plunder they obtained from it, and this method of subsisting and paying an army reached its utmost limits in the Thirty Years’ War. During the last stages of this war Germany had been so thoroughly devastated that the armies marched hither and thither like packs of hungry wolves, every soldier accom­panied by two or three non-combatants—camp followers of all sorts, mistresses, ragged children and miserable peasants who had lost all and now sought to live by robbing others under the protection of the army. An English traveller, as early as 1636, twelve years before the peace of Westphalia, reported that at Bacharach-on-Rhine he had found “ the poor people dead with grass in their mouths,” and that a village at which he staye<l “ hath been pillaged eight-and-twenty times in two years, and twice in one day.”

From these horrors there followed a revulsion to the other extreme. Unless ordered by higher authority for political reasons to sack a particular town or to pillage a particular district, the soldiers were rigidly kept in hand, rationed by their own supply officers and hanged or flogged if at any moment an outbreak of the old vices made the example necessary. After 1648 there were very few districts in Middle Europe that could support an army for even a few days, and the burden of their sustenance had to be distributed over a larger area. Thus, at the mere rumour of an army’s approach, the peasantry fled with all their belongings into the fortified places, armies soon came to he supplied from “ magazines,” which were filled either by contract from the home country or by inducing the peasantry— by means of good conduct and cash payments—to bring their produce to market. These magazines were placed in a strong place, and if one was not available, a siege had to be undertaken to meet the demand. Moreover, soldiers in Marlborough’s time were not as easily obtained as in the Thirty Years’ War, and they had to be housed and fed comfortably enough to make it worth their while to stay with the colours instead of deserting. From these and similar conditions there grew up a system of supply and transport usually called the “ magazine system,” under which an army was bound, under penalty of dissolution, to go no farther than seven marches from the nearest fortress, two days from the nearest field bakery, and so on. When an 18th-century army foraged for itself it was because the regular supply service was interrupted, *i.e.* when it was *in extremis.* But the relative rarity of wars in the 18th century, the habit of demanding nothing from the inhabitants of the country traversed by an army, and the virtual exclusion of the people from the prince’s quarrels, gave Europe a century’s respite in which to recover from the drain of the Thirty Years’ War. And therefore, when the French Revolution came, the attempts of the armies of old Europe to suppress it without robbing a single Frenchman of a loaf of bread proved futile, and soon the national army created by the Revolution, unencumbered by tents, magazines and supply trains, swept over southern Ger­many and Italy. The Revolutionary armies differed indeed from those of the old wars in this, that they did not devastate wantonly, nor did they murder for the sake of loot. But they were merciless in their exactions, and, moreover, the tides of their invasions flowed in particular channels, so that the greater part of the invaded country escaped. This had a considerable, sometimes even a predominant, influence on the strategy pur­sued, a retreat along their own lines of communication being often in fact avoided by the French as being the worst fate that could befall them. Napoleon, however, systematized the waste­ful and irregular requisitioning that his predecessors had intro­duced, and in his hands the supply service, like all else connected with the art of war, underwent a thorough reform. His strategy@@1 in the offensive passed through two distinct stages— (*a*) the swift and sudden descent into the theatre of war, and (*b*) the close grouping of his armies in view of the decisive blow. The first stage was characterized by extraordinarily swift move­ment, complete independence of all trains (other than the reserves of ammunition) and thorough exploitation of the food resources of the traversed zone. If the troops suffered, as well

as the inhabitants, this did not shake the emperor’s purpose in the slightest. If all the disorders which are the natural conse­quence of ill-regulated requisitioning—that is, marauding— cost the army 50,000 men, he had foreseen the loss and taken 50,000 men more than he needed for the battle. But the second stage, which as a rule involved three or four days’ occupation, without considerable movement, of a restricted area, required other measures of supply. In this the army lived upon maga­zines, which were filled from the captured supply trains from the available supplies in the area, and from the resources accumulated in requisitioned vehicles close to the head of the routes followed in the first period. These resources were col­lected in the towns within this concentration area, and placed “ out of reach of an insult ” (that is, made safe against raiders) with a garrison and field works to supplement the town walls and gates. From this *centre of operations* Napoleon never allowed himself to be severed, whereas to the preservation of the route between France and that centre of operations he gave very little thought and assigned few or no troops, and most of the confusion of strategical thought since his time has been due to the general failure to perceive the essential distinction, in Napoleonic practice, between a centre of operations and a “ base.”

In the 19th century, however, there came the inevitable reaction. Purely political wars, and the consequent indifference of the inhabitants to the operations of war, produced as before a return to the system of cash payments and convoy supply, especially in the Austrian army. As regards Europe the intro­duction of railways enormously facilitated the supply and trans­port service, and campaigns were neither as barren nor as pro­longed as they had been under the old conditions. The French and British armies did not, at least to the same extent, wage political wars, but their ceaseless colonial warfare imposed upon them the magazine and convoy system, and habituated them to it. The French, in 1870, stood still in the midst of the rich fields of Lorraine, and as a prolonged halt is fatal to the system of living on the country, it would have failed, even had it been tried. The Germans, on the other hand, levied requisitions, civilian transport, and contributions in money in accordance with Napoleonic tradition, though (owing to the existence of railways) with much less than Napoleonic severity. Their system has been accepted as the best for European warfare by all the great powers, whose organizations and methods of transporting and issuing supplies are the same in principle.

This principle is based on the Napoleonic distinction between supplies required during an advance and those required during a concentrated halt. the British *Field Service Regulations* (1909), pt. ii., lay it down that “ the system of subsistence should be elastic and readily adaptable to every situation as it arises,” but that it must always be based on the rule that “ all mobile supplies are to be regarded as a *reserve ”* for use when neither local nor line-of-communication resources are available. As a general rule local resources should be used before the line of communication is called upon, and last of all the call is made on the mobile supplies in the hands of the fighting units. During a strategical concentration or a long halt “ the resources of the immediate neighbourhood cannot be expected to support the troops. At such times they may be supplied from field dépôts established at convenient centres, and filled with supplies that are obtained by purchase or requisition and collected by requisitioned or hired (civilian) transport.” During an advance, on the other hand, “ by far the most advantageous method is for the troops to be rationed by the inhabitants on whom they are billeted . . . This method should be employed whenever possible.”

The extent to which it can be employed varies considerably with the place and the season, but the British and all continental armies have their own “ rules of thumb ” or rough generaliza­tions based on experience. General Lewal *(Stratégie de marche,* p. 47) says that in a country of ordinary fertility, with 70 inhabitants to the square kilometre, or 180 to the square mile, 10,000 men can be subsisted for one day on an area of 22 square

@@@1 H. Camon, *Guerre napoléonienne.*