troops. They are raised and maintained by the Indian rulers, and are composed entirely of Indian officers and men of the State to which the particular corps belongs, although British officers assist in such matters as training and equipment. They had their origin in 1885, in consequence of the fear of an attack by Russia on the North-West Frontier, at a time when the Indian Army had been reduced after the Afghan War. The danger of the situation impressed the Indian rulers with the necessity of being ready to assist the Government of India in its defence. The Nizam of Hyderabad placed his troops at the disposal of the Government and offered to contribute a large sum of money for the purpose of Imperial defence. Other rulers followed suit, the result of the movement being that almost every State of any size contributed a quota to the Imperial Service Troops. The ready manner in which these forces were placed at the disposal of the Government at the commencement of the present war demonstrates strongly their great importance to the Empire which they had already served so well in China, Somaliland, Chitral, Tirah, and other parts of the world.

Three decorations are especially reserved for the Indian ranks.

1. "The Order of British India," conferred on Indian commissioned officers for long, faithful, and honourable service, has two classes, which carry with them the titles of "Sardar Bahadur" and "Bahadur" respectively.

2. "The Indian Order of Merit," given for personal bravery, irrespective of rank or service. It is divided into three classes, advancement to a higher class being granted

492 DESCRIPTION OF THE INDIAN ARMY

to a man who is already in possession of the next lower class on again distinguishing himself. Each class of both these orders carries with it extra monthly pay.

3. "The Indian Distinguished Service Medal," which is awarded for individual instances of distinguished service in peace or on active service.

APPENDIX II

HEALTH OF THE INDIAN TROOPS IN FRANCE

It was feared that the rapid transition from the dry, warm climate of India to the cold and damp of Flanders would lead to a great increase of sickness among the troops, both British and Indian. These fears happily proved to be unfounded.

In peace time a daily average of 3 per 1000 of admissions to hospital was calculated as a probable standard for war conditions. In practice, it was found to work out at 2 per 1000, and as improvements were made in our method of trench warfare, in the shape of better dug-outs and the draining of trenches, even this average tended to decrease.

This remarkable result must be largely ascribed to the skill and self-sacrificing zeal of the Royal Army Medical Corps and the Indian Medical Service, under the command of Colonel (now Brigadier-General) W. W. Pike, C.M.G., D.S.O., R.A.M.C.

The work of the medical branch of the Service is not one which comes very prominently into the limelight. Its chief reward is found in the admiration and gratitude of the troops over whose health and general well-being the medical officers keep such careful watch.

It was expected that pulmonary affections, such as pneumonia and bronchitis, would be common, but these, as well as malaria and dysentery, were rare, while gastric diseases due to changes of food and water were almost unknown.

Influenza and trench fever occurred among the Indians in much the same proportion as amongst the British. The

494 HEALTH OF THE INDIAN TROOPS

former, however, were rather more prone to "trench feet" than the latter; on the other hand, they were practically free from that new and insidious disease of the trenches, Albuminuria, although the British in the same area suffered to a considerable degree.

Sanitation has been defined as the art of practically applying the laws of hygiene to individual environments. Conservancy is that branch of sanitation which deals with the disposal of waste products. Now, as hygiene is the science of health maintenance, it is obvious that the sanitation of an army in the field is a vital factor in military efficiency.

Those who have lived in India, even for a short period, learn intuitively the elements of sanitation. Deprived of the conveniences of modern civilization, they must adopt the more primitive methods of sanitation and conservancy for their own comfort as well as health.

Indians are being daily educated in these matters, and in regiments, owing to the class of men and the discipline involved, sanitation had reached a high standard before the war. All ranks of the Indian Army Corps therefore entered the field with a sound working knowledge of the important questions of sanitation and conservancy. They not only maintained but improved the standard, as was shown by the health of the troops under very trying and novel conditions of climate and surroundings.

Further adjuncts to health were introduced, such as drying rooms for clothes, laundries, and baths.

In the summer of 1915, when the fly pest was at its worst, a Special Commission was sent to France by the British Museum to investigate the causes and advise as to its prevention. In a subsequent circular the Commission specially commented on the good efforts of the Indian Army Corps to combat this plague, in the following words: "The Commission desires to express its admiration of the able and energetic manner in which potential breeding-places of flies have been dealt with throughout the area occupied by the Indian Corps."

