

ago by the late Rev. P. Phillipstein just prior to the first interment, viz., that of N. J. Simmons. Since then the following have been buried by Jewish ministers : Mrs. N. J. Simmons, Samuel Phillips, and Mrs. Thelma Ward (daughter of Mr. M. Phillips). The Trustees of the Cemetery are Lionel Cohen, Michael Phillips, and Stanley Simmons.

General Sir John Monash.

A Great Australian.

By COLONEL A. W. HYMAN.

Sir John Monash was born in Melbourne on 23rd June, 1865. His early school days were spent in Richmond, Victoria, and Jerilderie, New South Wales. At the latter town he came under the influence of a schoolmaster, William Elliott, who remained his friend through life. Later, he became a pupil of Scotch College, Melbourne, where at fourteen he matriculated. In 1881, he became Captain of the School. At the entrance of the College, there has now been erected a memorial gate in his honour.

He gained an exhibition of £25 which enabled him to enter the University of Melbourne, where he graduated in Engineering, in Arts and in Law. The Degree of Doctor of Engineering was conferred upon him later. At the University, as throughout life, his day began at 6.30 a.m., and often ended at 1.30 in the morning. In 1923, he became Vice-Chancellor of the University, which post he held until his death, when the Council recorded the following resolution :—

His great organising and executive ability combined with exceptional intellectual powers qualified him to render eminent service to the Administration of the University, and this service was freely given. The wide range of his intellectual and aesthetic interests and the unique experience of his life enabled him to appreciate the many and varied activities of so complex an institution. By his death, the University has lost a good friend and a wise Counsellor.

To pay his University fees, Monash coached other students. He joined the University Regiment, and soon became a non-commissioned officer; his first commission

was in the Garrison Artillery in 1887. After leaving the University, he became an Assistant Engineer and Chief Draftsman to the Victorian Government. Later, as a consulting engineer, he was largely responsible for the construction of certain important railway lines in Queensland, Victoria, Tasmania and Western Australia.

All this time he was serving in the Militia. He had now risen to the rank of Major, but was soon promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel in the Intelligence Corps, after which he became a full Colonel upon taking over the command of the 13th Infantry Brigade, Commonwealth Military Forces.

At the outbreak of the Great War in 1914, he was given the command of the 4th Australian Infantry Brigade, A.I.F., and when he left Australia in December, 1914, he was given charge of the 2nd Australian Convoy of about eighteen ships, upon which were Australian and New Zealand troops. As Adjutant of one of these ships, H.M.T. *Ajana*, I early had an opportunity of observing that we had in the Commander of the Convoy a leader of outstanding personality. Throughout the voyage to Egypt, the convoy was escorted by one Japanese cruiser and one Australian submarine. The first time I actually met Sir John Monash was when we were anchored off Aden. I had to go off in a gale in a small ship's boat to the flagship on which Sir John had his headquarters.

The late General Sir Brudenell White, soon after Sir John Monash's death, wrote as follows :—

His ambition was certainly not a predominant factor in his career, although it had its influences. Sir John was a simple man, and to my mind his simplicity was his most marked and perhaps his most charming characteristic. Had you asked him from what he received the most gratification—from tasks well fulfilled, from honour, from power, from pride of place or from the plaudits of the crowd—I think he would have replied that from all these he received less pleasure than from the greeting at the end of the day accorded him by a devoted grandchild. Ambition, of course, he possessed, but the ambition which seeks power, authority or riches is scarcely worth the name. The only ambition for which I have any regard is that which comes from an impelling will to make a job of any task undertaken. That is the ambition which Sir John Monash had in a marked degree. He was possessed with a more than usually good brain, as his school and University achievements show, but it was to the other qualities which I have mentioned to which he himself would have ascribed most of his achievements.

Apart from his right mindedness, which was natural, he possessed a calmness of judgment and a tolerance which made reference for his advice a pleasure. His modesty was amazing. There are probably few men who so carefully docketed and filed for reference all matters likely to be of use, and with most men the attempt would have blurred their vision and sapped energy. To him, with his trained mind and untiring industry, it was an aid and pleasure.

