

Monarchy of Austrian and Hungarian into a Triple Monarchy of Austrian, Hungarian, and Slav. This project was feared by the Serbs because, by preventing the disintegration of Austria-Hungary, it would force postponement of their dreams of making Serbia the "Prussia of the Balkans." The project was also regarded with distaste by the Hungarians, who had no desire for that demotion associated with a shift from being one of two to being one of three joint rulers. Within the Hapsburg Cabinet there was considerable doubt as to what action to take toward Serbia. Hungary was reluctant to go to war for fear that a victory might lead to the annexation of more Serbs, thus accentuating the Slav problem within the empire and making the establishment of a Triple Monarchy more likely. Ultimately, they were reassured by the promise that no more Slavs would be annexed and that Serbia itself would, after its defeat, be compelled to stop its encouragement of Slav nationalist agitation within the empire and could, if necessary, be weakened by transfer of part of its territory to Bulgaria. On this irresponsible basis, Austria, having received a promise of support from Germany, sent a forty-eight-hour ultimatum to Belgrade. This document, delivered on July 23rd, was far-reaching. It bound Serbia to suppress anti-Habsburg publications, societies, and teaching; to remove from Serbian official positions persons to be named later by Austria; to allow Hapsburg officials to cooperate with the Serbs inside Serbia in apprehending and trying those implicated in the Sarajevo plot; and to offer explanations of various anti-Austrian utterances by Serbian officials.

Serbia, confident of Russian support, answered in a reply which was partly favorable, partly evasive, and in one particular at least (use of Austrian judges in Serbian tribunals) negative. Serbia mobilized before making her reply; Austria mobilized against her as soon as it was received, and, on July 28th, declared war. The Russian czar, under severe pressure from his generals, issued, retracted, modified, and reissued an order for general mobilization. Since the German military timetable for a two-front war provided that France must be defeated before Russian mobilization was completed, France and Germany both ordered mobilization on August 1st, and Germany declared war on Russia. As the German armies began to pour westward, Germany declared war on France (August 3rd) and Belgium (August 4th). Britain could not allow France to be defeated, and in addition was morally entangled by the military conversations of 1906-1914 and by the naval agreement of 1912. Moreover, the German challenge on the high seas, in commercial activities throughout the world, and in colonial activities in Africa could not go unanswered. On August 4th Britain declared war on Germany, emphasizing the iniquity of her attack on Belgium, although in the Cabinet meeting of July 28th it had been agreed that such an attack would not legally obligate Britain to go to war. Although this issue was spread among the people, and endless discussions ensued about Britain's obligation to defend Belgian neutrality under the Treaty of 1839, those who made the decision saw clearly that the real reason for war was that Britain could not allow Germany to defeat France.

Chapter 12—Military History, 1914-1918

For the general student of history, the military history of the First World War is not merely the narration of advancing armies, the struggles of men, their deaths, triumphs, or defeats. Rather, it presents an extraordinary discrepancy between the facts of modern

warfare and the ideas on military tactics which dominated the minds of men, especially the minds of military men. This discrepancy existed for many years before the war and began to disappear only in the course of 1918. As a result of its existence, the first three years of the war witnessed the largest military casualties in human history. These occurred as a result of the efforts of military men to do things which were quite impossible to do.

The German victories of 1866 and 1870 were the result of theoretical study, chiefly by the General Staff, and exhaustive detailed training resulting from that study. They were emphatically not based on experience, for the army of 1866 had had no actual fighting experience for two generations, and was commanded by a leader, Helmuth von Moltke, who had never commanded a unit so large as a company previously. Moltke's great contribution was to be found in the fact that, by using the railroad and the telegraph, he was able to merge mobilization and attack into a single operation so that the final concentration of his forces took place in the enemy country, practically on the battlefield itself, just before contact with the main enemy forces took place.

This contribution of Moltke's was accepted and expanded by Count von Schlieffen, chief of the Great General Staff from 1891 to 1905. Schlieffen considered it essential to overwhelm the enemy in one great initial onslaught. He assumed that Germany would be outnumbered and economically smothered in any fighting of extended duration, and sought to prevent this by a lightning war of an exclusively offensive character. He assumed that the next war would be a two-front war against France and Russia simultaneously and that the former would have to be annihilated before the latter was completely mobilized. Above all, he was determined to preserve the existing social structure of Germany, especially the superiority of the Junker class; accordingly, he rejected either an enormous mass army, in which the Junker control of the Officers' Corps would be lost by simple lack of numbers, or a long-drawn war of resources and attrition which would require a reorganized German economy.

