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SPECIAL LECTURE.

Friday, December 7, 1877.

GENERAL SIR RICHARD WILBRAHAM, K.C.B., in the Chair.

ON THE CAMPAIGN IN ARMENIA IN 1877

By C. B. NORMAN, Esq., late *Times* Correspondent at the Seat of War.

It was with no small diffidence that I accepted the very flattering offer of the Council to deliver a lecture in this theatre on the Campaign in Armenia. A novice in the art of war, it seems absurd that I should venture to tread on professional ground in the presence of professional men who have made that art their study; but when General Stephenson was good enough to assure me that my experiences would not only be interesting to the many but might prove instructive to the few, I felt that it was a duty, as well as an honour, to accede to his request. I felt, too, that the courtesy extended to my comrade, Mr. Archibald Forbes, and to myself, marks an epoch in the history of Special War Correspondents, and proves, that although at times we may be considered the "curses of modern warfare," yet that when our side is not in, we are welcomed and appreciated by the Officers of the British Army.

It is not my province, nor is it my intention, to enter into a disquisition on the causes of the war. Our country, as I have no doubt you also, gentlemen, are, is divided on the subject of the Eastern Question; one party appears to consider it perfectly fair and justifiable to enforce Christianity at the point of the bayonet; another, aghast at such a doctrine, deems it necessary for the support of British interests to uphold, at all cost, what appears to many a corrupt, decaying empire; whilst a third, steering clear of these two extremes, maintains that a war between the Moslem and the Slav no more endangers our communications with India in 1877 than it did in 1829. I think, however, all are agreed on one point, and that is, that when England's honour is assailed her interests are in jeopardy, and that she is better prepared now than she ever was before to defend them.

For my own part, I shall endeavour to give you an impartial, unbiassed description of the campaign, dwelling more particularly on those points that came under my own particular observation. Prior to this, I will, with your permission, briefly run through the war of 1828-29. In doing so I am aware that I shall be travelling over

ground lucidly explained to you in a recent lecture by the Chairman. It may be that some here were not present on that occasion ; however, at the risk of repeating much that you have been told before, I will glance at Paskiewitch's operations, for I think that in comparing the two campaigns we shall find several points worthy of notice. We shall find that in spite of an interval of half a century, during which the campaign in Armenia had doubtless been carefully thought over, and plans for its successful accomplishment pigeon-holed in the War Office in St. Petersburg, in spite of a peace of twenty years, during which we certainly thought she was preparing for war, Russia has failed to profit by the lessons taught in her great campaigns of the past decade, has adhered to her ancient tactics, has committed the same mistakes in 1877 that she did in 1829, has been defeated by her old foe on the ground on which she was victorious fifty years ago ; and, finally, only with a supreme effort, has succeeded in accomplishing that which all the world, a few short months ago, thought would be a mere military promenade. I think that this is a lesson England may well lay to heart ; it may be summarised in a few words—undue depreciation of the qualities of an enemy.

To turn, then, to Paskiewitch's campaign. On the 8th of December, 1827, Russia being then engaged in hostilities with Persia, war with Turkey was declared. Hastily concluding peace with the Shah, the Russian general turned his thoughts to the conquest of Armenia and reduction of the Ottoman ports of Poti and Batoom. For this purpose he determined on three distinct lines of operations.

1st. On the Black Sea coast.

2nd. Viâ the Allaghoz Mountains into the heart of Armenia.

3rd. By Ararat, and the course of the Araxes for the same point.

The intentions of Persia, notwithstanding the recent treaty, were not quite understood, so a corps of observation was established on that frontier at Khoi. The Russian plan necessarily included the reduction of the fortresses of Ardahan, Kars, Akhalzik, Hertwitz, Akhalkalaki, and Bayazid, before crossing the Soghanli Daghi. The Turks, under Halib Pasha, busied themselves throughout the winter in strengthening the works at these places, reinforcing the garrisons, organizing into irregular regiments the inhabitants of Lazistan, Koordistan, and the Karapapaks of Shoreagel. They, too, mobilized an army of 40,000 men on the Soghanli Range, with the intention of striking a blow at any force advancing either from Erivan or Alexandropol. They also fomented an insurrection amongst the Abkhasian and Mingrelian tribes in the Caucasus.

It was not until the 12th June that Paskiewitch crossed the border at Goomri, and moving rapidly to Magardjik, commenced the bombardment of Kars on the 20th ; on the 23rd it was taken by assault. 151 guns and 11,000 men being captured with it. Leaving a strong garrison in the place, the Russian General, advanced by Zaim, and the eastern shores of Lake Tchildir to Akhalkalaki, which, on the 24th July, was assaulted and captured. Detaching a column under General Sacken to Hertwitz, that place surrendered on the 26th of the same

Reduced from the Russian Staff Map. — For the sake of clearness the mountains are omitted.

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month; the same day reinforcements reached the Russians from Goomri, and hearing that a Turkish army 30,000 strong advancing from Ardahan, Paskiewitch moves towards Akhalzik to them, and a battle ensued on the 9th August, at Koltshikin, the confluence of the Kur and Kooblian rivers. The Turks were driven from their entrenched camp with a loss of ten guns, and fled in disorder towards Ardahan. Paskiewitch the following day invests Akhalzik, was assaulted on the night of the 15th August, and capitulated the following day. In the meantime General Bergmann, from Karabagh, had been directed to advance on Ardahan, and Mouravieff was now detached from Akhalzik for the same purpose. Before these forces could meet, it surrendered to Bergmann on the 16th August.

In the meantime the right column under General Hesse had captured Poti, with 43 guns and 2,000 men, whilst Prince Tchavtza, with the left column, had subjugated the province of Bayazid, pushed on as far as Toprak-kale. Here, being threatened by the Pasha of Moosh, he is strengthened by two battalions from Khozvi, feeling that his communications are insecure as long as the city of Bayazid is in Ottoman hands, he retires through Dijadin, and attacks a large body of Koords, who cover the place. These being defeated, Bayazid capitulates on the 28th August. Anxious to obtain supplies, Tchavtza once more enters the Alishgird plain, and a sharp engagement at Grakom, having effected his purpose, though much harassed by Koords in his rear, the column retires.

Paskiewitch, feeling that his forces are not strong enough to risk an advance across the Soghanli Dag, now cantons his men as follows:

Akhalzik..	2,300	infantry,	326	cavalry,	4	guns,	under	Bebuto
Kars ..	2,400	"	281	"	12	"	"	Bergmann
Bayazid ..	8,800	"	376	"	18	"	"	Pankratov

The remainder returned to winter quarters in Russia. Thus Paskiewitch had no reason to be dissatisfied with the success of the campaign. In five months he had subjugated the provinces of Poti, Akhalzik, and Bayazid, he had captured three fortresses and smaller fortified towns, whilst 313 guns, 195 standards, and 10,000 prisoners were brought back to Russia, and his losses amounted to 3,200 men out of a total of 18,000 employed in the war.

During the winter, the Osmanli redoubled their efforts to save the province, the old commanders were disgraced, and Salegh and Husein Pashas nominated in their places. The plan of operations thus decided on was to advance direct on Kars by the Soghanli with an army of 80,000 men, whilst a second of 50,000, advancing from Bayazid, was to recapture Bayazid and move on Erivan. Emissaries were dispatched to stir up insurrection in Ghuriel and Abkhasia, and a force of 20,000 men sent to recapture Akhalzik. Mouravieff advances to Kars, and after a sharp engagement on the 28th February the Turks are defeated and the place relieved, not, however, before they had sacrificed all the Christian inhabitants of the town.

General Hesse in the meantime suppressed the insurrection in Ghuriel with a loss of 137 men.