His speeches were rare, and, when delivered, were outstanding. I remember one he delivered to the officers of the 4th Australian Division on the Suez Canal, Egypt, before we left for the French front in June, 1916. A copy of this speech was handed by me to the Mitchell Library, Sydney, in 1920, where it will be preserved for all time. I include two paragraphs of this speech, as follows :—

Removed as we are from the centre of things, living, as we are, so to say, on the fringe of the Empire's activities, in an atmosphere of monotonous war training in this Desert, and without the hourly stimulus of great and stirring happenings among us, many of us are inclined to lose our perspective, and to forget exactly where we stand. We do not continually realise that we are a part of an Empire at war, and all that means; that we shall not achieve success unless we deserve success, and that we shall not deserve to succeed unless we prove ourselves better men and show that in all things—in training, in efficiency, in military spirit—we are more capable than our enemies. The call is upon every one of us to put forth every ounce of effort, every fraction of those powers and abilities with which the whole of our past work, our education, our training, and all the experiences of our lives have endowed us. We have to realise that we are bound in honour to apply to the work now in our hands nothing less than the utmost power of performance and self-sacrifice of which we are capable.

And as an Australian, I make a very special appeal to Australian officers. Do we appreciate fully the enormous efforts and sacrifices which the Australian Nation has made, and is making, in order to put her armies into the field—efforts and sacrifices which will impose burdens upon her population for generations to come? We are so far, and have been so long removed from our home environments, that unless we think about it, and think hard, we shall forget it; and in forgetting it we shall forget also that Australia has committed the achievement of the great purpose for which those sacrifices have been made into the keeping of a small handful of men, a few hundred officers, through and by whom alone her great effort can be translated into success. Let us, the officers to whom I refer, see to it that, in doing anything less than our very best, we do not prove false to this great trust.

Sir Brudenell White again writes :—

His arguments were closely reasoned and logical : they showed they came from a brain of a master : his judgment and temperament were calm and judicial : his personal integrity was unassailable, and

his loyalty to those whom he served never failed. He was always ready to let others have the credit, and take the blame upon his own shoulders. He had his disappointments, which he faced without bitterness, but with a restrained dignity.

Sir John Monash took his Brigade to Gallipoli, where he commanded it with distinction throughout that campaign. There was nothing in his handling of the Brigade, which specially displayed the great qualifications to be discovered later. The truth was that a Brigade command did not give him the opportunity needed. When the opportunity came he embraced it, and in the creation, organisation and training of the 3rd Australian Division he made his real powers evident. This may appear to be luck, but I am not a great believer in luck. In equality of opportunity I admit, but much opportunity is missed by us all by not fitting ourselves to seize it when it passes. Sir John's habit was always to fit himself for what might come. As a Brigadier he fitted himself for a higher task, and when that task came he showed the effects of his preparation.

Dr. Bean again, in his *Official History of Australians in the War of 1914-1918*, writes :—

In September, 1916, he had deeply impressed the King at a successful review of his Division and 10,000 other Australian and New Zealand troops on Salisbury Plain, England. The King spent two and a half hours with him on a footing of perfect freedom. Sir John Monash himself mentioned in his book how Earl Haig, Commander-in-Chief of the British Army, rode beside him that day, and, with much feeling and warmth as he said good-bye, remarked : "You have a very fine Division, General. I wish you all sorts of good luck !"

As a Divisional Commander, Sir John showed not only an ability to create, organise and train, but all the qualities necessary for command in the field. Earl Haig made a point of praising the commanders of the incomparable troops of the A.I.F., and he placed a high value upon Sir John Monash. Thus it was that when General Birdwood was selected to command the 5th British Army, to Sir John Monash went the blue ribbon of the Anzac Command. The divisions of that command were all commanded by first-class men, and all capable and experienced. But events showed the selection of Sir John Monash to be not only a wise one, but the wisest.

Dr. Bean wrote further of him :—

It is quite certain that the A.I.F. contained no brain better than that of Sir John Monash. . . . And this not merely in military matters, or engineering or law, but in pictures, music, natural history, athletics, archaeology or anything else. He was as catholic as

Napoleon, for his mind knew no horizon except the universe. As a leader, he had few equals in the whole British Army. This was very marked in his careful training of the 3rd Australian Division. Monash never really had full scope for his ability until he was charged with the perfecting of the plans for the 3rd Division's part in the Messines offensive in 1917. His conference with his staff covered every possible consideration, and before the conference ended, every item had to be ticked off. Before that battle, Monash issued some 35 successive Operation Orders and Circulars, setting forth his plan. Every man knew the general plan and his own particular part of it, but General Monash knew them all. After that battle and the third battle of Ypres, Haig definitely made up his mind that Sir John Monash would be, after Birdwood, the best Commander of the Australian Forces; this opinion was also shared by General Congreve, V.C., who was Commander of the British 7th Corps, and also by all other British Generals under whom Monash served.