The German emphasis on attack was shared by the French Army command, but in a much more extreme and even mystical fashion. Under the influence of Ardant Du Picq and Ferdinand Foch, the French General Staff came to believe that victory depended only on attack and that the success of any attack depended on morale and not on any physical factors. Du Picq went so far as to insist that victory did not depend at all on physical assault or on casualties, because the former never occurs and the latter occurs only during flight after the defeat. According to him, victory was a matter of morale, and went automatically to the side with the higher morale. The sides charge at each other; there is never any shock of attack, because one side breaks and flees before impact; this break is not the result of casualties, because the flight occurs before casualties are suffered and always begins in the rear ranks where no casualties could be suffered; the casualties are suffered in the flight and pursuit after the break. Thus the whole problem of war resolved itself into the problem of how to screw up the morale of one's army to the point where it is willing to fling itself headlong on the enemy. Technical problems of equipment or maneuvers are of little importance.

These ideas of Du Picq were accepted by an influential group in the French Army as the only possible explanation of the French defeat in 1870. This group, led by Foch, propagated throughout the army the doctrine of morale and the offensive à outrance. Foch became professor at the Ecole Supérieure de Guerre in 1894, and his teaching could be summed up in the four words, "Attaquez! Attaquez! Toujours, attaquez! "

This emphasis on the offensive à outrance by both sides led to a concentration of attention on three factors which were obsolete by 1914. These three were (a) cavalry, (b) the bayonet, and (c) the headlong infantry assault. These were obsolete in 1914 as the result of three technical innovations: (a) rapid-fire guns, especially machine guns; (b) barbed-wire entanglements, and (c) trench warfare. The orthodox military leaders generally paid no attention to the three innovations while concentrating all their attention on the three obsolete factors. Foch, from his studies of the Russo-Japanese War, decided that machine guns and barbed wire were of no importance, and ignored completely the role of trenches. Although cavalry was obsolete for assault by the time of the Crimean War (a fact indicated in Tennyson's "The Charge of the Light Brigade"), and although this was clearly demonstrated to be so in the American Civil War (a fact explicitly recognized in The Army and Navy Journal for October 31, 1868), cavalry and cavalry officers continued to dominate armies and military preparations. During the War of 1914-1918 many commanding officers, like John French, Douglas Haig, and John J. Pershing, were cavalry officers and retained the mentality of such officers. Haig, in his testimony before the Royal Commission on the War in South Africa (1903), testified, "Cavalry will have a larger sphere of action in future wars." Pershing insisted on the necessity to keep large numbers of horses behind the lines, waiting for the "breakthrough" which was to be obtained by bayonet charge. In every army, transportation was one of the weakest points, yet feed for the horses was the largest item transported, being greater than ammunition or other supplies. Although transport across the Atlantic was critically short throughout the war, one-third of all shipping space was in feed for horses. Time for training recruits was also a critical bottleneck, but most armies spent more time on bayonet practice than on anything else. Yet casualties inflicted on the enemy by bayonet were so few that they hardly appear in the statistics dealing with the subject.

The belief of military men that an assault made with high morale could roll through wire, machine guns, and trenches was made even more unrealistic by their insistence that such an offensive unit maintain a straight front. This meant that it was not to be permitted to move further in a soft spot, but was to hold back where advance was easy in order to break down the defensive strong points so that the whole front could precede at approximately the same rate. This was done, they explained, in order to avoid exposed flanks and enemy cross fire on advanced salients.

There was some opposition to these unrealistic theories, especially in the German Army, and there were important civilians in all countries who fought with their own military leaders on these issues. Clemenceau in France, and, above all, Lord Esher and the members of the Committee on Imperial Defence in England should be-mentioned here.

At the outbreak of war in August 1914, both sides began to put into effect their complicated strategic plans made much earlier. On the German side this plan, known as the Schlieffen Plan, was drawn up in 1905 and modified by the younger Helmuth von Moltke (nephew of the Moltke of 1870) after 1906. On the French side the plan was known as Plan XVII, and was drawn up by Joffre in 1912.

