

routed with one magnificent rush, which captured four guns and inflicted heavy losses on the Turks. The enemy fought stubbornly, and were saved from complete destruction by the approach of night.

46. General Delamain's troops bivouacked for the night on the scene of their victory about two miles from the river, both men and horses suffering severely from want of water, as the brackish water of the marshes is undrinkable. In the morning the column reached the river, and the horses got their first water for forty hours.

47. Throughout the battle the Naval Flotilla co-operated with the land attack from positions on the river. Late in the evening of 28th, led by the "Comet" (Lieutenant-Commander E. C. Cookson, R.N., Acting Senior Naval Officer), the flotilla advanced upstream and endeavoured to force a passage through the boom obstruction. The ships came under a terrific fire from both banks at close range. The "Comet" rammed the boom, but it withstood the shock.

Lieutenant-Commander Cookson was shot dead while most gallantly attempting to cut a wire cable securing the barges.

48. The Turks evacuated their remaining trenches during the night and escaped along the bank of the Tigris. On the morning of the 29th a pursuit was organised, troops moving in ships preceded by cavalry on land.

The Cavalry, consisting of four weak squadrons, overtook the enemy on 1st October, but had to wait for the support of the river column, as the Turks were making an orderly retreat, covered by a strong rearguard with infantry and guns.

49. The progress of the river column was so delayed by the difficulties of navigation due to the constantly shifting shallows in the river that it was unable to overtake the retreating enemy.

When the ships reached Aziziyah on 5th October, the enemy had reached their prepared defensive position at Ctesiphon, covering the road to Baghdad, where they were reinforced.

50. The Turks lost some 4,000 men in casualties, of whom 1,153 were prisoners captured by us. In addition we took 14 guns and a quantity of rifles, ammunition and stores. Considering the severity of the fighting our casualties were comparatively small. They amounted to 1,233, including a large proportion of men only slightly wounded.

51. The defeat of Nur-ed-din Bey completed the expulsion of Turkish troops from the Basrah Vilayet. Apart from material gains won at Kut-al-Amarah, our troops once again proved their irresistible gallantry in attack, and added another victory to British arms in Mesopotamia.

52. I am glad to place on record my appreciation of the ability and generalship displayed by Major-General C. V. F. Townshend, C.B., D.S.O., throughout these operations. His plan for turning the Turkish left was the manœuvre whereby the position could best be captured without incurring very heavy losses.

53. Brigadier-General Delamain, who commanded the main attack, showed himself to be a resolute and resourceful commander. His leadership during the battle was admirable.

54. The troops under the command of Major-General Townshend displayed high soldierly qualities, and upheld the reputation

they have earned during this arduous campaign.

55. The conduct of the Infantry in the attack was particularly noteworthy. They were set a task involving prolonged exertion and endurance, and performed it with an alacrity and resolution which must have been most disconcerting to the enemy.

56. The Artillery has established a high reputation for good shooting. The Infantry rely on their accuracy and skill; during the attack they welcome the close support of the guns, and press forward with the narrowest margin dividing them from the curtain of bursting shells, in a manner that is a tribute to their comrades in the Artillery.

57. The services of the Royal Flying Corps, not only during the battle but also in the frequent reconnaissances which preceded the fighting, also call for notice.

The Flying Officers displayed courage and devotion in the performance of their duties, which were often carried out under a heavy fire. The accurate information obtained during air reconnaissances was of the utmost value in planning the defeat of the enemy, and the remarkable skill and powers of observation displayed by Flight Commander Major H. L. Reilly, Royal Flying Corps, contributed in no small degree to the success of the operations.

58. The work of the Royal Navy fully maintained the high standard they have established in these rivers. I much regret the loss of Lieutenant-Commander E. C. Cookson, whose gallant act has already been referred to.

59. Acknowledgments are due to the excellent work done by the Commanders and personnel of the river steamers for their unremitting work in connection with operations on the rivers of Mesopotamia.

60. Accompanying this despatch is a list of officers and men whose names I wish to bring to notice in connection with the operations undertaken during the period under report.

I have, etc.,

(Signed) JOHN NIXON, General,
Commanding I.E.F. "D."

OPERATIONS KHAFAJIYAH

24TH APRIL—19TH JUNE, 1915.

DIVISIONAL AND BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS STAFF, ETC.

Browne, Major (Temporary Lieutenant-Colonel) H. J. P.
Dent, Captain W.
Gorringe, Major-General G. F., K.C.B.
C.M.G., D.S.O.
Hendley, Colonel C. E.
Melliss, Major-General C. J., V.C., K.C.B.
McKenna, Captain J. C.
St. John, Major R. S.
Wilson, Captain A. T.

33RD Q.V.O. LIGHT CAVALRY.

Edward-Collins, Lieutenant G.
Meiklejohn, Lieutenant J. F.

No. 6 AMMUNITION COLUMN.

Corbould-Warren, Captain E.