

next day, and about the same time reports of the presence of hostile troops at Ain Sadr were received, and our mounted troops obtained touch with hostile patrols near Bir-el-Duedar.

9. On the 22nd small detachments were told off from the reserves to hold lightly the trenches prepared along the west bank. On the 26th forces of some 2,000—3,000 men each were located at Bir Mabeuik, Muiya Harab, and Wadi Muksheib, and the enemy advanced and engaged our covering troops near Kantara, retiring at 3.30 p.m. On the same day two battalions 32nd Brigade (33rd Punjabis and 4th Gwálior Infantry) were sent to hold the trenches along the west bank from Bench Mark post to Ballah, while G.O.C.'s of sections reinforced the west bank trenches in their sections from local reserves. The New Zealand Infantry Brigade arrived from Cairo, the Otago and Wellington battalions proceeding to reinforce Kubri, while Headquarters and the Auckland and Canterbury battalions detrained at Ismailia. H.M.S. "Swiftsure," "Clio," "Ocean," and "Minerva" entered the canal, taking station near Kantara, Ballah, El Shatt, and Shalouf respectively.

10. During the 27th and 28th the enemy was further reinforced, and established himself in an entrenched position about five miles east of Kantara, astride the El Arish road. On the morning of the 27th attacks on the Baluchistan and El Kubri posts in No. 1 Section were made at about 3 a.m. Both were beaten off without loss. On the morning of the 28th the outposts at Kantara were attacked, and the enemy was driven off with little difficulty. One battalion from 31st Brigade (2nd Rajputs) was sent to reinforce Serapeum.

11. From the 29th-31st the enemy closed towards the Canal, the largest concentration appearing in the vicinity of Gebel Habeita. The 5th Battery, Egyptian Artillery, was sent to Toussoum.

12. On the 1st February an advance from the north-east towards the Ismailia Ferry post was detected, and that post, as well as Bench Mark post, was reinforced under the orders of the General Officer Commanding No. 2 Section. On the 2nd February our advanced troops from Ismailia Ferry encountered the enemy at some distance from the post, and a desultory action ensued. This was broken off at 3.30 p.m., and the enemy then entrenched himself about 2½ miles south-east of our defences. In the course of the day considerable bodies of troops were also seen on the move in front of El Ferdan, Bench Mark, Toussoum and Serapeum. During the night of the 2nd-3rd some firing at El Kubri took place, but nothing further of note occurred in No. 1 Section.

13. At about 3.30 a.m. on the 3rd a determined attempt was made to effect a crossing some 2,000 yards south of Toussoum. The enemy brought up a number of pontoons and rafts, several of which they succeeded in launching, while two, if not more, actually crossed the Canal. This attack was covered by heavy rifle and machine-gun fire from the east bank. It was met by parties of the 62nd Punjabis under Major Skeen and Captain Morgan, as well as by fire from the 5th Battery, Egyptian Artillery. Several pontoons were sunk, and all the men who crossed were disposed of, except twenty, who hid under the west bank and surrendered to the 2nd Rajputs next morning.

14. At daylight the enemy were found to

have closed on the Toussoum post, and a counter-attack pushed forward from Serapeum encountered a large force about half a mile from camp. The enemy's attack was not pushed closer than three-quarters of a mile from our position, and they retired about 2 p.m. after shelling our positions intermittently up to that time. Seven officers and 280 men were taken prisoners opposite Toussoum during the course of the fight. A large number of the enemy's dead were found outside Toussoum post and along the east bank of the Canal.

15. At 4.30 p.m. two battalions 31st Brigade (27th Punjabis and 128th Pioneers) arrived at Serapeum, and Major-General A. Wallace, Commanding 11th Division, took over command of the Section from the Great Bitter Lake to Lake Timsah. During the morning H.M.S. "Hardinge" was struck by two 6-inch shells; her funnel being split and forward steering gear disabled. She moved into Lake Timsah, and later in the day to Kantara, her place being taken by H.M.S. "Swiftsure." H.M.S. "Ocean" also moved up into this section of the defence. At Ismailia Ferry post the enemy were found at daylight to be entrenching some 700-800 yards from the defences, and two hostile batteries opened fire shortly afterwards. The infantry attack was not pushed home, and no casualties occurred, though many shells burst in the camp and in the vicinity of the town. Shipping detained in Lake Timsah was under fire and suffered slight damage, but no loss of life.

16. Circumstances were similar at El Ferdan, where a considerable number of shells were fired, chiefly at the Canal Gare and railway station, both of which were damaged. No casualties occurred.

17. At Kantara the outposts were attacked between 5 and 6 a.m., the enemy being driven off, leaving many killed and wounded and unwounded prisoners. Later in the day a partial attack from the south-east was stopped some 1,200 yards from the position.

18. During the day H.M.S. "Swiftsure," "Clio," "Hardinge," and the French ships "Requin" and "D'Entrecasteaux" were engaged, as were also the torpedo boats and armed launches, all rendering valuable services. The bulk of the fighting fell to the 22nd and 29th Infantry Brigades, but the 28th, as well as portions of the 31st, 32nd, and New Zealand Infantry Brigades, the Artillery and Engineers of the Lancashire Division, T.F., and No. 3 Field Company Australian Engineers, were also engaged. Very efficient service was rendered by the detachment Royal Flying Corps, several reconnaissances over the enemy's lines being undertaken during the day.

19. The enemy engaged at different points along the Canal on the 3rd appeared to number some 12,000 to 15,000 men in the aggregate, and six batteries, with at least one 6-inch gun, were located. It appears from accounts received from prisoners that the attacking force consisted of the VIIIth and portions of the IIIrd, IVth, and VIth Turkish Army Corps, and that Djemal Pasha was in chief command. The enemy's plan contemplated simultaneous attacks on Kantara, Ferdan, Ismailia, Shalouf, and Suez, coupled with the main effort to cross the Canal near Toussoum. At the first three of the above-mentioned places their efforts were only half-hearted, while at