The original Schlieffen Plan proposed to hold the Russians, as best as could be done, with ten divisions, and to face France with a stationary left wing of eight divisions and a great wheeling right and center of fifty-three divisions going through Holland and Belgium and coming down on the flank and rear of the French armies by passing west of Paris. Moltke modified this by adding two divisions to the right wing (one from the Russian front and one new) and eight new divisions to the left. He also cut out the passage through Holland, making it necessary for his right wing to pass through the Liege gap, between the Maastricht appendix of Holland and the forested terrain of the Ardennes.

The French Plan XVII proposed to stop an anticipated German attack into eastern France from Lorraine by an assault of two enlarged French armies on its center, thus driving victoriously into southern Germany whose Catholic and separatist peoples were not expected to rally with much enthusiasm to the Protestant, centralist cause of a Prussianized German Empire. While this was taking place, a force of 800,000 Russians was to invade East Prussia, and 150,000 British were to bolster the French left wing near Belgium.

The execution of these plans did not completely fulfill the expectations of their supporters. The French moved 3,781,000 men in 7,000 trains in 16 days (August 2-18), opening their attack on Lorraine on 29 August 14th. By August 20th they were shattered, and by August 25th, after eleven days of combat, had suffered 300,000 casualties. This was almost 25 percent of the number of men engaged, and represented the most rapid wastage of the war.

In the meantime the Germans in 7 days (August 6-12) transported 1,500,000 men across the Rhine at the rate of 550 trains a day. These men formed 70 divisions divided into 7 armies and forming a vast arc from northwest to southeast. Within this arc were 49 French divisions organized in 5 armies and the British Expeditionary Force (B.E.F.) of 4 divisions. The relationship of these forces, the commanding generals of the respective armies, and their relative strength can be seen from the following list:

Entente Forces (North to South)

Army	Commander	Divisions
B. E. F.	Sir John French	4
V	Lanrezac	10

IV	De Langle de Cary/	
III	Ruffey	20
II	Castelnau/	
I	Dubail	19

German Forces (North to South)

Army	Commander	Divisions
I	von Kluck/	
II	von Bülow/	
III	von Hausen/	34
IV	Prince Albrecht of Württemberg/	
V	Crown Prince Frederick	21
VI	Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria/	
VII	von Heeringen	15

The German right wing passed Liege, without reducing that great fortress, on the night of August 5-6 under the instructions of General Erich Ludendorff of the General Staff. The Belgian Army, instead of retreating southwestward before the German wave, moved northwestward to cover Antwerp. This put them ultimately on the rear of the advancing German forces. These forces peeled off eight and a half divisions to reduce the Belgian forts and seven divisions to cover the Belgian force before Antwerp. This reduced the strength of the German right wing, which was increasingly exhausted by the rapidity of its own advance. When the German plan became clear on August 18th, Joffre formed a new Sixth Army, largely from garrison troops, under Michel-Joseph Maunoury but really commanded by Joseph Galliéni, Military Governor of Paris. By August 22nd the whole French line west of Verdun was in retreat. Three days later, Moltke, believing victory secure, sent two army corps to Russia from the Second and Third armies. These arrived on the Eastern Front only after the Russian advance into Prussia had been smashed at Tannenberg and around the Masurian Lakes (August 26th-September 1st). In the meantime in the west, Schlieffen's project swept onward toward fiasco. When Lanrezac slowed up Bülow's advance on August 28th, Kluck, who was already a day's march ahead of Bülow, tried to close the gap between the two by turning southeastward. This brought his line of advance east of Paris rather than west of that city as originally planned. Galliéni, bringing the Sixth Army from Paris in any vehicles he could commandeer, threw it at Kluck's exposed right flank. Kluck turned again to face Galliéni, moving northwestward

in a brilliant maneuver in order to envelop him within the German arc before resuming his advance southeastward. This operation was accompanied by considerable success except that it opened a gap thirty miles wide between Kluck and Bülow. Opposite this gap was the B.E.F., which was withdrawing southward with even greater speed than the French. On September 5th the French retreat stopped; on the following day they began a general counterattack, ordered by Joffre on the insistence of Galliéni. Thus began the First Battle of the Marne.