On the 19th May Paskiewitch, hearing that the enemy had 50,000 men near Hassankali, rejoined head-quarters at Akhalkalaki and prepared to resume the offensive. A corps under Mouravieff was detached to Akhalzik. Pankratieff at Bayazid was directed to send a force to Karadjuren, near Kars, whilst Paskiewitch, foreseeing the relief of that fortress would be the first object of the Turks, placed himself at Beghli Ahmed. Early in June it appeared that the Osmanli had taken up their position in two columns, one under Salegh Pasha at Zewin; a second, under Hakki Pasha, at Mellidooz. On the 11th Paskiewitch advanced from Kotanli, masking his design by threatening Hakki Pasha's front, moved his main body down the Sakin Pass, cut in between Zewin and Mellidooz, and on the 19th, descending from the Tchakirbaba *viâ* Kainley, attacked Salegh Pasha on the very spot the battle of Zewin was fought on, on the 25th of the same month this year. Hakki Pasha, threatened in front by Burstoff's column at Sara Kamysh, dared not come to the assistance of his chief, who was signally defeated, losing 12 guns and 2,000 prisoners. The following day, the 20th June, Paskiewitch, moving by Kara Orghan, took Hakki Pasha in rear, capturing 15 guns and the Turkish commander with 700 prisoners. The Russian General at once follows up the Turkish army, passing through Kuipri Kui on the 23rd, occupied Hassan Kale on the 24th, where he finds 29 guns; on the 25th he encamps on the Nabi Tchai, and on the 28th Erzeroom is surrendered. Later on, the Russians advanced towards Trebizond as far as Baiboort; but the peace of Adrianople in August stopped all further operations. The frontier was rectified by an International Commission, Erzeroom, Kars, Ardahan, and Bayazid were evacuated, and the Russian army moved back to Georgia.

To turn now to the operations of the present campaign. War was declared on the 24th April last, but for many months previously it was well known that it could not be long deferred, and both nations made every endeavour to meet the coming storm.

The Turkish organization is perfectly powerless for offensive purposes, though admirably adapted for defence, and thus the Porte turned its attention to strengthening the fortresses barring the road to Armenia. For this purpose, cargoes of heavy Krupp guns were dispatched to Trebizond for transport to Ardahan, Kars, and Erzeroom, but so dilatory was the Seraskierate that the first consignment only reached the eastern coast of the Black Sea after the declaration of war. None were in time to take part in the defence of either Kars or Ardahan. The Porte also determined to adhere to the plan of causing a rising in the Caucasus, although well aware that both in 1828 and in 1855 this movement, whilst denuding Armenia of many men, had no effect on the results of the campaign.

The frontier line, commencing from Fort Nicolai on the Black Sea, runs in a south-easterly direction to the Arpa Lake, then following the course of the Arpa River until it joins the Aras, where it juts forward in a wedge-shaped course to the west as far as the Aghri Dagh Mountain, whence, turning easterly, it skirts the northern shores of the

Balikly Lake, and runs to Ararat, where the Russian, Persian and Turkish frontiers meet. The line between the two former states runs in an easterly, while that between the two latter states southerly, course.

The plan of the Russians, it was surmised, would be similar followed in 1828-9, viz., one column, operating on Batoom, endeavour to seize that port and to cripple the insurrection in Khasia, another would undertake the capture of Ardahan and whilst a third would operate on Bayazid and the line of the Aras.

This surmise was strengthened, because, during the winter, it came known that corps were being mobilised at Kutais, Akhalkalaki, Alexandropol, and Erivan. The chief command of the army was vested in the Grand Duke Michael, but the actual director of operations in Armenia was one Loris Melikoff, an Armenian of the princely house of Mellian.

The following were the details of their force:

1st. The 40th division assembled at Kutais for the purpose of operating against Batoom. It was commanded by Lieutenant-General Oklobjia. It consisted of 16 battalions of infantry, 6 batteries of artillery, and 2 regiments of Cossacks;.

2nd. The main army under Melikoff was mobilised at Alexandropol and comprised the division of the grenadiers of the Caucasus, the 38th and the 39th divisions, with a division of cavalry, a brigade of sappers and the brigade of rifles of the Caucasus.

3rd. At Erivan the 19th and the 38th divisions were massed in a complete division of cavalry and 96 guns.

This army nominally consisted of 90,000 infantry, 15,000 cavalry, 2,500 sappers, and 290 field guns, whereas, I am assured on excellent authority, that at the time of invasion it did not exceed that number.

I must own, I was not very much surprised, after the relief of Constantinople, to find that the Russian strength had been much over-estimated. On my journey through Europe to the Asiatic seat of war, I had the pleasure of travelling with Lieutenant-Colonel Stracey, of the Grenadier Guards, who had been spending his leave in the Russian and Turkish camps, on the Pruth and the Danube. Amongst other valuable information that that officer was kind enough to furnish me with, was this, that the Russian army in Europe was just about half the strength it was reported to be. I found Colonel Stracey's estimate equally applicable to the Asiatic army, which numbered 50,000, not 100,000 men. Brag is a good game to play if it frightens your enemy in the field; but if they enter it fully prepared to meet 100,000 and they have only 50,000 opposite them, it generally turns out awfully for that 50,000, and the early part of the campaign in Europe as well as in Asia, I think demonstrated to the Russians the weakness of their hand.

The Turks, on the other hand, preparing for defence, massed their forces principally in the fortresses on their frontier line. They had—

Batoom	30	battalions					
Ardahan	12	"		86	siege guns....	3	batteries.
Kars	38	"		217	"	8	"
Bayazid	3	"		0	"	2	"
Van	6	"		0	"	2	"
Erzerroom	13	"		150	"	6	"

whilst at Olti, as a connecting link with Ardahan, were 6 battalions and a mounted battery; between Erzerroom and Kars 2 battalions, and a battery at Gulentab and Khagisman, 2 battalions; and at Delibaba and in the Alishgird Plain, kept in open communication with Bayazid, were 12 battalions, 2 field and 1 mounted battery.

Thus, leaving Batoom out of the question, which was a separate command, garrisoned by men from the coasts of the Black Sea, not from the Armenian army corps, the Turks had in April but 92 battalions, with 24 batteries, 11 only of which were horsed, and 3 regiments of cavalry. Whereas, according to the authorised constitution, the 4th, or Armenian army corps, should consist of 120 battalions, fully officered, and a force of 199,000 territorial soldiers, formed into battalions, it is true, but without officers. Of these 120 battalions, 24 only consisted of Nizam or regular regiments, drilled, disciplined, equipped, and officered; of the remainder, 48 belonged to the Redif or reserve troops, and 48 to the Mustahfiz or enrolled territorial army. These latter, at the outbreak of the war, were found to be absolutely without officers; so sergeants and corporals of the Nizam corps were hurriedly appointed captains and lieutenants of Redif and Mustahfiz battalions, and certainly, as far as I was able to judge, most injudicious selections were as a rule made.

The artillery, which certainly is the best branch of the service, was armed with Krupp's steel breech-loaders; the horse-artillery with 4-pounder guns, which have a calibre of 3.42 inches, and weighs, with limber complete, 3,960 lbs. The field batteries, some few of which still retain the smaller gun, are generally armed with the 6-pounder Krupp, which has a calibre of just 4 inches. The mountain guns are, as a rule, Krupp's bronze 2¼ inch rifled pieces, carrying what I believe is technically known in our batteries as a 7-lb. shell. All batteries have the same number of guns and the same number of officers, viz., one captain and two lieutenants. Horse batteries have 164 non-commissioned officers and men; field and mountain batteries 162 and 107 respectively. These batteries form a battalion, commanded by a Bin-Bashi, or leader of a thousand. Four battalions form a regiment, the first being composed of horse, the other three of field batteries. This is commanded by a Liva Pasha, or General of Brigade, who has a Colonel, a Lieutenant-Colonel, a first-class Veterinary Surgeon, and thirteen junior Officers on his Staff. All guns are drawn by six horses; and, what struck me as peculiar was that, in Asia, there was but one ammunition waggon with each battery, the remainder of the ammunition being carried on arabas or country carts, or on mules or pack-ponies, which, of course, were never to be found when wanted. There was a forge with each battery, but the dearth of artificers

was a common cause of complaint, the majority of these men belong to the arsenals of Kars or Erzeroum.

The mountain guns were generally carried as in our own mountain batteries, on the backs of mules, but when the ground permitted it, the gun was mounted, and the carriages, being provided with a pair of shafts, was drawn by one animal, as the mules were generally fine beasts of from 14.1 to 14.3 hands. The effect was absurd.