HEALTH OF THE INDIAN TROOPS 495

This incident, small perhaps in itself, sufficiently indicates the work done and the importance attached to sanitation by all branches of the Medical Service with the Indian Army Corps.

The method of dealing with the wounded in trench warfare necessitated much consideration, and all existing systems had to be revised and adapted to the new conditions.

It must be remembered that the almost continuous shell fire made the task of the removal of wounded a very difficult and dangerous operation, and the success with which it was carried out speaks for the bravery, devotion, and skill of the Medical Service on which the onus of the work devolved.

During the first few months after the arrival of the Indian Corps, the following were the arrangements in force.

The wounded were attended in the trenches by the regimental medical officers, assisted by two men per company of the battalion, who carried such of the patients as were unable to walk, when a chance offered, to the Regimental Aid Posts which were situated in the safest positions procurable, at a short distance in rear of the trenches.

Next came the posts known as Field Ambulances, each of which was divided into Bearer and Tent sections. The bearers went forward with a small personnel, mostly with horsed ambulances, until they got into touch with the Regimental Aid Posts, when they established positions known as Advanced Dressing Stations, to which the wounded were transferred by stretcher-bearers as rapidly as possible. Thence, after the first field dressings had been inspected and, if necessary, readjusted, the wounded were removed to the Dressing Stations established two or three miles in rear of the trenches by the Tent Divisions of the Field Ambulances. In rear again of the Dressing Stations were the Clearing Hospitals, with their attendant columns of motor ambulances.

496 HEALTH OF THE INDIAN TROOPS

At daybreak reports were collected of the number of wounded in the Dressing Stations, after which the motor ambulances conveyed them to the Clearing Hospitals on the line of rail. Here the wounded were carefully attended to, and those fit to travel were got ready for the journey by train to the base and thence by hospital ships to oversea hospitals.

The weak link in this chain was the necessity for transporting the wounded by hand between the Aid Posts and the Advanced Dressing Stations.

A few months after the arrival of the Corps, the Royal Engineers laid a light trolley line from a point about 2000 yards in rear to the firing line, for the purpose of taking supplies up at night. This line was under the charge of Captain Frost, Supply and Transport Corps, to whose good service in this connection during the action of the 25th September, 1915, reference has already been made.

The trucks were then adapted for the carriage of stretchers, and after taking supplies to the front line, they returned with the wounded from the First Aid Posts. This system presented two great advantages.

- (1) The more rapid and comfortable removal of the wounded.

- (2) Saving of labour, as four to six bearers could manage four wounded men on a truck, instead of at least four bearers to carry each wounded man.

On one occasion 2300 wounded were transported by this method in twenty-four hours.

Since those days light railways have been laid in many places along the line, and experience has improved the method, but it is believed that the Indian Corps can claim to be the pioneers in this direction.

The adoption of a standard system of evacuation of wounded is due to the initiative of Colonel Pike, the Deputy Director of Medical Services with the Indian Corps. After consulting all the medical officers on this important subject, Colonel Pike drafted a pamphlet entitled, "Regimental Medical Aid in Trench Warfare," which was

HEALTH OF THE INDIAN TROOPS 497

published in the R.A.M.C. Journal and stills holds its place as a guide in any form of stationary warfare.

In this, as in all his strenuous work, Colonel Pike, who has since been awarded the C.M.G. for his invaluable services, was most ably assisted by Captain F. D. Cunningham, R.A.M.C., to whom the Corps in general and the Head Quarters Staff in particular owe a debt of gratitude for his never-failing skill and kindly attention.

Two circumstances have prevented the mention of more than a very few instances of the wonderful gallantry and devotion to duty displayed by the Medical Services of the Indian Corps. Space was limited, and great difficulty was experienced in obtaining particulars of individual acts.

The official list of rewards for services in France granted to all ranks of the Indian Medical Services (excluding R.A.M.C.) contains the names of seventy-six recipients, and for each instance of bravery or devotion which has met with recognition, there were numbers of unrecorded cases.

This list includes the humble Kahar or stretcher-bearer of the Field Ambulance. The silent heroism of these men has been remarkable in every war in which Indian troops have been engaged. Unarmed and unwarlike, they have gone about their work on the battlefields, meeting, many of them, the death from which they sought to save others, looking for no reward save the knowledge of duty well performed. However great the danger, the writers have never heard of *a single case in which a Kahar flinched from his duty*. They were all heroes.

To these men and to the gallantry and self-devotion of the regimental stretcher-bearers is due the fact that so few wounded were abandoned upon the battlefields. The Indian Corps will never forget the debt it owes to these courageous men.