His next battle at Paschendale in October, 1917, did not give him much scope.

Major-General Sir Charles Rosenthal has written :—

At Doullens, France, a conference was held in March, 1918, at the crisis of the greatest German attack of the campaign. This conference was perhaps the most momentous of the Great War of 1914-1918, and was attended by Generals Haig, Foch and Wilson. Clemenceau, the French Prime Minister, and Lloyd George, the British Prime Minister, were also present, and it was at this conference that Marshal Foch was made Generalissimo of the Allied Armies. While it was sitting, General Monash so deployed the troops of his 3rd Division that they offered the strongest possible resistance to the advancing Germans. The result was most outstanding, and when General Birdwood was later appointed G.O.C. of the 5th British Army, General Monash was selected to command the Australian Corps—an appointment which was destined to have a far-reaching effect not only with the A.I.F., but with the whole Allied cause.

It was not, however, until he became Commander of the Australian Corps at the end of May, 1918, that his great powers and master mind were fully displayed, for in the Battle of Hamel in July he co-ordinated tanks, infantry, artillery and aeroplanes; this had a most important bearing on the final issue of the war, and it was in this battle American troops fought alongside Australians for the first time.

On 8th August, 1918, began that great offensive which finally ended in the Armistice in November, 1918. The preparation by the Australian Corps for this famous attack, and the attack itself, so writes Dr. Bean, was

Monash's most perfect military achievement. Its success was beyond anticipation. Dr. Bean states :—

The part Sir John Monash played in making this decision will some day be recognised, and in it lies his just claim to a place among the great military leaders of history.

He was knighted a few days afterwards by the King in the field.

The Battle of St. Quentin followed in September-October, 1918, and the success achieved by Australian troops under Monash's leadership against the Prussian Guards was perhaps his brightest tactical operation. General Rawlinson refers to it as the finest single operation of the Great War.

Sir Thomas Blamey, now Commander-in-Chief of the Australian Military Forces (then Sir John Monash's Chief of Staff), has written :—

There resulted a victory [referring to that of August] in which the whole of the enemy's defences and formations were destroyed by the Australian and Canadian troops. This caused the Supreme German Command to describe the day as "Germany's Black Day," and Ludendorff acknowledged it as marking the downfall of Germany.

On 21st November, 1918, Sir John was appointed by the Australian Government as Director-General in England of Demobilisation and Repatriation. From that moment, he gave of his best in repatriating home 180,000 men and 7000 dependents. He carried out this great task most successfully.

Sir Thomas Blamey states :—

On his return to Australia in December, 1919, the Victorian Government selected Sir John Monash to undertake the establishment of the Victorian Electric Scheme at Yallourn. As Chairman of the Commission, he lived long enough to see the success of his labours in this great work.

His last two public official acts were as Representative of the Australian Government at the opening of New Delhi, in India, in 1930, and when he led, for the last time, the great Anzac Day march in Melbourne in April of the same year.

The keynote of Monash's success was his thoroughness and determination to fully qualify in whatever study he undertook, and thus he was fully prepared for the grave responsibilities he found during the Great War, 1914-1918, and in subsequent years until his death.

The most affectionate and cordial relationship existed between Monash and his staff; he was entirely informal in that relationship. His strong personality, firmness and driving force, preserved the right perspective.

General P. J. McGlinn adds :—

Sir John Monash became a national possession, so that all could avail themselves of his time and talents. He kept at his post until physical exhaustion called a halt: those who knew him were convinced that the intensity of his labours hastened his end. He



General Sir John Monash.

(Photo. by courtesy of his daughter, Mrs. Gershon Bennett.)

died in harness, but all had hoped he would be able to spend the last years of his life in that retirement he so richly deserved.

It is generally agreed that if the turn of events had

given Monash the opportunity of commanding the entire Allied Forces in the Great War, he would have been qualified for the task.

It is not too much to say, as Mr. R. W. L. Patterson in *The Reveille* of October, 1931, wrote :—

Monash was Australia's greatest son! This young nation has produced men of letters, artists, scientists and engineers whose names had been written large in the Book of Fame, but in Monash there was combined something of them all—brilliant in war, brilliant in peace, a scholar amongst scholars, a lover of the Arts.

Public and general recognition of Monash's record of service was, however, of slow growth in Australia. If he had possessed a greater sense of the dramatic, he might have easily been acclaimed a public hero after he had returned to Australia in 1920 from the Great War, but as he said himself, he "preferred to get down to his civilian job as soon as possible without fuss."