Of garrison artillery there were 1,500 in Kars, 400 in Ardahan, 1,200 in Erzeroum. These were organized into companies of 3 and 150 non-commissioned officers and men. The principal guns were the muzzle-loading shunt gun, with a calibre of 5 and bronze guns on Krupp's system, made in the arsenal of St. Petersburg of 12, 15, and 18 centimètres calibre.

The artillery horses, most of which are country bred, though some are imported from Hungary, are strong useful animals, standing 14.1 to 14.3, possessing great powers of endurance. They were allowed 9 lbs. of barley and 12 lbs. of grass per diem, but as the quantity of grass was unlimited, and as it was of a necessity the condition of the animals was not all that could be desired. The cavalry of the 4th army corps might well raise a smile on the face of those accustomed to the magnificent appearance of our own regiments of horse; indeed, an A.D.C. of Ali Pasha, the cavalry division commander, whom I had previously known as a duffadar in the Punjab Cavalry, informed me privately, that any one of our Irish regiments in India could have "eaten up" the whole of Mooltan cavalry, and I well believe him. Nominally there were two brigades of two regiments each in the corps. I never saw a whole regiment together. The squadron is the tactical unit, of which there are 155 non-commissioned officers and men. The staff of a Turkish cavalry regiment is a curiosity, consisting as it does, on paper, of 150 officers, non-commissioned officers, musicians, farriers, and artificers including 9 medical officers!

The horse-furniture is the same as for the gunners of the Turkish artillery. A saddle of the same pattern as that used in the British Army; a wallet on the near, holster on the off side of the pommel; a valise on the cantle, containing kit; on the near side of the cantle attached to it by D's is a nose-bag; on the off side a small bottle. The bridle is of the simplest kind, and varies according to the taste and wealth of the rider. Arms consist of a sabre, a curiously useless metal. A Smith and Wesson's revolver, Winchester carbine; 2 small pouches, containing 20 rounds each, worn on the waistbelt. The uniform consists of a short tunic-baggy trousers, and half boots.

The battalion, which is the tactical unit of the infantry, consists of 8 companies, of 3 officers, and 98 non-commissioned officers and men; it is commanded by a Bin-Bashi, with 2 half-battalion leaders under him, and 2 medical officers. Four of these compose a regiment commanded by a colonel, with a lieutenant-colonel, and regi-

staff, consisting of 80 junior officers, non-commissioned officers, musicians, armourers, &c.

It must be borne in mind that in the Turkish Army, troop and company officers do not hold commissions; they live in barracks, though in separate rooms to the privates, and unless they have great influence, can never hope for promotion; as a rule, sons of Pashas, after passing through the military school, are attached as pupils to one or other of the embassies, and granted commissions as wing or squadron commanders. The consequence is, that the troop or company officer is, as a rule, illiterate, possesses no powers of command, and rarely, if ever, shows fitness for his position, which he owes either to luck or else to gross kow-towing to his battalion commander.

The general arm of the Turkish infantry is the Martini-Peabody, a close copy of our own Martini-Henry, the only difference I could notice was in the shape of the lever; the bayonets were of two kinds—the ordinary sword bayonet, and a four-cornered fluted weapon, somewhat resembling our own. Some battalions were still armed with the Snider. Ammunition was carried 50 rounds in a black leather pouch on the waistbelt, 20 more, in small receptacles, stretched across the breast of the tunic, and 80 in the pack, which, by the way, consisted of a brown or blue cloth great coat, with hood, in which the kit, such as it was, was wrapped up. The men, instead of wearing boots, wore a sandal, made of felt, with a soft leather sole. Their marching qualities were decidedly bad, when compared with either our British troops or native corps in India. Discipline on the march was unknown, and men straggled in the most lamentable manner even in the presence of the enemy. I doubt if such things as kit-inspection, or examination of arms and equipments, were ever carried out. I have opened men's pouches at all times, on the march, going into action, and in action, and never yet saw a full one. In one engagement in which we got a very considerable beating, a man assured me that his battalion went into action with one full packet of ten, and a few spare rounds in their havresack, and yet each battalion had 32 ponies each, carrying 2,000 spare rounds attached to it.

I think this campaign should teach us one thing, and that is, that it will be hard to find a more serviceable weapon than the Martini-Henry—exposed to all weathers, rarely if ever cleaned, knocked and battered about, lock, stock, and barrel generally in such a condition that had the owner been a British private, I feel sure that the captain of his company would not have felt himself competent to adjudicate on the case; the Turkish soldier still clung to it, and had no hesitation in firing off his hundred and fifty rounds, if he happened to have them, although the weapon had not been cleaned for weeks.

There was no organized transport service. Tents and regimental stores were carried on pack animals attached to each corps, whilst commissariat and army stores were carried on arabas or country carts. These were pressed from the neighbouring villages, and as they were not paid their services, being looked upon as a "war contribution," as you may imagine, they were neither zealous nor efficient. Regimental baggage animals were escorted and drawn by detach-

ments detailed from each battalion, from two to three men per company being considered necessary.

I have omitted all mention of Sappers and Miners; they are considered in the admirable Imperial Regulations for the government of the Ottoman Forces, published in 1869, but I failed to find a solitary specimen in Armenia; and on my putting the question to the Chief of the Staff, he said, "I am the corps of Sappers and Miners;" he was more, he was the mainspring of the Army.

The command of the Turkish forces was vested in Mushir Mookhtar Pasha, who, from the fact that he formerly had been Governor of Erzeroom, knew the theatre of war well. Many years ago he was an Aide-de-camp to the Sultan Abdul Aziz, and in that capacity he visited England in 1867; as Colonel on the Staff, he served throughout the Yeman and Cretan campaigns, for which he was promoted to the rank of Liva, and subsequently Ferik or Lieutenant-General. His court influence procured him the Mushirlik of Erzeroom. He was a particularly pleasing mannered gentleman; a capital French speaker, frank and outspoken, with a good general knowledge of the world. Even in the midst of that gallant race, his coolness under fire was noticeable, and his capacity for organization was no less deserving of notice. If you, gentlemen, had seen the state of his army as I saw it early in June, when he commanded but ten battalions and a few companies on the Zewin Dorz—if you had seen him, as I have seen him, back and hold in check for four months one of the greatest military Powers in Europe—if you had seen the material with which he had achieved all this—empty treasure-chest (he has not had 20,000 l. since the outbreak of the war, and commenced it with but 1,000 l.), skeleton battalions, incompetent officers, useless cavalry, and unworthy Generals—you will agree with me that no Commander-in-Chief of this generation, at any rate, has shown more ability, more gallantry, or deserves more praise, than Ghazi Mookhtar Pasha.

His Chief of the Staff, Faizi Pasha, an Hungarian refugee, was a man of varied attainments, a good French and German speaker, a capital topographical draughtsman, and, though upwards of 70, possessed of great powers of endurance. Prior to this campaign, he had done the Porte good and gallant service: the fortifications at Ispir were constructed from his plans, and he designed the new works in the neighbourhood of Kars and Erzeroom; he served throughout the siege of Kars in 1855, and was frequently mentioned in the dispatches of Sir Fenwick Williams.

The Commander of the Turkish right wing, in the Akhik Plain, was one Lieutenant-General Mahomed Pasha; he, too, served in the war of 1855, and was undeniably a gallant soldier, but was quite uneducated, scarcely able to read; despised the character of the Russian soldiers even more than the generality of Turkish soldiers; a poor fellow, he was shot through the head in a vain attempt to save his men, in the first action of the war, and so spared the humiliation of seeing his own men, one short half-hour later, flying before the hated Giaour.

The Commandant of the left wing, and of the fortress of Aghdam,

was one Lieutenant-General Hassan Sabri Pasha. He owed his position entirely to Court influence, for last year he was removed from his command in Montenegro for incompetence; his conduct at Ardahan threw a doubt on his personal courage as well as on his ability.

Mookhtar himself took command at Kars, whilst Ismail Pasha, a Koord, the Viceroy of the Erzeroom vilayet, retained the military and civil leadership in that place. He certainly showed great lack of promptitude in arranging the forwarding of warlike material, and fully deserved the accusations freely poured upon him by his brother Generals.