As an instance of the spirit which animated these humble servants of the Empire, the following is worthy of record. At the commencement of the battle of Neuve

498 HEALTH OF THE INDIAN TROOPS

Chapelle an officer of the Royal Engineers relates that he saw two Kahars carrying a wounded man on a stretcher under fire. As they were passing, one of the Kahars was badly wounded by shrapnel. He had just sufficient strength left to sign to his fellow Kahar not to drop the stretcher. They placed it gently on the ground and then this brave man collapsed in a heap. As Captain Bird, the officer who relates the story, remarks, "Perhaps it was only a small episode, but it shows you what the Kahars are."

Finally, as regards the arrangements in the field and in the hospitals, ashore and afloat, for the due observance by Indian soldiers of their religious customs, a short extract from an interview with the heroic Subadar Mir Dast, V.C., reported in the *Times* of India, carries the weight of high authority.

In reply to a question as to whether the feeding arrangements were satisfactory, the Subadar is reported to have made the following remarks :—

"The feeding arrangements were excellent; they left nothing to be desired. We got all we wanted and our religious susceptibilities were scrupulously respected. The Hindu soldiers had their own cooking arrangements according to their own fashion; and so had the Mahomedan soldiers. It is this arrangement which has made the lot of the Indian soldier so happy in the battlefield. Even in hospitals our religious feelings are strictly guarded, and we have full liberty and every facility in respect of observing the prayer times, etc. In respect of this, so far as the Pavilion Hospital * is concerned, we are thankful to Colonel Campbell and Colonel Macleod for their great kindness to us."

The magnitude of the task of the medical officers can be grasped from the figures of wounded of the British and Indian units. Up to the 10th November, 1915, these amounted to 23,627. To this total must be added the number of sick who required attention. For these the figures are not readily available, but they can hardly have

* At Brighton.

HEALTH OF THE INDIAN TROOPS 499

amounted to less than 18,000 during the same period, at the daily rate of 2 per 1000.

In addition to these cases, the medical officers had to grapple with the heavy work of sanitation and conservancy, as well as the inoculation of the troops against typhoid fever.

APPENDIX III

THE INDIAN SOLDIERS' FUND

No history of the Indian Corps in Flanders would be complete without an account, however brief, of the work of the Indian Soldiers' Fund which owes its inception to the Order of St John of Jerusalem, whose Sovereign Head and Patron is His Majesty the King-Emperor.

The Fund was inaugurated on the 1st October, 1914, when a Committee was formed under the chairmanship of Sir John Hewett, the members being ladies and gentlemen who, from their connection with India in an official or private capacity, were anxious to do everything possible to assist our Indian troops in their severe trials in Europe; with these were associated some distinguished members of different Indian communities.

Lord Curzon of Kedleston very generously provided a Head Quarters by giving the free use of his residence, No. 1, Carlton House Terrace.

The original objects of the Fund were threefold.

(1) To maintain the Lady Hardinge Hospital at Brockenhurst Park.

(2) To supply comforts of all kinds to all hospitals in Great Britain and France in which Indian wounded were treated.

(3) To supplement the clothing and comforts supplied by Government to Indian troops on service.

From the very inauguration of the Fund the late Lord Roberts took the liveliest interest in its welfare, and its Head Quarters was one of the last places visited by him before his final journey to France.

THE INDIAN SOLDIERS' FUND 501

Appeals for subscriptions were made to the general public and to various bodies, with the result that up to the 20th November, 1915, donations totalling £151,762 had been received. A leading part in this work was taken by the City Sub-Committee, with Mr. C. C. McLeod, formerly a well-known resident of Calcutta, as chairman. With such zeal did this Committee work that, although many of the great commercial houses in London and elsewhere had already been approached, a sum of over £45,000 has been obtained, and subscriptions still continue to come in.

In addition to cash, the British public made most generous gifts of clothing, amounting to some 200,000 garments. These were dealt with by the Warehouse Committee under Lady Sydenham, as also were the comforts, of which a large supply was received. A working-party Sub-Committee was further formed under the Hon. Gertrude Kinnaird, with Doctor Carter as Secretary.

The widespread sympathy felt for the Indian troops is well illustrated by the various classes of persons who assisted in this work. Amongst these were invalids, a society of blind girls, old-age pensioners, lonely people in remote cottages, and large, well-equipped working parties in cities under the leadership of the Mayoress. These working parties, in addition to the bales sent direct to hospitals, supplied 44,000 articles, such as shirts, belts, mufflers.