Kluck was meeting with considerable success over the Sixth French Army, although Bülow was being badly mauled by Lanrezac, when the B.E.F. began to move into the gap between the First and Second German armies (September 8th). A German staff officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Hentsch, ordered the whole German right to fall back to the Aisne River where a front was formed on September 13th by the arrival of some of the German forces which had been attacking the Belgian forts. The Germans were willing to fall back to the Aisne because they believed the advance could be resumed when they wished to do so. In the next few months the Germans tried to resume their advance, and the French tried to dislodge the Germans from their positions. Neither was able to make any headway against the firepower of the other. A succession of futile efforts to outflank each other's positions merely succeeded in bringing the ends of the front to the English Channel on one extreme and to Switzerland on the other. In spite of millions of casualties, this line, from the sea to the mountains across the fair face of France, remained almost unchanged for over three years.

During these terrible years, the dream of military men was to break through the enemy line by infantry assault, then roll up his flanks and disrupt his rearward communications by pouring cavalry and other reserves through the gap. This was never achieved. The effort to attain it led to one experiment after another. In order these were: (1) bayonet assault, (2) preliminary artillery barrage, (3) use of poison gas, (4) use of the tank, (5) use of infiltration. The last four of these innovations were devised alternately by the Allies and by the Central Powers.

Bayonet assault was a failure by the end of 1914. It merely created mountains of dead and wounded without any real advance, although some officers continued to believe that an assault would be successful if the morale of the attackers could be brought to a sufficiently high pitch to overcome machine-gun fire.

An artillery barrage as a necessary preliminary to infantry assault was used almost from the beginning. It was ineffectual. At first no army had the necessary quantity of munitions. Some armies insisted on ordering shrapnel rather than high-explosive shells for such barrages. This resulted in a violent controversy between Lloyd George and the generals, the former trying to persuade the latter that shrapnel was not effective against defensive forces in ground trenches. In time it should have become clear that high-explosive barrages were not effective either, although they were used in enormous quantities. They failed because: (1) earth and concrete fortifications provided sufficient protection to the defensive forces to allow them to use their own firepower against the infantry assault which followed the barrage; (2) a barrage notified the defense where to

expect the following infantry assault, so that reserves could be brought up to strengthen that position; and (3) the doctrine of the continuous front made it impossible to penetrate the enemy positions on a wide-enough front to break through. The efforts to do so, however, resulted in enormous casualties. At Verdun in 1916 the French lost 350,000 and the Germans 300,000. On the Eastern Front the Russian General Aleksei Brusilov lost a million men in an indecisive attack through Galicia (June-August, 1916). On the Somme in the same year the British lost 410,000, the French lost 190,000, and the Germans lost 450,000 for a maximum gain of 7 miles on a front about 25 miles wide (July-November, 1916). The following year the slaughter continued. At Chemin des Dames in April, 1917, the French, under a new commander, Robert Nivelle, fired 11 million shells in a 10-day barrage on a 30-mile front. The attack failed, suffering losses of 118,000 men in a brief period. Many corps mutinied, and large numbers of combatants were shot to enforce discipline. Twenty-three civilian leaders were also executed. Nivelle was replaced by Pétain. Shortly afterward, at Passchendaele (Third Battle of Ypres), Haig used a barrage of 4 1/4 million shells, almost 5 tons for every yard of an 1 r-mile front, but lost 400,000 men in the ensuing assault (August-November, 1917).

The failure of the barrage made it necessary to devise new methods, but military men were reluctant to try any innovations. In April, 1915, the Germans were forced by civilian pressure to use poison gas, as had been suggested by the famous chemist Fritz Haber. Accordingly, without any effort at concealment and with no plans to exploit a breakthrough if it came, they sent a wave of chlorine gas at the place where the French and British lines joined. The junction was wiped out, and a great gap was opened through the line. Although it was not closed for five weeks, nothing was done by the Germans to use it. The first use of gas by the Western Powers (the British) in September, 1915, was no more successful. At the terrible Battle of Passchendaele in July 1917, the Germans introduced mustard gas, a weapon which was copied by the British in July 1918. This was the most effective gas used in the war, but it served to strengthen the defense rather than the offense, and was especially valuable to the Germans in their retreat in the autumn of 1918, serving to slow up the pursuit and making difficult any really decisive blow against them.