The plan of the present campaign was evidently based on that of 1828. The road from Akhalzih to Ardahan passes over such bad ground, and is so impracticable for guns that the project of advancing a column by that route was abandoned, and the army for the conquest of Armenia massed at Alexandropol (Goomri) and Erivan. The idea was to move rapidly on Kars, siege or mask it with a sufficient force, then to push on to Ardahan, capture that, and advance on Erzeroom in three columns, from Ardahan, from Kars, and from Bayazid.

The road from Ardahan passing through Urul, Pennek, Olti, and the Giurji Boghaz Defile, is, until it emerges into the valley of the Euphrates at Hinask, essentially a mountain path, impracticable for field artillery, without the expenditure of much engineering labour.

That from Goomri to Kars is a good military highway, the Arpa Tchah being bridged near Alexandropol, the Kars river at Djamushly. From Kars there are four routes to Erzeroom, all practicable for guns, all diverging at or near Beghli Ahmed. The northernmost, styled the Hissar Boghaz, ascends the Soghanli Mountains near Tchapakli, crosses the Hoonkiar Dooz, thence by Bardez, Yeni-Kui, and Ala Klissa, joins the other three at Kuipri Kui. The second, called the Sakin Boghaz, branching off at Kotanli, passes through Deli Mussa, Yeni-kui, and so on to Kuipri Kui. The third, following the course of the Kars stream to Sara Kamysh, crosses the Mellidooz Plateau (the scene of Paskiewitch's triumph on 20th June, 1829), down into the bed of the Chan Su at Kara Orghan, ascends the Zewin Plateau, where Salegh Pasha was defeated on the preceding day, in 1829, by the Russian Marshal, through Alakilissa to the Aras at Kuipri Kui. Whilst the fourth, branching off from the last road at the Mellidooz Plateau, passes through Medzingird, and runs south to the bed of the Aras at Khorassan, whence it follows the course of that stream to its source in the Devi Boyun Ridge, crosses over that chain of hills, and drops into Erzeroom.

The road from Bayazid running through the Aliashgird Plain, crosses the Kose Dagh Mountains by one of three routes from Moola Suliman, and connects itself with the Kars roads at Kuipri Kui. At this place there is an ancient stone bridge, not of much strategic importance, however, as in June the Aras is fordable at many points below the bridge, and nearly anywhere above it. At the junction of all the roads leading from Russian territory to Erzeroom, Kuipri Kui has ever been looked upon as a spot that required defence. In 1855 Sir

Fenwick Williams established a depôt of provisions there, and threw up earthworks. It is difficult to conceive why steps were not taken in this campaign to render this place thoroughly defensible. Its strategic importance is patent to the veriest novice in military matters, yet the Turkish authorities contented themselves with merely putting in order General Williams' old works, although, owing to the increase in fire-arms, they were commanded on the eastern and north faces by adjacent hills well within range of field artillery.

On the crest of the Devi Boyun strong working parties were employed in completing works left unfinished in 1855; but their labour was of the most superficial kind. There was no superintending workmen, whose sole aim and object seemed to be to give a minimum amount of cover with a maximum expenditure of time.

I am afraid I have dwelt at great length on the description of the position of the hostile armies, and nature of the roads over which they will have to pass; but, as to the best of my knowledge the details have never been described before, whereas the actual campaign has been told in every daily paper, I have entered somewhat freely on these points.

To turn now to the actual operations. On the 24th of April Mookhtar Pasha was in Kars with 38 battalions, and though aware that war was inevitable, he was somewhat surprised at the sound of distant firing, and rather more so when he was informed that a strong force of Russian cavalry had crossed the frontier, and after a short skirmish captured three squadrons of his cavalry on their out-duties. He at once sent a *parlementaire* to Loris Melikoff, and courteously informed that war had that day been declared between the Sultan and the Czar; that as the Turkish outposts had opened fire on his men, there was no alternative left to the Russian commander but their capture. This was followed up by the first column of the Russians crossing the Arpa Tchai, and on the 25th taking up their head-quarters near Mazra on the Kars River; at the same time Tergukasoff crossing the Ararat Mountains by the Kara Serai road, marched straight on Bayazid, which was surrendered without a struggle, the garrison evacuating it on the approach of the enemy and falling back on Van, where Lieutenant-General Mookhtar Pasha was endeavouring to organize a force of Koords to operate behind the Russian line of communications.

Mookhtar Pasha knew well the real condition of Erzerum, he knew that were he shut up in Kars there was no one competent to organize a relieving army; nothing, in fact, to oppose Melikoff's advance to the capital of Armenia, so he determined to retire from Kars, which he had personally ascertained to be well supplied with commissariat stores and war material, and to take up a position on the Sogh Range, where he would form an army from the reinforcements daily expected from Europe and from Syria, and would then take the offensive. Consequently, before the investment of Kars was completed, taking with him two field batteries, a mountain battery, nine battalions and about 500 horse *zaptiehs*, or mounted policemen and Circassians, he, on the 5th of May, retired *viâ* the Hissar Boghaz to the Hoon

Dooz Plateau. On this retreat he was followed up by the Russian cavalry, who, however, quailed before his Martini-Henry's, and, with the exception of picking up a few prisoners in the shape of stragglers, and a few tents, did no harm.

Melikoff did not attempt to attack him, but, placing a cavalry brigade at Tchapakli to watch his movements, made his preparations for the capture of Ardahan. For this purpose he left the greater part of his camp standing, with about 10,000 men to mask Kars, and moved himself with the 20th and 39th Divisions, *viâ* Zarchat and Boskiu, to Ardahan. Owing to the apathy, or, as it was freely whispered, the treachery of Sabri Pasha, a bridge was thrown over the Kur Su, and on the 15th a strong Russian brigade seized, unopposed, an eminence commanding the Emir Oglou, a redoubt about three miles west of the town, and generally considered the key of the place. The commandant of this outwork was one Captain Mehemet Bey, a Prussian, whose father had been in the Turkish service, and who from his youth had been in Turkish employ. Seeing the danger of allowing the enemy to occupy this eminence, he applied to Sabri Pasha for reinforcements in order that he might attack them. This was refused, and the following morning the enemy, who had busied themselves during the night in throwing up batteries, commenced the bombardment of the Emir Oglou, the guns of which were speedily silenced, and the place assaulted. That it defended itself gallantly may be judged from the fact that out of four companies of the Angora Redif battalion who held the work, but sixteen escaped. Having seized this work Melikoff moved his men round to the southern face of the city, and commenced to bombard the works there. During the night of the 16th, Sabri Pasha escaped, and on the following morning the city was assaulted. Those of the garrison endeavouring to escape by the north were met by a brigade of Cossacks posted there, and cut down, whilst a battery playing on the bridge increased the work of destruction. After the capture, the place was thoroughly looted by the Karapapak irregulars, who were allowed three days for that purpose. Any act of violence brought to the notice of the commander was severely punished. It has been said, and freely circulated in England through the Ottoman Embassy, as well as in the press, that the Russians wantonly fired on the hospital over which the Red Crescent was flying, and that numbers of patients, as well as attendants, were killed. Gentlemen, this is absolutely false. I was present with Sir Arnold Kemball on the Olti road, when strings of Ardahan fugitives were pouring into Erzeroom, and I never heard a word of this. On the contrary, one and all spoke of the manner in which they had been treated when captured, for all Redif soldiers were released, and given five days' rations to enable them to reach Erzeroom. I have here a letter from a German doctor in Turkish employ, who was taken prisoner, and he says a few shots hit the walls of the hospital during the engagement, but that no harm was done, and he speaks in the highest terms of the way in which the Russians made arrangements for the Turkish wounded. I had frequent opportunities of speaking to Captain Mehemet Pasha, and many officers and men

present at the assault, and they one and all denied the fact the cruelties had been perpetrated; and I think it only just that I here exonerate the Russians from false charges, as I shall later exonerate Mookhtar Pasha from the same crimes. The Turkish at Ardahan were 1,930 killed, 411 wounded and about 3,000 prisoners. This number was given me by a doctor taken prisoner, but subsequently released. The wounded includes only those who captured in the place and healed there. Many hundreds remained at Ardanutsch and Erzeroom.

