

The War in German East Africa

(Continued from the February number.)

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From Taveta and other places on the frontier the Germans, during 1914, made raids on the Uganda Railway but failed in their endeavours to capture Nairobi, the capital of British East Africa. Early in November, 1914, the British attacked the German port of Tanga from the sea but were defeated with a loss of 795 and in January following, our forces took Jasin, a German port about 20 miles inside the border but were forced to surrender by a stronger force of the enemy. These were the worst disasters sustained by our troops in that theatre of the great war and they led to a reorganisation of our forces and greater preparations. Major-General Tighe was brought from India to take charge of the campaign, but little was accomplished during 1915 except the bombardment of seaports, the destruction of the *Königsberg* and the blockade of the entire coast. Another change of leadership was decided upon towards the close of 1915 and General Smith-Dorien was appointed to take over the command. This appointment indicates how much value the British government placed upon the conquest of this German colony. General Smith-Dorien, however, took sick on his way to Africa and a new appointment had to be made. This time General Smuts was chosen who, only a few months before, had been leading one of the armies under General Botha in the German South West African campaign. (See *THE SCHOOL* for February, 1916).* No one who has read of General Smith-Dorien's heroic leadership of Britain's immortal first army of regulars during the retreat at Mons and in the battle of the Marne will doubt his ability as a soldier and leader and yet we may doubt if his preparation for leadership in East Africa was equal to that of General Smuts who on February 23rd, 1916, assumed the command at Nariobi. General Smuts had been born in South Africa, had been educated first in the schools of his own country and then in Cambridge University, and had qualified as a barrister in London. He had led a commando against the British in the Boer war, and when the South-African Union was formed he became Attorney-General in General Botha's cabinet. He had been chosen second in command when General Botha undertook his conquest of German West Africa and had contributed largely to the success of that brilliant campaign. He is recog-

*These articles are to be had in the Special War Edition of *THE SCHOOL*. See advertisement in this issue.