The tank as an offensive weapon devised to overcome the defensive strength of machine-gun fire was invented by Ernest Swinton in 1915. Only his personal contacts with the members of the Committee of Imperial Defence succeeded in bringing his idea to some kind of realization. The suggestion was resisted by the generals. When continued resistance proved impossible, the new weapon was misused, orders for more were canceled, and all military supporters of the new weapon were removed from responsible positions and replaced by men who were distrustful or at least ignorant of the tanks. Swinton sent detailed instructions to Headquarters, emphasizing that they must be used for the first time in large numbers, in a surprise assault, without any preliminary artillery barrage, and with close support by infantry reserves. Instead they were used quite incorrectly. While Swinton was still training crews for the first 150 tanks, fifty were taken to France, the commander who had been trained in their use was replaced by an inexperienced man, and a mere eighteen were sent against the Germans. This occurred on September 15, 1916, in the waning stages of the Battle of the Somme. An unfavorable

report on their performance was sent from General Headquarters to the War Office in London and, as a result, an order for manufacture of a thousand more was canceled without the knowledge of the Cabinet. This was overruled only by direct orders from Lloyd George. Only on November 20, 1917, were tanks used as Swinton had instructed. On that day 381 tanks supported by six infantry divisions struck the Hindenburg Line before Cambrai and burst through into open country. These forces were exhausted by a five-mile gain, and stopped. The gap in the German line was not utilized, for the only available reserves were two divisions of cavalry which were ineffective. Thus the opportunity was lost. Only in 1918 were massed tank attacks used with any success and in the fashion indicated by Swinton.

The year 1917 was a bad one. The French and British suffered through their great disasters at Chemin des Dames and Passchendaele. Romania entered the war and was almost completely overrun, Bucharest being captured on December 5th. Russia suffered a double revolution, and was obliged to surrender to Germany. The Italian Front was completely shattered by a surprise attack at Caporetto and only by a miracle was it reestablished along the Piave (October-December, 1917). The only bright spots in the year were the British conquests of Palestine and Mesopotamia and the entrance into the war of the United States, but the former was not important and the latter was a promise for the future rather than a help to 1917.

Nowhere, perhaps, is the unrealistic character of the thinking of most high military leaders of World War I revealed more clearly than in the British commander in chief, Field Marshal Sir Douglas (later Earl) Haig, scion of a Scottish distillery family. In June, 1917, in spite of a decision of May 4th by the Inter-Allied Conference at Paris against any British offensive, and at a time when Russia and Serbia had been knocked out of the war, French military morale was shattered after the fiasco of the Nivelle offensive, and American help was almost a year in the future, Haig determined on a major offensive against the Germans to win the war. He ignored all discouraging information from his intelligence, wiped from the record the known figures about German reserves, and deceived the Cabinet, both in respect to the situation and to his own plans. Throughout the discussion the civilian political leaders, who were almost universally despised as ignorant amateurs by the military men, were proved more correct in their judgments and expectations. Haig obtained permission for his Passchendaele offensive only because General (later Field Marshal and Baronet) William Robertson, Chief of the Imperial General Staff, covered up Haig's falsifications about German reserves and because First Sea Lord Admiral John Jellicoe told the Cabinet that unless Haig could capture the submarine bases on the Belgian coast (an utterly impossible objective) he considered it "improbable that we could go on with the war next year for lack of shipping." On this basis, Haig won approval for a "step by step" offensive "not involving heavy losses." He was so optimistic that he told his generals that "opportunities for the employment of cavalry in masses are likely to offer." The offensive, opened on July 31st, developed into the most horrible struggle of the war, fought week after week in a sea of mud, with casualties mounting to 400,000 men after three months. In October, when the situation had been hopeless for weeks, Haig still insisted that the Germans were at the point of collapse, that their casualties were double the British (they were considerably less than

the British), and that the breakdown of the Germans, and the opportunity for the tanks and cavalry to rush through them, might come at any moment.