Leaving General Komaroff with a strong brigade in Armenia, Melikoff returned to Kars, erected siege batteries to the north and north-east, and commenced a bombardment of the Mookhliss paltak and Kara-Dagh Forts. Tergukassoff, in the meantime captured Bayazid, pushed a reconnaissance towards Van, and advanced as far as Kara-Kilissa, the Turks falling back before him to Derik where Mahomed Pasha now had 12 battalions, 2 field and 2 mountain batteries.

Komaroff too pushed a reconnaissance to Pehnek. So faulty was the Turkish Intelligence Department, that it was fully believed a complete division was there, and Olti was evacuated precipitately, battalions falling back on the Tchakir Baba, on which Mookhtar retired—whilst three retired to the Giurji Boghaz. It was well known to the Turks that the Cossacks did not pursue, for the retreat was conducted in the most extraordinary manner. The men straggled all along a narrow mountain path; it took me five hours to pass from the front to the rear of the column, which consisted of officers, men, baggage animals and fugitive villagers in one vast confused jumble. No one questioned me, asked me what I wanted, where I was, but made way for me to pass through their ranks as if it were perfectly natural I should wish to be going to Olti, which they had abandoned. I spoke to one battalion commander who was seated in the field smoking a cigarette, and asked him what this retrograde movement meant. He told me that the Ardahan division had pushed on, occupied Olti, and was now crossing the Sevri Dag, but, "Inshallah, we will reach the Giurji Boghaz before them and beat them there." On June 10, Mookhtar learnt the true strength of Komaroff's reconnaissance force, and immediately detached Hadji Raschid Pasha, with 12 battalions, 2 regiments of Bashi Bazooks, and 6 mountain guns, to meet them back. On his approach the Russians retired, they, however, leaving the large depôts of provisions in Olti, besides about 3,000 stores of Enfield rifles, which the commandant in his agony to escape had omitted to destroy.

In the meantime Mookhtar Pasha, in order to be better able to support his right wing in case of attack, fell back on Zewin, and occupying the Khorum Doozi plateau, strongly entrenched it; he had received reinforcements, and had 20 battalions, all told, in this position.

In order to cover this movement he sent forward his Circassians numbering about 3,000, under one Lieutenant-General Moussa (a man who, under the name of Kondukoff, had for many years

manded a Russian cavalry regiment), to Beghli Ahmed. Here on the night of the 29th May, this force having, as it is customary in the East on such occasions, no outposts, was surprised by a Russian cavalry brigade, and after a short attempt to defend themselves, put to flight, losing 83 killed, 128 wounded, 300 prisoners, and 2 Galloper guns.

In conversing with Moussa Pasha afterwards, he told me that his men would not face the fire of the dismounted dragoons, though they were perfectly ready to attack them when mounted.

Mahomed Pasha now learnt that Tergukassoff's forces only consisted of 8 battalions, with 2 batteries and 7 regiments of horse, and so he determined to advance from Delibaba and drive him out of Zedikan, which had been in Russian possession for some days. Leaving a battalion and battery at Taikhojeh, to prevent the Russians cutting in between him and the Commander-in-Chief, he himself moved forward to Taghir, and offered battle; on the 15th, the Russians advanced and took up a ridge opposite us, and at daybreak on the 16th, attacked us in front with swarms of skirmishers, whilst with their guns, which they pushed up to within 1,500 yards, they pounded us out of the shelter trenches. Two battalions of infantry, with the whole of the cavalry now advancing up a ravine on the Turkish right, captured a hill enfilading our front, when a general *sauve qui peut* ensued. As I left the field, the Cossacks were busy with a crowd of fugitive infantry. I have been told by Turkish staff officers, not present at the engagement, that their loss was 21 killed and 125 wounded. I prefer the evidence of my own eyes, and of regimental Officers on the field, and I know for a fact that that night but three battalions were mustered at Delibaba. A Turkish army quickly disperses, but as quickly re-assembles, and the next morning staff officers were whipping up fugitives all over the country, who, finding they were not pursued, rejoined their corps in the front.

The losses, as far as I could ascertain, were 1,426 killed and missing (of whom 500, I see by Russian official returns, were captured) 965 wounded, and 11 guns abandoned. The Russian loss being about 300 killed and wounded. Mahomed Pasha, the commander, was shot through the forehead whilst endeavouring to rally his men, whilst Sir Arnold Kemball, besides being shelled out of the place he had selected for his breakfast, was chased about twenty-five miles by Cossacks.

Immediately on hearing of this reverse, Mookhtar dispatched numbers of mounted officers to scour the country for fugitives, he telegraphed to Erzeroom for every available man to be sent to Delibaba, and placing himself at the head of 5 battalions, 1 battery, and 1,000 horse, moved across himself to take command of the right wing; by this means, on the 21st, he was enabled to attack Tergukassoff with 21 battalions and 12 guns, who had entrenched himself on the heights of Eshek Khaliass. No attempts were made to turn the Russian position, which was most extended, the Turks contented themselves with a frontal attack on a strong mountainous position covered with shelter trenches, and though their opponents numbered but 8 battalions and 8 guns, with a rocket troop, they were unable to

effect anything. The gallantry of the Turks, inspired with enthusiasm by the personal bearing of Mookhtar Pasha, was of no avail and again did they assault the Russian lines, only to be shot down in hundreds by the withering fire of the breechloaders above. This put an end to the scene of slaughter, and taking cover of themselves, Tergukassoff, who saw he was outnumbered, fell back on Zewin. The Turkish losses, acknowledged to be 368 killed and 1,080 wounded, were too heavy to admit of pursuit, and their transport material reduced by the disaster of the 16th, needed reorganization. The battle, though without actual results, and reflecting as much credit on the Russians as on the Turks, served the purpose for which Mookhtar intended it, it showed his men they had a leader in whom they trusted, and that they were a match, man for man, for the Russians.

I must now turn to Faizi Pasha, who had been left in command at Zewin. On the 21st he learnt that Melikoff, at the head of a division, was advancing from Kars, and on the 24th it appeared he was on the Mellidooz Plateau. Mookhtar having taken away 5 battalions and a battery, the gallant old Hungarian had but 15 battalions, 6 field and 6 mountain guns with him; he, however, had an admirably entrenched position, and his men, having heard of the success at Khallans, of course, had been magnified into a Turkish victory, were confident of fight. As long as he could hold his left, Kohlmann knew 50,000 might beat their heads against his right and front. At daybreak on the 26th, under cover of a heavy fire from a battery of 91 guns established on the left bank of the Chan Su, the Russian close columns moved to the assault.

There was no excuse for their not knowing the ground, for, as before, Paskiewitch, on the 19th June, 1829, completely deceived Salegh Pasha here; yet Melikoff, without even reconnoitring, men into broken ravines, which terminated in precipitous cliffs, the crests of which were lined with Turkish riflemen. These had only to do but to lean over and fire into the crowds below, who endeavoured to find a way out of the trap they had been led into. Day long from dawn to sunset did this fight last; one weak attempt was made to turn the Turkish left, to which a broad open ravine was made to turn the Turkish left, to which a broad open ravine but it was checked by a gallant bayonet charge by the Aleppo battalion, who lost 150 in the struggle. The Russians showed gallantry—the heroism of their officers being most marked—was an unequal strife, they were only led up the ravines to be cut back by the pitiless hail of bullets poured from above. Broken and dispirited they withdrew as the sun went down, and the following morning, Melikoff finding his losses so enormous, retired on Zewin. The loss of the Turks was 138 killed, 328 wounded; that of the Russians we do not know; Faizi Pasha told me he thought it not be less than 2,500; an Austrian military correspondent estimated it 5,000; the Russian official statement was 856, whilst in the letters, captured in a mail bag shortly after the battle, it was estimated at more than 1,000; in these the blame of the defeat was thrown on General Heimann, who planned and led the attack, which, at any rate, showed he believed in his own plans.

Mookhtar Pasha, hearing of the success of his lieutenant, moved across to his own head-quarters, recalled the troops from Olti, and ordered a general advance. With recent reinforcements his own army and his right wing now numbered 23 battalions each, and with these he judged, and judged rightly, that he would be able to relieve Kars and drive Tergukasoff across the border. On the 30th June, we advanced from Zewin, and on the 7th occupied Vairan Kale, the present head-quarters of the Grand Duke; here we were reinforced by 8 battalions and a battery, under the command of Mushir Mustafa Pasha, the newly appointed commandant of the fortress, and we opened up communications with the place, men passing freely in and out. On the 10th, the Russians, fairly demoralised by the defeat at Zewin, and the prompt advance of Mookhtar Pasha, raised the siege and fell back on an intrenched camp at Kurrukdurra, midway to Goomri.

