

of their instruction and training. They were chosen because the need for them was urgent and bitter; because mobile troops could not be spared for fortress duties; because they were the nearest and could be embarked the quickest; and because their training, although incomplete, was as far advanced as that of a large portion, not only of the forces defending Antwerp, but of the enemy forces attacking.

PART OF A LARGE OPERATION

The Naval Division was sent to Antwerp not as an isolated incident, but as part of a large operation for the relief of the city. Other and more powerful considerations prevented this from being carried through. The defence of the inner lines of Antwerp could have been maintained for some days; and the Naval Division only withdrew when ordered to do so in obedience to the general strategic situation, and not on account of any attack or pressure by the enemy. The prolongation of the defence due to the arrival of the Division enabled the ships in the harbour to be rendered useless and many steps of importance to be taken.

It is too early now to judge what effect the