Mr. R. W. L. Patterson again wrote :—

When the war was over, this genius of the battlefield was content to sink back into comparative obscurity and work, unostentatiously but forcefully, for the rehabilitation of that Australia for whose freedom he had fought so well.

Sir John Monash was proud of belonging to the Jewish Faith and of the contribution which Jewry has made to world culture and civilisation over the centuries. His important activities, however, in so many other spheres of work left him very little time to concentrate on the problems of Jewry; and it must not be forgotten he died at the comparatively early age of sixty-six years.

For some years before his death, Sir John was a member of the Board of the St. Kilda Synagogue, Melbourne. He opened the New South Wales Jewish War Memorial, Maccabean Hall, in Sydney on Armistice Day, 11th November, 1923; on his arrival at Central Station here he was met by the State Premier and many other prominent citizens. Later, he was the guest of the State Government at luncheon at Parliament House, which was followed by a civic reception by the Lord Mayor of Sydney at the Town Hall, and he was presented with an illuminated address by the citizens of Sydney.

The function at the Maccabean Hall was presided over by the late Judge J. J. Cohen, then President of the

Memorial, who introduced Sir John to the large and representative gathering present, after referring to Sir John's outstanding services to the country. Sir John, in his reply, said :—

I compliment those who made this building possible. It has a symbolic purpose, for behind it is the aim of keeping the Jewish people together and perpetuating our Faith; it is to prevent the regrettable drift of our people's allegiance from the religion of their fathers. The Honour Board would receive the respectful homage of all those who passed by—the example of those who served in war should keep alive the things they stood for, fought for, and suffered for.

He appealed to the Jews of New South Wales to set before themselves the idea of service to the country, for nowhere in the world have we so much freedom and liberty as in Australia.

In 1927, Monash was unanimously appointed President of the Zionist Federation of Australia. When accepting the Presidency, he spoke as follows :—

The British Empire has accepted the mandate for Palestine, and we who are living in Australia have a double responsibility, both as Jews and citizens, to do our share in rebuilding the land of Israel and reviving the cultural and spiritual centre of Judaism.

Sir John also took a prominent part in opening the new Hebrew congregation in Melbourne on 24th August, 1930.

It is quite certain that if Sir John had been living in these difficult days, his ability and record of service would have played a great part in the solution of the Jewish world complex and its post-war reconstruction.

The Monash Hut, Hyde Park, built and presented by the Jewish citizens of Sydney to the Lord Mayor's Australian Comforts Fund at the beginning of the present war, was named after Sir John, and, as is well known, has already given splendid social service to the fighting men who are serving Australia in the present war.

Perhaps he was the outstanding civilian-soldier of the Great War, and a country that can produce such a man is surely worth fighting for! He was awarded the G.C.M.G., K.C.B., V.D., and he was mentioned eight times in despatches. He was also created, by the French, Grand Officer of the Legion of Honour; and Grand Officer of the Order of Belgium; and received the Croix de Guerre

(both of France and Belgium) and the American Distinguished Service Medal. His civil honours were B.A., D.C.L., LL.D. (Eng.), and the honorary degrees of Doctor of Laws, both of Oxford and Cambridge, were conferred on him personally in 1919. Some years before his death he was promoted to the rank of full General in the Australian Army. He died in Melbourne on 8th October, 1931.

Australian Jews in this and future generations have to set out to keep the name and record of service of Sir John Monash with us for all time; to set him firmly in our minds so that he will never be forgotten, so that we and posterity will know and remember what manner of man he was, how proud to be a Jew, and how he worked always for the British Empire and Australia.

The Story of State Aid to Jewish Establishments in New South Wales.

Addendum to the above Article published in the last issue of this "Journal."*

By RABBI DR. I. PORUSH.

The concluding sentence of the first paragraph on page 355 of that article, "nothing more appears to have been heard in regard to this communication," requires revision in the light of new material come to hand and of the research subsequently undertaken.

The scanning by the writer of the Minute Books of the York Street Synagogue, recently found in the vaults of the Great Synagogue, revealed that the relentless efforts of the community were, after all, not futile, and that for some time a stipend was granted by the Legislature to the Minister of the Jewish congregation in Sydney.

This now seems to be the continuation of the story of what the Jews then regarded as the struggle for equal religious rights: Without amendment of the Church Extension Act of the colony, which legislated for the pro-

**Vide* Part X., Vol. I., pages 337-355 of this *Journal*. When that article was written, the Minute and Letter Books of the York Street Synagogue, the main source of this Addendum, were not known to the writer.