Kars has been so constantly described within the last few days that I shall only weary you by entering into a detailed account of the place. I am afraid I was heretical enough in July to predict that it could only be taken by a *coup de main*, or else starved into submission, from the position of the works, the majority of which have low parapets, no ditches, and not flanking defence, but are situated on the crest of the hills; shots either pass clean over or bury themselves in the hill-side below. It was calculated that the Russians fired 32,000 shells into the place in the bombardment in June and July, yet the casualties were but 85 killed, and 155 wounded, in the batteries and town; whereas, including losses in sorties, the total list ran up to 368 killed and 1,362 wounded. In the case of assault, troops cannot be moved rapidly from one part to another, for the banks of the Kars Tchai are exceedingly precipitous. There is only one road connecting the western with the eastern hills, and the garrison, too, was so small that it was impossible for them—a bare 10,000 men—to man seven miles of entrenchments, besides the numerous forts. This entrenchment, too, was of weak profile, as indeed were most of the works on the hills: the ditch was no obstacle, and the *trous-de-loup* and other obstacles in its front were not worthy of the name.

The enemy having fallen back, Mookhtar busied himself in getting up supplies of food and war material for the fortress, which really had suffered no want during the so-called siege, and moved on himself first to near Vezinkui, afterwards to the northern slopes of the Aladja Dagh above Kharkana. To keep up his communications with that fortress he withdrew 18 battalions from it, 12 of which, under Hussain Hami Pasha, he posted at Vezinkui, 6 on the Olya Tepe, whilst a couple of battalions were posted on the Nakharjee Tepe to our right. These Tepes are sugar-loafed hills, rising up from the plateau to a height of some 600 to 800 feet; their sides are steep and smooth, and they formed very strong adjuncts to our position.

Tergukasoff in the meantime hearing of Melikoff's reverse, evacuated Zedikan, and fell back through Kara Kilissa and Diadin to the Balikly Lake, and so to Igdyr. He was not molested in this march,

although Ismail Pasha possessed 25 battalions and 18 guns, and Russian general had but a third of that force.

Whilst this was going on with the main columns, Faik Pasha, advancing from Van, encountered the Bayazid garrison at Teperis-ku the 19th June. His forces amounted to 6 battalions, 2 field and mountain battery, and 8,000 Koords, whilst the enemy numbered 2 battalions and a regiment of Cossacks; the Russians defeated, back on the citadel, the Koords pursuing them closely. As they were without guns their position was hopeless, for Faik cut off the water supply, and commenced to bombard the place; the commander then hung out a white flag, and sent an officer to treat for surrender. The details were arranged, and the following afternoon Faik Pasha sent his company down to the gates of the citadel. They were thrown open, and the Russian garrison, unarmed, commenced to march out, when suddenly a body of Koords rushed in on the Russians, sword in hand, cut in between them and the gateway, and unopposed by the Russian troops, who looked on as passive spectators, killed 280 of their unarmed enemy in cold blood. The Russian commander at once shut the door of the place; then ensued one of those scenes of horror which it is not do to dwell on. Suffice to say, the lust for blood being what the Koords pillaged the town, killing every Christian man, woman and child, whom they came across; it is computed that 1,400 were thus slain. Faik now prosecuted the siege with something like the usual indolence of the Turk, taking advantage of the lack of mobility in the Ottoman armies. Tergukasoff, by a forced march from Igou, cut in between Ismail Pasha and Faik, severely defeated the latter, capturing 4 guns and 400 men, relieved Bayazid, and carried off the garrison with him. Ismail now pushed on to Zor in Georgia, subsequently to the hills overlooking Igduyr, but he never attempted to carry out his loudly proclaimed intention of advancing on Erivan, although Tergukasoff with but 14 battalions now barred the way.

To turn now to Mookhtar's army. The month of July was passed in desultory skirmishing with Loris Melikoff's forces, and it was not until the 18th of August that anything of importance occurred, when the Russians heavily attacked the Turkish position. They were eventually defeated; but, owing to the disinclination of the Ottoman cavalry to face infantry fire, drew off to their camps at Kadakler and Karakoram in good order. On the night of the 24th of that month Mookhtar, learning that the majority of the enemy had moved from Kezil Tepe to Karakoram, attacked that hill in force; it was carried by a brigade under Captain Mehemet Pasha, at dawn, and before the Russians could make any attempts to recapture it, batteries were thrown up on the crest, and the place covered with shelter trenches. A heavy fight ensued, the Russians endeavouring to recapture the hill, the Turks pushing forward with hopes of carrying the Karajal camp; indeed, at one period of the fight it seemed as if the Russians would have been driven across the Agh Tchai. General Heimann, however, checked the retreat, which was assuming an ugly look, and saved the day from proving a disaster. The Turks, however, remained in possession of the Kezil Tepe, from which they armed with siege guns, and Mookhtar moved his headquarters

quarters down into the plain. The Russian official loss was 12 officers and 237 men killed; 34 officers, including 3 generals, and 667 men, wounded; the Turkish loss was officially stated to be 300 killed and 940 wounded.

The month of September was passed pretty quietly. Slight cavalry skirmishes between the hostile forces near Subatan and Igdyr relieved the monotony of the life; it, however, began to be whispered that strong reinforcements were daily arriving at Goomri, whilst a brigade had also arrived from Ardahan, which had been reinforced from Akhazik. Mookhtar, too, had been reinforced, but fearing for his communications with his right wing, he established a camp of 5 battalions, and a battery at Natschevan, midway between the Aladja Dag and Koolpi. This brigade, on the 30th September, was attacked by a Russian corps of 8 battalions, which was driven back, our loss being 250 killed and wounded.

On the 2nd October, commenced the series of offensive movements on the part of the Russians, culminating in the complete conquest of Armenia. At dawn, a strong Russian column was seen advancing from Karajal to the Little Yagni Hill, held by Captain Mehemet Pasha, whilst other columns attacked the whole Turkish line, the great Yagni, the defence of which was entrusted to a single redif battalion, was carried, 3 officers and 37 men of that gallant volunteer corps only surviving. This was the only ground the Turks lost; their position was defended with the most obstinate courage, and although they were outnumbered more than two to one still they held their own; their loss was about 1,000 killed and 3,200 wounded, whilst the Russian loss was computed at 7,000 men! At nightfall, holding the Great Yagni with a very strong force, Melikoff withdrew to Karajal and the Kapack Tepe, which he strongly intrenched. On the following day, owing to the difficulty of supplying the garrison with water, the Great Yagni was abandoned by the enemy, and Mookhtar immediately re-occupied it. On the 5th October, Melikoff further drew in his forces, concentrating them all at Karajal and Kapack Tepe preparatory to a further offensive move. On the 8th, seeing the enemy was receiving continual reinforcements, Mookhtar evacuated the Kezil Tepe and retired to his old position on the slopes of the Aladja Dag, with strong posts on the Nakharjee, Oliya, and Little Yagni Tepes, his main force being above Kharkana and a division at Vezinkui. His front was defended by an almost continuous line of shelter trenches. On the 9th October, the Grand Duke, who now had assumed command of the Russian camp, occupied the Kezil Tepe, Sabalan, Hadji Veli, and the Great Yagni, and at noon commenced to shell the Turkish position. This was vigorously responded to, and at dusk it ceased. At dawn on the 10th the same operation was performed, the Turks suffering some loss from the fire. On the 13th October, strong columns of the Russians threatened all points, and their batteries kept up a continuous fire. The whole attention of the Turks was fixed on the front. No one thought a turning movement feasible; indeed, Mookhtar Pasha assured me that the ground in the south of the Aladja Dag was quite impracticable for guns. On the 14th, however, Mookhtar learnt to his

cost it was not so. Circassians brought in word that a strong Russian division was at Orlok advancing on his rear; at the same time Grand Duke advanced in several columns on his front. Hadji Ras Pasha with twelve battalions, two field and one mountain battery, 2,000 cavalry, was sent to oppose the division advancing from Orlok and for some time it appeared as if the Turks would prove successful. Lazaroff's men were driven back by the impetuosity of the Turkish attack, but rallied on a ridge between Bazadich and Orlok; but in meantime the Oliya Tepe had been carried, and a strong column ascending the Nalband Tepe completely cut off the Turkish right wing from Kars. This was at 1 p.m. on the 15th, and as soon as Moslem saw the Moscov on the Nalband Hill, a panic seems to have seized them, and they fled headlong through Vezinkui towards Kars. All attempts to carry the Little Yagni were frustrated owing to the gallant stand by Captain Mehemet Bey, the commander; but at night seeing the *debandade* of the main army, he retired into Kars abandoning his guns. Mookhtar himself reached the place early on the following morning, and at once set to work to mobilise a corps for its defence. The remnants of 30 battalions—all he could muster out of the 42 he showed that morning was all he could spare Russian Hami Pasha for the defence. Thirty-four battalions were captured by the Russians, 42 guns, and 7 Pashas were also taken.