One of the chief reasons for the failure of these offensives was the doctrine of the continuous front, which led commanders to hold back their offensives where resistance was weak and to throw their reserves against the enemy's strong points. This doctrine was completely reversed by Ludendorff in the spring of 1918 in a new tactic known as "infiltration." By this method advance was to be made around strong points by penetrating as quickly as possible and with maximum strength through weak resistance, leaving the centers of strong resistance surrounded and isolated for later attention. Although Ludendorff did not carry out this plan with sufficient conviction to give it full success, he did achieve amazing results. The great losses by the British and French in 1917, added to the increase in German strength from forces arriving from the defunct Russian and Romanian fronts, made it possible for Ludendorff to strike a series of sledgehammer blows along the Western Front between Douai and Verdun in March and April 1918. Finally, on May 27th, after a brief but overwhelming bombardment, the German flood burst over Chemin des Dames, poured across the Aisne, and moved relentlessly toward Paris. By May 30th it was on the Marne, thirty-seven miles from the capital. There, in the Second Battle of the Marne, were reenacted the events of September 1914. On June 4th the German advance was stopped temporarily by the Second American Division at Château-Thierry. In the next six weeks a series of counterattacks aided by nine American divisions were made on the northern flank of the German penetration. The Germans fell back behind the Vesle River, militarily intact, but so ravaged by influenza that many companies had only thirty men. The crown prince demanded that the war be ended. Before this could be done, on August 8, 1918—"the black day of the German Army," as Ludendorff called it—the British broke the German line at Amiens by a sudden assault with 456 tanks supported by 13 infantry and 3 cavalry divisions. When the Germans rushed up 18 reserve divisions to support the six which were attacked, the Allied Powers repeated their assault at Saint-Quentin (August 31st) and in Flanders (September 2nd). A German Crown Council, meeting at Spa, decided that victory was no longer possible, but neither civil government nor army leaders would assume the responsibility for opening negotiations for peace. The story of these negotiations will be examined in a moment, as the last of a long series of diplomatic conversations which continued throughout the war.

Looking back on the military history of the First World War, it is clear that the whole war was a siege operation against Germany. Once the original German onslaught was stopped on the Marne, victory for Germany became impossible because she could not resume her advance. On the other hand, the Entente Powers could not eject the German spearhead from French soil, although they sacrificed millions of men and billions of dollars in the effort to do so. Any effort to break in on Germany from some other front was regarded as futile, and was made difficult by the continuing German pressure in France. Accordingly, although sporadic attacks were made on the Italian Front, in the Arab areas of the Ottoman Empire, on the Dardanelles directly in 1915, against Bulgaria through Saloniki in 1915- 1918, and along the whole Russian Front, both sides continued

to regard northeastern France as the vital area. And in that area, clearly no decision could be reached.

To weaken Germany the Entente Powers began a blockade of the Central Powers, controlling the sea directly, in spite of the indecisive German naval challenge at Jutland in 1916, and limiting the imports of neutrals near Germany, like the Netherlands. To resist this blockade, Germany used a four-pronged instrument. On the home front every effort was made to control economic life so that all goods would be used in the most effective fashion possible and so that food, leather, and other necessities would be distributed fairly to all. The success of this struggle on the home front was due to the ability of two German Jews. Haber, the chemist, devised a method for extracting nitrogen from the air, and thus obtained an adequate supply of the most necessary constituent of all fertilizers and all explosives. Before 1914 the chief source of nitrogen had been in the guano deposits of Chile, and, but for Haber, the British blockade would have compelled a German defeat in 1915 from lack of nitrates. Walter Rathenau, director of the German Electric Company and of some five dozen other enterprises, organized the German economic system in a mobilization which made it possible for Germany to fight on with slowly dwindling resources.

On the military side Germany made a threefold reply to the British blockade. It tried to open the blockade by defeating its enemies to the south and east (Russia, Romania, and Italy). In 1917 this effort was largely successful, but it was too late. Simultaneously, Germany tried to wear down her Western foes by a policy of attrition in the trenches and to force Britain out of the war by a retaliatory submarine blockade directed at British shipping. The submarine attack, as a new method of naval warfare, was applied with hesitation and ineffectiveness until 1917. Then it was applied with such ruthless efficiency that almost a million tons of shipping was sunk in the month of April 1917, and Britain was driven within three weeks of exhaustion of her food supply. This danger of a British defeat, dressed in the propaganda clothing of moral outrage at the iniquity of submarine attacks, brought the United States into the war on the side of the Entente in that critical month of April, 1917. In the meantime the Germany policy of military attrition on the Western Front worked well until 1918. By January of that year Germany had been losing men at about half her rate of replacement and at about half the rate at which she was inflicting losses on the Entente Powers. Thus the period 1914-1918 saw a race between the economic attrition of Germany by the blockade and the personal attrition of the Entente by military action. This race was never settled on its merits because three new factors entered the picture in 1917. These were the German counter-blockade by submarines on Britain, the increase in German manpower in the West resulting from her victory in the East, and the arrival on the Western Front of new American forces. The first two of these factors were overbalanced in the period March-September, 1918, by the third. By August of 1918 Germany had given her best, and it had not been adequate. The blockade and the rising tide of American manpower gave the German leaders the choice of surrender or complete economic and social upheaval. Without exception, led by the Junker military commanders, they chose surrender.