The self-sacrificing spirit in which the Committee and their assistants carried on their work is proved by the fact that the expenditure on Head Quarters establishment amounted, up to the 15th November, 1915, to 0.75 of the receipts and 1.36 of the expenditure.

As regards object (1) mentioned earlier, a hospital named after the late Lady Hardinge of Penshurst was established by the kindness of Mrs. Morant in Brockenhurst Park near Southampton. The building was erected by the State under the advice of Sir Havelock Charles and

502 THE INDIAN SOLDIERS' FUND

Colonel Horrocks. It accommodated 500 patients, want of space alone preventing an extension to 650 beds.

The hospital was staffed by ten retired officers of the Indian Medical Service, under Lt-Colonel Perry, C.I.E. The nursing staff consisted of a matron and assistant-matron with nineteen nurses specially chosen for their knowledge of the languages and requirements of Indian patients. Their work was, strictly speaking, not that of nursing, but of general supervision and control.

The hospital was opened on the 20th January, 1915, and the number of patients treated up to the 20th November, 1915, was 1863.

The mortality was kept down to the surprisingly low figure of 1 per cent., a striking evidence of the skill and care exercised in dealing with such large numbers of patients, the majority of whose wounds were septic on admission.

By the kindness of Sir James Clarke, sixty members of the St John Ambulance Brigade were engaged in work at the hospital, all menial service being performed by Indian servants.

The conveyance of sick or wounded Indians with the greatest possible comfort and despatch was facilitated by the gracious gift of a motor-ambulance by Their Majesties and by the generous offer of a motor-ambulance convoy of fifty vehicles by Mr. Arthur du Cros, M.P., the Hon. Gideon Murray and others, who also promised to equip and maintain the convoy. To deal with this branch, a Motor Sub-Committee was formed under the chairmanship of Lord Norreys. The convoy commenced work in France on the 1st March, 1915, and performed most valuable service. The total number of patients carried up to November, 1915, was approximately 50,000.

In addition to the Lady Hardinge Hospital, comforts were supplied by the Fund to eight other similar institutions in England, twenty in France, one in Alexandria, and also to nine hospital ships.

The extent and variety of the work can be judged

THE INDIAN SOLDIERS' FUND 503

by the following figures, taken at random, of articles supplied :—

Socks	78,000	Handkerchiefs	85,000
Balaclava caps	12,000	Sweets	125,000 lbs.
Cigarettes	22,000,000	Envelopes	850,000
Gramophones	40	Periscopes	2000
Religious books	7000	Footballs	130

The well-being of Indian prisoners of war was also not overlooked. Up to November, 1915, the Committee were in possession of the names of 500 prisoners in Germany, and General Sir Alfred Gaselee undertook the work of representing the Fund in association with the Prisoners of War Committee.

The first step was to ensure that the prisoners had a proper supply of clothing. Accordingly, a Red Cross kit-bag was sent by name to each prisoner. These bags contained a useful assortment of underwear and comforts. An additional supply of clothing was also despatched and acknowledgments of receipt duly arrived.

Every week consignments of 480 tins of condensed milk, 100 lbs. of sweets, and 10,000 cigarettes were sent off and duly reached their destination. Arrangements were also made, through Switzerland, for the supply of bread. For Brahman and other prisoners, whose caste restrictions prevented their eating bread prepared by Europeans, material was furnished to enable them to bake their own supply.

The Committee have acknowledged their obligations to numerous subscribers, not only to those who have given money, but also to many, themselves in poor circumstances, who have sent gifts of garments and comforts; also to the War Office and India Office and to the St John Ambulance Association in India, which latter has been of the greatest assistance in many ways.

The Fund received most grateful acknowledgments from Sir James Willcocks and Lt-General Rimington, and its

504 THE INDIAN SOLDIERS' FUND

efforts evoked the heartfelt gratitude of the Indian Forces in France and elsewhere.

The writers can testify that it was impossible to visit the trenches, billets or hospitals without meeting at every turn evidence of the solicitude with which the comfort and well-being of the Indian soldier were considered in every detail.

There can be no doubt that the excellent health enjoyed by the Indian troops, contrary to all expectation, must be greatly ascribed to the devoted work of the Committee of the Indian Soldiers' Fund and their assistants.