On the 17th Mookhtar, telegraphing to Ismail Pasha to fall back on Kuipri Kui, retired himself with ten weak battalions and a few mountain guns *via* the Hissar Boghaz Pass to Bardez, and so on *via* Yenikui to the Aras, where on the 28th he effected a junction with his right wing numbering not more than 10,000 men all told. Without delay, instant they fell back on Hussan Kale, and, regardless of the fact Heimann was in pursuit from Kars, Tergukassoff from Bayazet bivouacked in the open without a picket. Heimann pushed on, learning from his cavalry the actual state of affairs, moved a brigade under a General Shack, round *via* Ogomi to the rear of the Turkish position, whilst he attacked it in front; thus surprised, and at night the Osmanli fled precipitately, leaving 500 prisoners in the hands of the enemy; a brigade at Khooroodjook, alarmed by the fire, turned out and checked the Russian pursuit, which, on account of the fatigue of the men after their long, forced marches, was pressed vigorously. Thus, on the 29th, the Turkish forces were enabled to take up a position on the Devi Boyun, which had recently been considerably strengthened under the able superintendence of Faizi Pasha, who in July, owing to Oriental jealousy of Europe, had been relieved of his appointment as Chief of the Staff. The force now at Mookhtar's disposal amounted to his own 10 battalions, numbering 3,000 men, Ismail's 22 battalions, about 10,000 men, 3,000 the garrison of Erzeroom, and about 60 guns, of which 36 were horsed. On the 4th November, Heimann, who with Tergukassoff's forces now commanded 48 battalions, 7 regiments of cavalry, 96 guns, determined to attack the Devi Boyun, sending a division during the night to the ravines, near Partak on the north and Nabik on the south. He advanced in heavy masses to attack Mookhtar's front.

This movement was covered by a strong body of dragoons, which tempted the Turks out of their entrenchments. Up to this time, the Ottoman troops had gradually repelled all attacks on their left flank, commanded by Captain Mehemet Pasha; but now, led into an ambuscade, they were mercilessly shot down, and ere they could reach the shelter of the entrenchments on the crest of the *Devi Boyun*, the Russian infantry had seized them. A wild *debandade* into Erzeroom ensued; guns were hastily abandoned, and fully 2,500 prisoners remained in the hands of the enemy; our losses were 56 guns and about 3,000 killed and wounded. Heimann at once seized this position, and straightway commenced to throw up batteries for the bombardment of Erzeroom. A parlementaire was sent in to summon the place to surrender; but, by order of the Sultan, an answer was returned, that the place would be defended to the last man and the last cartridge. On the 9th, the Russian General, who throughout the campaign seems to have acted in a blindly gallant manner, scorning reconnaissances and despising losses, made an ill-judged attempt to carry the place by assault; the attacking columns lost their way, one only reached its destination and captured the *Medjidieh* redoubt, to the south-west of the place: they were speedily driven out by Captain Mehmet Pasha, who was always foremost where fighting was to be found, not before they had captured the garrison of 20 officers and 500 men. It is worthy of remark, that the Mahomedan inhabitants of Erzeroom, stirred up to enthusiasm by the *Mooltahs*, rushed up to the citadel for arms, and offered very substantial aid to Mehemet Pasha. The Russians left 300 dead bodies in the fort. What their other losses were it is impossible to say, but as the Turkish casualties amounted to 700 killed and 1,500 wounded, the enemy must have lost very heavily.

And, now, to turn to Kars. The Grand Duke, after the battle of the *Aladja Dag*, still retained his head-quarters at *Karajal*, but directed *Lazaroff* to move on *Magardjik*, and thus cut off communication with Erzeroom. On the 10th, having dispatched all his prisoners, &c., to *Alexandropol*, he moved his head-quarters to *Vairan Kale*, and left a division at *Vezin-kul*. As he was prosecuting this march, the garrison made a sortie which was quickly repulsed, the Turks pursued into their intrenchments, and the *Hafiz Pasha Fort*, at the south-east corner of the fortress, was actually for some time in the hands of the Russians, who, before the garrison rallied, had time to dismount and carry off the breech-pieces of the guns mounted in it. The Russians now were compelled to fall back, with heavy loss. The Grand Duke, prior to commencing a bombardment, sent in a parlementaire to demand the surrender of the place. This was spurned; and, on the 15th, his batteries opened fire on the southern and south-eastern faces. *Hafiz Pasha Tcha* was abandoned by the Turks, owing to its guns being useless; and, on the night of the 18th, assaulting columns moved on all the forts in the plain simultaneously. After a hard struggle, the *Kanli* and *Suwarri Tabrai* were captured, and then a body of men, climbing the *Karadagh Hill*, took the fort on the crest in rear. The redoubt in its front, and *Karapaltak* to the north, now being commanded, easily fell, and the works on the west

side surrendered. The Russians captured 3,000 guns, and 16,000 prisoners, of whom one-third were sick and wounded in hospitals. The Turkish loss in the defence of the city was about 3,000 killed and wounded, whilst the Russians lost about 3,000 killed and wounded.

Kars having fallen, the Grand Duke was enabled to detach 11 with two complete divisions to aid in the capture of Erzerum, although the place is surrounded by a bastioned base of considerable strength. It is so situated that the fall of the Azizi, or Kars Forts, necessitates the fall of the city they completely command, built on eminences quite overlooking the place. Although Mevki Pasha has been reinforced by 17 battalions from Trebizond, it is too much reason to fear his troops are demoralized by recent reverses to make a very determined resistance, and there is grave reason to doubt that the place is adequately provisioned. I think we may now set our minds to hear, in the course of the next few days, that Erzerum has fallen. The fact that Loris Melikoff needs a winter quarter for his troops will induce him to risk an assault, which, in my opinion, will prove a much more hazardous undertaking than the capture of Kars: but when we think of the numbers of men at his command, and the few available for the defence of the city, the fate of the place seems sealed. With its fall we may consider the campaign in Armenia at an end.

I have not dwelt on the operations near Soukhoum Kali and Batoum, for the simple reason that I was not in a position to know much about them as you in England were. Suffice it to say, that at the outbreak of war, emissaries were sent into the Abkhasia country to foment insurrection, and that when the tribes had risen and massacred the Russian garrison of Soukhoum Kali, a force of 10 battalions and 30 guns were dispatched from Constantinople to aid the insurgents. The plan, of course, was to strike at the Russian line of communication and divert troops from the main operations in Armenia; but as in 1855, so in 1877, this movement failed. The country is extremely difficult for military operations, and the Turkish organization is eminently unsuitable for offensive warfare. Finding the expedition a failure, the Porte withdrew the troops in August, dispatching them to the European theatre of war.

With regard to Batoum, under the gallant Dervish Pasha, it has taken a most determined stand against all Oklobjio's assaults, and finally, in July, that General had to withdraw; now, however, having been strongly reinforced, he is once more resuming the offensive. From what I can hear, the place is simply impregnable, and though it probably will be ceded to Russia, I do not think it likely that it ever will be captured.

And now, gentlemen, if you will permit me, I will dwell for a few minutes on what, in my humble opinion, were the causes of Russian failure in the first part of the campaign, and of Turkish reverses at the latter end.

To a certain extent, campaigns in the same theatre of war necessarily be repetitions of each other, the same roads must be followed, fortresses seized; but here Loris Melikoff took up the

witch's plan, followed it slavishly, even in its errors, halting only when dash and promptitude became necessary. In 1828, Paskiewitch's left wing was far too weak; its commander, Prince Tchavtazavadz whose grandson I may mention was badly wounded at the battle of Kezil Tepe in August last, after reaching Toprak-Kali, was threatened by hordes of Koords, under the Pasha of Moosh, and though successful in an engagement with them, felt constrained to retire; this year Tergukassoff was in precisely the same predicament. Then, on the other hand, Melikoff, instead of boldly assaulting Kars after the capture of Ardahan, when his own men were flushed with triumph and the Turks dispirited by defeat, leisurely commenced siege operations on a face by which Kars is perfectly unassailable. Again, at Zewin, instead of attacking on the left flank as Paskiewitch did where the ground is open and admits of the free movement of troops, he endeavoured to carry a strong entrenched position by a frontal attack up ravines where his men soon became one confused crowd.

In fact, he failed to appreciate the military qualities of his opponents, and did not recognise the increased advantages the breech-loader and spade give to the defence; for, indeed, one untrained man, provided his heart is in the right place, behind a shelter trench, is, in these days, worth two highly trained men attacking him.

To turn now to the Turks. I think you will all agree with me that when Mookhtar Pasha found he had but 28 battalions with which to watch the three roads on Erzroom, that he could not have employed them to better advantage than in posting men at Olti, Zewin, and Delibaba. Owing to the innate heroism of the Osmauli, he was enabled to repel the two columns of Melikoff and Tergukassoff, and to force them back on their own frontier. Here he failed. Possessed of the same feeling as the Russian Commander, profound contempt for his foes, Mookhtar having relieved Kars, pushed on too far, and exposed himself to being cut off from that fortress. That that danger was pointed out to him I am aware, for I had more than one conversation both with him and with the Chief of his Staff, on this very point. But he ridiculed the idea of the Russians being able to resume the offensive until it was too late to act. Another great cause of Turkish failure was the want of cavalry, the absence of outposts, and omission to use reconnoitring parties. The consequence was the Commander-in-Chief never had any reliable information concerning the enemy's movements. It may seem astounding; but to illustrate this I will tell you that, on the 30th of July, a Russian division moved down from Tashkale to Ani, and quietly encamped there within sight of our camp, and yet the fact was not discovered until more than half their tents were pitched at noon. In the same way, on the 5th August, this force moved off unnoticed.

On the 10th July, Melikoff raised the siege of Kars, struck his camp, and retired to Kurrukdurra. This, too, was not known or reported until 9 A.M., by which time he had reached his new position in safety, with his long commissariat and siege trains.

Regarding those minor matters on which, after all, the efficiency of an army depends, sanitary arrangements were systematically neglected.

Water pickets were unknown. Men bathed, washed their clothes, and watered their horses in the same stream from which the water-carriers fetched the men's water. The Turks believe firmly in cold water for sore backs, and as 90 per cent. of the horses suffered from bad saddles, it was the usual thing to see strings of horses standing in the stream, their owners busy washing the sores. It was not to be wondered at that dysentery was rife. Then, again, no attempts were made to bury the offal of beasts killed; it was merely piled in large heaps and allowed to fester in the sun. With reference to discipline, in our acceptance of the word, there was none, though crime was rare; men fell out of the ranks as they pleased, and, despite the undeniable bravery of the Osmanli, a wounded man always found a couple, or if need be more, comrades, to help him to the rear. I speak under correction, but guards were unknown. I never saw any. Sentries there were in plenty, more especially in the day time. They relieved each other from their company tents. I have counted thirty-eight sentries round a regimental camp, and that 100 miles from the enemy. On taking up a new encampment, I have seen them literally at every twenty yards the whole way round. They never move from the spot on which they are posted, unless it rains, when they make for the nearest shelter. In the early part of the campaign, the commissariat arrangements were execrable; later on they improved; but the Turkish soldier never received his full rations, which, by the way are, on paper, immeasurably superior to those of any army in the world. The officers were, as a rule, simply worse than useless. From Generals of Division down to subalterns, they were ignorant, illiterate men. What astounded me most was the manner in which they abused each other before their juniors; there was a thorough want of *entente cordiale* between the superior officers, and this doubtless had much to do with Turkish failures.

And now a word or two about the so-called atrocities. Mutilation and stripping of the dead, and desecration of the graves of the enemy were the most I saw with the Army. In Mookhtar's army this was put down with a firm hand, and his severity cost him many men. On one occasion, I remember his hanging a Circassian for killing a Mahomedan villager, and straightway 1,100 of these gentry deserted. When we remember that until 1826, the Turkish soldier received a reward for every head carried to the Commander-in-Chief's tent, we may imagine how difficult it is now for a General to prevent killing the wounded. This in Asia, as well as in Europe, was practised, but without the authority and against the repeatedly expressed orders of the Commander-in-Chief.

One word more, and I have done; we have heard a great deal of the indomitable gallantry of the Turk, and more than once I have seen it written that he is the finest soldier in the world. No one concedes more to the valour of the Osmanli than I do, but like all other men he is liable to panic, and in this campaign we have had three very bad examples of panic occurring as soon as his flank is turned, viz., at Taghir, at the Aladja Dag, and at the Devi Boyun. I think the trait of gallantry in the character of the Turk has been a

little exaggerated. The Mahomedan religion is essentially a fighting religion, and as a rule all followers of the Prophet fight well. When we think of Jelalabad, of Delhi, and of Lucknow, we may safely congratulate ourselves, that we too have Mahomedan soldiery who have shown as much gallantry fighting under our flag as ever the Osmanli has done under his Crescent, and remembering that, gentlemen, I think the Russian bugbear may safely be laid aside once and for ever.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, if time had allowed, I dare say some of us would have liked either to have made some observations on this campaign or, at all events, to have put some question to the lecturer. One knows, however, how very difficult it is to condense all the detailed operations of a campaign into a single lecture, and perhaps, at this late hour, it would be hardly well for us to attempt to discuss it. The lecturer has abstained from making any predictions as to the future, which is not very often the case with lectures delivered in this Institution; nor has he had an opportunity of speaking of the extreme severity of the climate. I was looking back into my journal a day or two ago, and I found that, even on the 7th of November, it was with the greatest difficulty I could cross from Kars to Erzeroom; the snow was so deep that the principal passes were even then closed. I fancy, from what Mr. Norman has said, that the roads in that district must be very much improved since that time, because he spoke of three or four roads being practicable for artillery, and that certainly was not the case when I was there. This probably may have been done in 1855. Then, as to the fortress of Goomri, or Alexandropol, as it is called now; at one time that fortress created very great alarm; it was considered to be a sort of second Sebastopol. I was ordered by our Government to visit it and report upon it, and, thanks to my finding the sentries asleep, I got in. I arrived there about five o'clock in the morning, and, thinking that permission to go over the fortress would probably be refused me, if I applied for it, I rode straight up to the fort. I found it a very strong position, three sides being naturally protected, and one very strongly fortified. I went through the whole fortress, counted all the guns, and went home. Afterwards I called upon the Governor, and asked him for permission to visit it, but he told me he was very sorry, but he was strictly forbidden to allow anybody to see the fortress. With regard to the terrible massacre of the garrison of Bayazid, it was certainly a very rash move on the part of the Russians to detach so small a force so very far in advance, unsupported as it was. I think Mr. Norman has been very fair in his description of the two armies, though there are one or two small matters I should have liked to have remarked upon. For instance, the fact of Turkish officers not being able to read or write is not a very great sign of ignorance, for reading and writing are not so common in the East as with us. It is also very clear that the Turkish soldier does require, not only less drilling than most soldiers, but also less command; as long as there are two or three energetic men in command, he is very independent of his company officers. I am sure you will allow me to tender your best thanks to Mr. Norman for his very interesting lecture.

OUR EGYPTIAN OBELISK: CLEOPATRA'S NEEDLE.

Engraved from a Photograph.